

The Exodus 20 Reason You Need to Make America Great Again

Sin is not a popular subject among people, politicians and, tragically, a lot of preachers today. To be honest, there are many motivational speakers disguised as ministers in American pulpits choosing not to address the topic and instead sending people to hell with a positive attitude. However, I'm grateful for godly men and women willing to stand in the gap and remind us that God's Word must be emphasized not only during elections, but every day of the year. On Nov. 6, voters in Alabama decided to amend their constitution, allowing the Ten Commandments to be displayed in public schools and government buildings. Bravo, 'Bama!

Recently, I was reading about Jesus' encounter with a group of Pharisees (religious intellectuals who assumed they had it all together) and a woman who was caught in the act of adultery (John 8:1-11). The men felt the woman should be stoned for her sin, but Jesus wanted the accusers to understand they were no more righteous than she. Without saying a word, He stooped down and began writing in the dust "with His finger" (John 8:6b).

Both Exodus 31:18 and Deuteronomy 9:10 mention "the finger of God" in reference to the Ten Commandments. Though we don't know for sure, I like to think that Jesus—being God in the flesh—was deliberately listing the Ten Commandments in the sand that day to remind the men that they weren't without their own stone-worthy offenses. In John 8:7, Jesus says, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone."

Scripture also tells us that the oldest man present was the first to slink away, perhaps because he realized just how often he had sinned against God during the course of his life.

Jesus was letting the law convict them of their own sins. Conviction—that feeling we get when we see our own ugliness and recognize our choices and attitudes as wrong—is a necessary step in addressing our sin problem. Why? Because the awareness that we are sinners leads us to see our need for repentance and divine help. No one will ever earn salvation by checking off a list of do's and don'ts. But knowing and doing what God commands, positions us to welcome Jesus as the critical lifeline He is. And we need Him now more than ever.

On any given day in America, I wonder if Washington, Adams, Madison, Jefferson and Hamilton would even recognize the country they helped found. Hamilton may love seeing his name in lights on Broadway, but his parting words on this planet indicated the humility of his heart: "I have a tender reliance on the mercy of the Almighty, through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a sinner. I look to Him for mercy."

With all our spiritual and political unrest, these founding fathers would most certainly speculate that it was a vandal who cracked the Liberty Bell because it bears Scripture—"Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (see Lev. 25:10). I can almost hear Washington making a joke about some outspoken religious resister holding the Pilgrims hostage on the Mayflower until their compact didn't sound so "Christian".

What can we learn today from these imperfect men who were fully aware of their sinful natures, yet surrendered to the knowledge that the providential hand of a loving God was leading every step of the way? To start, their primary textbook was the Bible. The Ten Commandments weren't just worthy of a monument in the public square; they were immortalized as the foundation of the very documents that form our "one nation under God".

The Ten Commandments are the basis for our framework of self-government. Interestingly, Exodus 20:1–17 stresses that a

nation's character is a direct reflection of the individual character of each citizen. Every one of the Ten Commandments applies to the multitudes but is addressed to the individual. Meaning, in order to "Make America Great Again," we need to take responsibility to make ourselves, and our country, God's again. {eoa}

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