

What Is Happening to Patriotism in America?

“America is the only country ever founded on an idea. [It is] the only country that is not founded on race or even common history. It’s founded on an idea and the idea is liberty. That is probably the rarest phenomena in the political history of the world; this has never happened before. And not only has it happened, but it’s worked.” –author and commentator Charles Krauthammer (1950-2018)

This year marks the 243rd anniversary of the signing of our nation’s Declaration of Independence. Significantly, it explicitly acknowledged God four times and we are told that all men are “created equal” and are “endowed by their Creator” with the unalienable right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

The declaration cites the “laws of nature and of nature’s God” as authoritative and appeals to Him as the “Supreme Judge of the world.” Finally, the Founding Fathers expressed in the declaration their “firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.”

These first principles, found in our Declaration of Independence, are linked to biblical truth, moral tradition and a scriptural understanding of liberty. They were not withdrawn 11 years later when the U.S. Constitution was approved. The framers did not need to restate in the Constitution what they had already established in the Declaration of Independence: The one true God of the universe is the true source of our freedoms and liberties.

Freedom and Liberty

This annual holiday should prompt some holy reflections, since true freedom ultimately comes from God. King David said, “I

will walk in freedom, for I have devoted myself to your commandments" (Ps. 119:45, NLT). This greater freedom comes from putting God first and obeying His commands.

Today, in this "greatest country on God's green earth," to quote radio host and commentator Michael Medved, we enjoy many freedoms. Our Constitution gives us:

- freedom of religion.
- freedom of speech.
- freedom of the press.
- freedom to peacefully assemble.
- freedom to protest our government. And
- freedom to elect our leaders.

All of these freedoms became our American creed and were secured by the wisdom and dedication of our Founding Fathers.

"Let the annual return of [July 4th] forever refresh our recollections of these rights and an undiminished devotion to them." –Thomas Jefferson, in a letter, in June 1826

Patriotism

Patriotism may seem parochial to a new generation. Some athletes gain notoriety for refusing to stand for our nation's flag. Some schoolchildren are encouraged by their parents to refuse to say the Pledge of Allegiance to our nation's "stars and stripes." Some churches, not wanting to appear political, now remove the flag completely from public view.

Our present politically-correct society seems to have problems celebrating great milestones of our country's past. The Fourth of July is a national holiday celebrating our colonial leaders uniting together to declare independence from a despotic

king—an ocean away.

This year, President Trump sought to inspire and unite Americans with an elaborate July Fourth event, which he called a “Salute to America.” With the Lincoln Memorial as a backdrop, the president used his speech and aerial flyovers to praise the men and women of our armed forces, as he highlighted American exceptionalism of patriots and heroes, past and present.

One could hardly believe the heavy criticism he received from his 2020 Democrat-opponents and their supportive media’s talking heads. Together, they complained and mocked him on everything from the cost of the event to their perceived exploitation of the holiday for a political purpose.

Even after the non-political event was over, they would not retract their over-the-top remarks. Others called for an investigation into what, they insist, was a “potentially unlawful decision to divert” money allocated to the national parks to the president’s “spectacle.”

A nation’s common history, culture and values need to be honored and acknowledged by school children, brave members of our military and the cultured elite alike. But unless mutual respect and tolerance again prevail among us, everyone will soon “bite and devour one another” (Gal. 5:15a).

If we fail to remember and reflect on our uniquely American freedoms or selfishly demand them for ourselves and fail to courageously secure them for others, we will progressively lose our freedoms.

Periodically, we need to be reminded of and publicly reaffirm our patriotic commitments to a country that still formally acknowledges in our national motto and money that our freedoms are from the one true God, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Biblical Patriotism

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people” (Prov. 14:34).

In this time of extreme political correctness, let us pursue biblical patriotism (Jer. 29:7), religious freedoms and civic responsibilities while affirming our loyalty to and patriotic pride in being citizens of this great country.

“Our fathers’ God, to Thee, Author of liberty, to Thee we sing/
Long may our land be bright with freedom’s holy light/
Protect us by Thy might/ Great God our King!” –“My Country,
‘Tis of Thee,” Samuel F. Smith, 1832

May our Creator and sustainer continue to protect and bless these United States of America! {eo}

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