

AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

2/11/2018

We have learned and continue to do so that in the war of our independence our forefathers constantly sought the blessings of God.

I. SOME OF THE PROCLAMATIONS OF THE CONGRESS ARE SEEN.

- A. May 17, 1776: "A day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that we may with united hearts, confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and by a sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease His righteous displeasure, and, through the merits and mediations of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness."
- B. December 11, 1776: "Reverence the Providence of God, and look up to Him as the supreme disposer of all events..and beg the countenance of His Providence in the prosecution of the present just and necessary war."
- C. The Congress also exhorted the Continental Army to strictly observe the regulation "which forbids profane swearing, and all immorality, of which all officers are desired to take note."
- D. March 19, 1782: A day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer so that "our joint supplications may then ascend to the throne of the Ruler of the Universe, beseeching Him to make us holy, so that we may be a happy people that the religion of our Divine Redeemer, with all its benign influences, may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."
- E. October 18, 1783: The Thanksgiving proclamation for the signing of the peace treaty with Britain offers thanks that "the freedom, sovereignty and independence" of the United States has been established, and "the most essential rights of human nature" secured through the interposition of Divine Providence, which has been most miraculously and abundantly manifested."

II. SOME QUOTES FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS ARE SEEN.

A. Patrick Henry

1. Henry was a Christian Founding Father.
2. Henry was one of the strongest evangelical Christian of his times.

3. One of Henry's most famous quotes was; "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason people of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here."
4. Here Henry rejects the idea that America was founded on religions but on a person, Jesus Christ.

B. George Washington

1. As Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, Washington's first General Order required all officers and men not engaged in actual duty to attend Divine services.
2. At Valley Forge Washington issued a General Order to his troops in which he said; "To the distinguished character of a patriot, it ought to be our highest glory to add the more distinguished, character of a Christian."
3. On July 9, 1776 Washington ordered the commanding officer of each regiment to procure Chaplains. They were to be persons of good characters and exemplary lives.
 - a. In this same order, Washington stated his hope that "every officer and man, will endeavor so to live, and act, as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest Rights and Liberties of his country."
 - b. He further commanded everyone in the army to obey the orders of the Continental Congress, and thus, "by their unfeigned and pious observance of their religious duties," that were to "incline the Lord, and Giver of Victory , to prosper our arms."
 - c. The orders of the Continental Congress were the Articles of War passed by the Founding Fathers June 30, 1775. In them, it was "earnestly recommended to all officers and soldiers diligently to attend divine service." What would happen to anyone who behaved indecently or irreverently at divine worship? They would be brought before a court martial.

4. On August 3 1776 Washington talked to his soldiers about profane cursing and swearing.
 - a. He stated that we “can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly.”
 - b. He stated that; cursing and swearing “is a vice so mean and low that every man of sense and character detests and despises it.”
5. One of the modern lies about George Washington popular among some historians is that he used foul and profane language. (I don’t think so!)
6. General George Washington revealed his Christian faith to some Delaware Indians chiefs, when they visited his camp in 1779 and brought three youths to be educated in white schools.
 - a. “You do well to wish to learn our arts and way of life, and above all the religion of Jesus Christ.”
 - b. Who did Washington suggest would assist the Indians to learn the Christian faith? The Congress!
7. After the War for Independence, in a circular letter to the governors of the states, Washington said that he was praying that God would “dispose us all to demean ourselves” with what characteristics? Charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind.
 - a. These were the characteristics of whom; The Divine Author of our blessed religion.
 - b. Washington said that we could “never hope to be a happy nation” without humbly imitating the example of Jesus Christ.
8. When Washington was inaugurated as our first President in New York City on April 30, 1789 he insisted on taking the oath with his hand on the Bible.
9. In a statement which would be considered quite “politically incorrect” today, Washington declared in October, 1789 ; “While just government protects all in their religious rights, true religion affords to government its surest support.”

10. In his farewell address, Washington warned us; "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

C. James Madison

1. Madison wrote; "Before any man can be considered as a member of civil society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe."
2. Madison is saying that our relationship with God precedes our civil rights, and our relations with each other.

D. John Adams

1. Adams was our second President
2. One of his most memorable statements was; "Our Constitution was designed only for a moral and religious people. It is "wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

III. WHAT HISTORIANS HAVE SAID ABOUT THE SENTIMENT OF THE TIME

A. Some elements stated;

1. That America was a land blessed of Divine Providence.
2. America was inhabited by a Chosen People.
3. That America was led through Divine Grace by Christian men of heroic stature.

B. Two things were to accompany America's every step.

1. Repentance for iniquity. (unconfessed sin)
2. Fasting and prayerful supplication for forgiveness and fortitude.

C. Time would reveal that America's reward of victory over Great Britain was her righteousness and adherence to the true faith.

D. History has shown God's providential watch care over America.

E. God used men of strong moral and spiritual character to establish this nation.