

# George Washington's Answer for the Dallas Massacre

Anger and lawlessness are raging in the streets of America. This past Thursday, five police officers were gunned down in our neighboring city of Dallas and seven others wounded in a carefully planned attack that shocked the nation. Commenting on the Dallas massacre, retired NYPD detective, Bo Dietl, said he has never seen America as divided as it is at this time.

Recalling the social turbulence of the 1960s, he opined that this is an even more intense and critical moment in the nation's history. Dr. Susan Hyatt says that, like 911, this could be a tipping point in America's history.

## When a Nation Rejects God

But should we be shocked at the moral chaos invading our land when our highest officials have set themselves in opposition to the Moral Governor of the universe and made it clear they do not want His influence in this nation? Yes, they have done this by ordering displays of the Ten Commandments removed from public schools, court houses, and all public-owned property. They have done this by ordering the removal of crosses and all Christian symbols from all government facilities. They have done this by banning prayer and Bible reading in public schools. They have done this by a growing hostility toward anything Christian in the public life of the nation.

Choices have consequences and we are now beginning to reap the consequences of this rejection of Christian morality. The inevitable consequences of these actions were highlighted to me some time ago when I heard a noted sociologist, who was being interviewed by Charlie Rose, tell about the power of symbols to effect behavior. For example, in studies he had directed, they found that a person is less likely to lie if a

Bible is in their presence at the time. They learned that the very presence of a Bible or the Ten Commandments will have a positive impact on a person's behavior.

It is thus no wonder that we are experiencing such moral degeneracy in this nation. We could put off paying the piper for only so long. If George Washington, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin and the other Founders are looking down from above, they are shaking their heads and saying, "We told you so. We warned you this could happen."

### **The Founders' Solution for America's Dilemma**

The Founders were unanimous in their belief that the American Republic they formed could only be sustained by a moral and religious (Christian) people. In his Farewell Address, after serving two terms as America's first president, Washington warned the fledgling nation to cling to morality and religion. Why? Because for Washington, morality and religion (Christianity) were the *indispensable* supports for national stability and political prosperity (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 169-70).

For Washington, Christianity was not something to be merely "tolerated" in the new nation, but something *indispensable* for the nation's survival and success. He also warned against entertaining the supposition that morality could be sustained without Christianity. The morality required to maintain a free republic could only come from Christianity.

He elaborated on this when he wrote, "The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the external rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 174).

James Madison, the chief architect of the U.S. Constitution, was in complete agreement with Washington concerning the necessity of Christian morality. This is why he wrote, "The belief in a God All Powerful wise and good, is so essential to

the moral order of the world and to the happiness of man, that arguments which enforce it cannot be drawn from too many sources" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 131).

He also wrote, "We have staked the whole future of the American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future ... upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves according to the Ten Commandments" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 173).

This belief in the necessity of Christian morality in the public life of the nation was so prevalent that when Thomas Paine sent a manuscript to Benjamin Franklin in which he attacked historic Christianity, Franklin refused to print it. In very strong language Franklin suggested to Paine that he burn the manuscript and not allow anyone else to see it. "If men are this wicked with Christianity," said Franklin, "What would they be if without it" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 142).

John Adams, America's second president, was of the same mind in this regard as Washington, Franklin, Madison and all the Founders. This was made clear in a 1798 address to the officers of the Massachusetts Militia in which he declared,

"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. ... Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 173).

### **What Would Washington Do?**

In the wake of the massacre in Dallas, Texas, America is bewildered. The masses are looking for answers and for leadership. At a time like this, it is appropriate to look to the Founding Father of this nation and ask, "What would George Washington do and say at a time such as this?

Washington would, without doubt, call the nation back to God. He once said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." He would also point us to Jesus as our example and exhort us to treat one another with love and respect. We know this to be true because this is what he expressed in a letter to the governors of the various states at the end of the Revolutionary War.

In what could be called a "pastoral letter," Washington expressed his "earnest prayer" for the governors and the states over which they presided. He wrote, "I now make it my earnest prayer that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens ... to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of His example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation" (Hyatt, *Pilgrims and Patriots*, 134).

### Concluding Thought

May the political leaders of this nation come to their senses and realize that the answer to America's current dilemma is not more laws and regulations out of Washington D.C. And may the pastors and religious leaders of this nation realize that unless they boldly preach the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27), they are contributing to the problem. And may we all realize that unless we recover the vision and understanding of America's Founders, the free republic they created will not survive. {eo}

*This article was derived from Eddie Hyatt's latest book, Pilgrims and Patriots, which can be ordered from Amazon or from his website at . Pat Robertson calls this book "a must-read."*

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