

## AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

3/26/2017

Last week we looked at what other parts of the world thought about America as a Christian nation. Today we again turn our attention back to America.

### I. WHAT PRESIDENTS HAVE SAID ABOUT GOD AND COUNTRY

#### A. Dwight Eisenhower

1. "Without God there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first---the most basic---expression of Americanism."
2. He stated that our American way of life was firmly rooted in Him "Thus the founding fathers of America saw it, and thus with God's help, it will continue to be."

#### B. George Washington

1. Washington started the process of placing his hand on the Bible when presidents are sworn in
2. In his inaugural address he declared, "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adorn the invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States."

#### C. Abraham Lincoln

1. Lincoln delivered his inaugural address days before the start of the Civil War.
2. He stated; "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty."

D. John Kennedy stated; "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country...Let us go forth to lead the land we love,

asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

F. Thomas Jefferson;

1. On three occasions Jefferson extended an act of Congress designating lands to missionaries.
2. He stated the purpose was; "For civilizing the Indians and promoting Christianity."

G. Benjamin Harrison granted lands to organizations "for the purpose of missionary or educational work.

H. President Ronald Regan stated; "America needs God more than God needs America. If we ever forget what we are One Nation Under God then we will be a Nation gone under."

I. In our lifetime President George Bush launched the office of Faith-Based initiatives."

## II. WHAT CONGRESS HAS SAID ABOUT GOD AND COUNTRY

A. Congress has stated that; "Christianity should be encouraged."

B. The oath of office for all members of congress declares, "I \_\_\_\_\_do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States...so help me God."

C. Both the Senate and the House open their sessions with prayer.

D. Both institutions continue to open their sessions with prayer as they have done from the beginning.

E. Famed Chaplain Dr. Peter Marshall in the late 1940's offered this prayer; "May it be ever understood that our liberty is under God and can be found nowhere else...We were born that way, as the only nation on earth that came into being for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith."

- F. The House Judiciary Committee has stated that; "At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged...it must be considered as the foundation on which the whole structure rests." (1854)
- G. The House of Representatives has stated; "The great vital and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ." (1854)
- H. In the midst of the Civil War the United States Senate endorsed legislation stating; "Encouraged in the day of trouble by the assurance of His Word, to seek Him for succor according to His appointed way, through Jesus Christ, the Senate of the United States does hereby request the President of the United States, by his proclamation, to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation."
- I. In the midst of the Cold War President Dwight Eisenhower attended a church service and was challenged to ask Congress to place the phrase "under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance. It was so done!
- J. To let the world know that America was a Christian nation Congress acted by joint resolution to make "In God We Trust" our National Motto.
  - 1. They also stipulated that the motto appear on our currency.
  - 2. They stated why this fact should be because; "in these days when imperialistic and materialistic Communism seeks to attack and destroy freedom, It is proper to remind all of us of this self-evident truth that as long as this country trusts in God, it will prevail."

### III. WHAT IS PARTIALLY INSCRIBED ON THE BUILDING IN WASHINGTON

- A. Both chambers of the House and Senate feature this inscription "In God We Trust" on their walls.
- B. In the Capitol Rotunda there are at least three large Christian paintings.
  - 1. A depiction of the pilgrims leaving Holland with a prayer meeting.
  - 2. A depiction of the arrival on these shores with a prayer meeting.
  - 3. A depiction of the first baptism in this country of Pocahontas.

- C. In Statutory Hall there are many statues of Christian leaders and pastors
  - 1. When they finished the Capitol they asked the states to send a statue of a famous person from their state to display in the hall.
  - 2. 25% of the statues were those of clergymen.
- D. Over the Speaker's rostrum in the House Chamber is the declaration, "In God We Trust"
- E. There are many images around the chamber walls.
  - 1. There are 23 lawgiver from across the centuries
  - 2. In the middle of the lawgivers is Moses looking down on the proceedings of the House.
  - 3. Moses is the only one of the 23 honored with a full face view.
- F. There is a prayer room in the Capitol which contains an open Bible sitting on an altar in front of a stained window showing Washington in earnest prayer. Behind him is etched the first verse of Psalm 16, "Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust."
- G. The United States Supreme Court at one time met in the basement of the United State Capitol Building.
  - 1. A plaque outside the chamber contains the words "What hath God Wrought!"
  - 2. This plaque is in remembrance of Sameul F. B. Morse which sent the above message for the first time over the telegraph in 1844.

#### IV. SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

- A. Barry Lynn director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State is no friend of America's Christian history.
  - 1. Mr Lynn had to admit; "Cleary, there are many religious references on buildings across Washington, D. C...They are part of the history of the country."
  - 2. Mr Lynn would wear out many wrecking balls eradicating Christianity.
- B. God still retains His Testimony in a basket of Washington liberalism.