

**Sunday, July 7, 2024**  
**Declaration of Dependence**  
*Turning Our Nation Back to God*

**Video** —

The following message is adapted from the references listed below in the blocked area (identified by different colors). My message will be a loose adaption from these sources.

1. Dr. Kenyn Cureton's Message entitled "How You Can Have Maximum Impact as a Christian Citizen". Permission to use materials was given.
2. Dr. Jerry Falwell's Message "Declaration of Dependence On God". Sunday, July 3, 2011.
3. Allabouthistory.org. "Spiritual Heritage and The Declaration of Independence".
4. The Declaration of Independence. US Original Document
5. iVotValues.org. Sermon "Maximum Patriotic Impact". Used by Permission.

Today is Religious Liberty Sunday across the Southern Baptist Convention as well as more well-known as Independence Day Weekend. So, I am pausing my Acts Study and will focus briefly on the need for God in our America and in the lives of its citizens.

We most often celebrate, and rightly so, the Declaration of Independence that was signed on July 4, 1776. In a few moments I will read portions of that and its spiritual foundations for is to consider. But, let me read from another document, even older than the Declaration of Independence that reinforces the fact that our country was designed and founded on Godly guidance and Biblical principles.

**The Mayflower Compact**, November, 1620.

This is the document that gave the direction to this nation.

*"In the Name of God Almighty, we whose names are underwritten . . . having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, . . . a voyage to plan the first colony in northern Virginia (they were in Massachusetts); do by these present, solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick . . ."*

**Three biblical truths those on board the Mayflower believed:**

- (a) They believed the new nation would glorify God.
- (b) They believed the new nation would extend Christianity, i.e. "the advancement of the Christian faith."
- (c) They believed their authority was from God. They planted a colony "in the name of Almighty God." What have you done in the name of God or for the glory of God?

**On July 4, 1776**, in Philadelphia, our Founding Fathers signed a document declaring our independence from the tyranny of those who would enslave the minds, the souls, the lives of men. But what many Americans don't realize is that with the same document, we not only declared our independence from Great Britain, we just as strongly declared our dependence upon Almighty God. Listen to the words from the Declaration of Independence

**In Congress, July 4, 1776....The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,** When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes;..

And the final phrase is...

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor”.

**In 1776, Congress** approved the Declaration of Independence with its 4 direct religious acknowledgments referring to

- God as the Creator (“All people are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”),
- the Lawgiver (“the laws of nature and nature’s God”), the Judge (“appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world”), and
- the Protector (“with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence”). (From [allabouthistory.org](http://allabouthistory.org). “Spiritual Heritage and The Declaration of Independence”.)

“For the Declaration of Independence begins by proclaiming that we are subject only to the ‘*laws of nature and nature’s God.*’ Do you remember how it ends? It ends with these words: “*With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.*” Do you know what the word reliance means? It means dependence. The signers of the Declaration were staking everything on God watching over them and seeing them through in their struggle for freedom: “*With a firm reliance upon the protection of Divine Providence.*” Hear this statement well: Our Founding Fathers did not believe in the separation of God from government. They believed that this nation was founded by God, protected by God, preserved by God, and blessed by God. It all depends on God! And based on that belief, they were willing to pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. And the nation they sacrificed so much to help found is still intact for us to enjoy its freedoms. May God bless America!

That brings us to you and me, here and now. If these patriots willingly laid it all on the line for this nation, don't you think we should do more than simply sing patriotic songs, wave the flag, barbeque burgers, and watch fireworks? I think so. Not only that, but Jesus said so.

Let's 1<sup>st</sup> read a passage from Matthew 22:15-22...

...<sup>15</sup> *Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said.* <sup>16</sup> *And they \*sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone."* <sup>17</sup> *Tell us then, what do You think? Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"* <sup>18</sup> *But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?"* <sup>19</sup> *Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax."* *And they brought Him a denarius.* <sup>20</sup> *And He \*said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?"* <sup>21</sup> *They \*said to Him, "Caesar's."* *Then He \*said to them, "Then pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."* <sup>22</sup> *And hearing this, they were amazed; and they left Him and went away.*

The religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus on the issue of paying taxes, but Jesus turned the tables on them. He asked them for a coin, and then asked whose portrait and inscription was stamped on it. They replied: "Caesar's." Jesus responded: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" (v.21). His point: All citizens—including His followers—are obligated to support their government.

## 5 Things We Can Do to Be Godly Citizens

### **1. SEEK GOD FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT.**

1 Timothy 2:1-4...*I urge then first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.*

2 Chronicles 7:14...*If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

### **2. SUPPORT YOUR GOVERNMENT.**

**A. Pay Taxes to your government (Matt. 22:21 & Matt. 17:24-27)**

*This is why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing (Rom. 13:6).*

**B. Take Pride in your government. Rom. 13:7; Ps. 137:5**...*Give everyone what you owe him... if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor (Rom. 13:7).*

**SHOW RESPECT**

### **3. SUBMIT TO YOUR GOVERNMENT.**

1 Peter 2: 13,14...*Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king who is the supreme authority or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do*

*wrong and to commend those who do right...*

#### **4. STAND UP TO YOUR GOVERNMENT.**

George Washington is credited with saying that “Government... is a troublesome servant and a fearful Master.” Sometimes, we must stand up to our government. Now there’s a time and place for civil disobedience, but it should come only as a last resort, especially in America, which was founded upon Judeo-Christian principles and biblical laws. However, if the government commands what God condemns, then you are obligated to disobey

**Thomas Jefferson** – All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent

**Biblical Examples:** Moses vs. Pharaoh; Nathan vs. David; Elijah vs. Ahab; Daniel vs. Nebuchadnezzar; John the Baptist vs. Herod; Peter vs. Sanhedrin.

**Acts 5:29**... *We must obey God rather than men!*

“Christians in Asia Minor disobeyed the Imperial edict to swear: “Caesar is Lord,” threw their incense to the ground in defiance, and declared: Christ is Lord!” They were all blessed by God for their proper civil disobedience. As Citizen Christians, we need to use our freedom to defend our freedom, or we may lose our freedom. In many ways, that time has come. Decisions are being made by our government and courts on the great moral issues of our day and on our rights as Christians, so we cannot afford to be silent. But when

we do speak out, have you noticed how the critics cry foul, claiming “Separation of Church & State,” and saying: “You don’t have a right to speak about public policy and law!

Go cower in your church, lock yourself in your little stained-glass prison, and stay there!” And that’s exactly what the devil wants—the salt shackled in the sanctuary and the light locked up in the church house.

But the last time I checked Christians are not second class citizens of America. Your voice needs to be heard. In fact, the Bible commands it. Jesus said: “*You are the salt of the earth... the light of the world!*” (Matt. 5:13-16). That’s you and that’s me. God urged his people: “***Shout it aloud! Do not hold back! Raise your voice like a trumpet! Declare to my people their rebellion, and to the house of Jacob their sins***” (Isa. 58:1). (iVote sermon)

#### **We Value**

##### **FREEDOM**

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”  
*First Amendment to the Constitution*

**“If we do not use our freedom to defend our freedom, we will lose our freedom.”**

#### **5. SELECT YOUR GOVERNMENT.**

**Action Step 1:** Register to Vote

**Action Step 2:** Make yourself aware of candidate’s positions and current laws that are being considered.

**Stay Informed**

**Action Step 3:** Vote based on God’s wisdom and Biblical values





**“Let each citizen remember at the moment he is offering his vote... that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country.”**

**Samuel Adams –  
Founding Father**



**“Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation... to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.”** **John Jay –  
Founding Father**

### **We Value...**

#### **1. LIFE**

**Psalm 139:15-16**...<sup>13</sup> For it was You who created my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother's womb.<sup>14</sup> I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made.

**Proverbs 24:11**...Rescue those who are being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.

- Every day in America, more babies are aborted than those who died in the 9/11 attacks – 3,000.
- Abortion ends the lives of around 1 million unborn children in America every year.
- Around 21% of all pregnancies end in abortion.
- Over 50 million have been murdered by abortion.

***It is the American Holocaust!***

**Let's Not Forget**

***Child Abuse  
Domestic Abuse  
Sex-Abuse  
Prejudice & Bigotry***

#### **2. FAMILY**

**Matthew 19:4-6**...Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." (Gen 1,2)

### 3. FREEDOM

**Galatians 5:1**...*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.*

(Outline Points adapted from iVote.com)

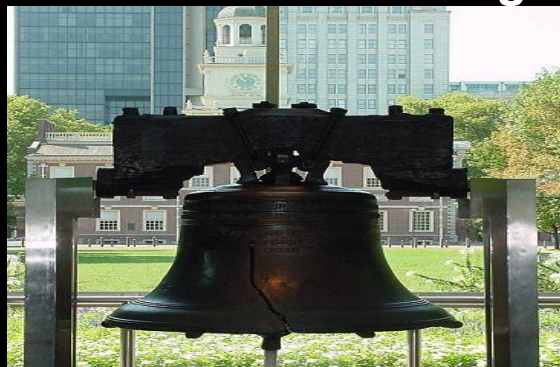
## We Value - Freedom

**"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."**

**Galatians 5:1**



## Let Freedom Ring



**"Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof!"**

**Leviticus 25:10**

### Revival Formula: (2 X 7 = 14)

(The reference is Second Chronicles which equals 2, the reference is Chapter 7, verse 14. This passage has 4 conditions and 3 promises which equal seven.)

**II Chronicles 7:14**... *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

### 4 Conditions -

- (1) Humble
- (2) Pray
- (3) Seek God
- (4) Repent

### 3 Results -

- (1) Hear
- (2) Forgive
- (3) Heal land

### Closing:

We have a privilege and a responsibility to be godly people who Love God & Love People. Our lives should reflect these two values in the way we live as citizens of God's Kingdom first but also of the USA. Let's pray, live righteously and lead this nation back to God.