

Why Should We All Truly Love America?

America, I love you!

Economically resilient, stubbornly optimistic, miraculously birthed, divinely blessed, statistically exceptional America.

Historically flawed? Sure. What country isn't? But I love America! And so should you.

Merta (not her real name), now in her 90s, recounted her story to me—a child's story of terror. Her father owned an old tube radio, illegal under Nazi occupation. As the war raged on and the Nazi soldiers advanced, they would huddle around the radio, the volume barely audible. Merta's family found hope listening to a gravelly British voice—Winston Churchill speaking of freedom.

"I remember being outside with my father one day," Merta said. "In the distance, we saw soldiers. 'Hide!' Papa yelled. But when he came for us, I will never forget the tears in his eyes as he cried, 'We're saved! The Americans are here!'"

Merta's story is a story retold thousands of times across the globe. I love the American values her story represents. When I say that, people counter with various historical references to America's failures: slavery, racism, wars.

The "It" boils down to a dismissive, "America made this or that mistake, and it's unforgivable."

As a Christian, I believe the highest form of my faith is forgiveness. Jesus demonstrated this on the cross when He said, "Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do."

I can forgive America's missteps and failures because I love America—not sweep them under the rug, but forgive and do my

part to keep us from failing again. I love America for many reasons. Here are a few:

1. America has the capacity to learn, correct course, and we continue to change. The country where Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated only a generation ago has since elected a Black man president and a Black woman VP.

2. America is generous. Whenever I come upon a modern freshwater well while traveling in an impoverished nation, it is a virtual certainty that it was provided by an America-based Christian entity like Samaritan's Purse, World Vision, Compassion International, World Help, *et al.* Private American initiatives and Christian NGOs are in developing nations by the thousands.

Side note: You may search countries and continents for a plaque that reads, "This well dug by the Democrat Socialists," or, "This Pediatric Medical Clinic provided by American Atheists," but you'll never find such a thing.

3. America is blessed. I believe God was actively involved in America's formation and continues to bless this country. America was founded on principles quoted by Jesus, the apostles, Abraham and others: Love your neighbor as yourself. Obey the law. Care for the poor. Defend human life. Our Constitution says these are "The Laws of Nature and Nature's God."

4. America is exceptional. This simply means that statistically, we are the exception, not the rule. America is 4% of the world's population, yet every year we produce more technology, medical cures, scientific discoveries, symphonies, movies, music and literature than the other 96% of the world combined! That's exceptional.

Jack Hibbs, the pastor of Calvary Chapel Chino Hills and a Trump Evangelical adviser, says, "American Exceptionalism is not a statement of arrogance. It means that God did something

He had not done before among the nations. The freedom of worship and the love of the gospel was the foundation to our nation's beginning."

Ponder these amazing words from SCOTUS Chief Justice Earl Warren, told Time magazine in 1954:

"I believe no one can read the history of our country ... without realizing that the Good Book and the spirit of the Savior have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses. ... I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under the law, and the reservation of powers to the people. ... I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of the Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country."

America is exceptional because we have trusted the Bible and believed in God as our constant guiding sources. The very idea of exceptionalism hinges on trusting in a power higher than ourselves.

In June, Gallup reported that 50% of Americans say the U.S. has poor moral values, a reading that has been on the decline for two decades. During the same 20-year period in which America's moral values have declined, the percentage of those who say they believe in God has also fallen from 92% as recently as 2011 to 81% in Gallup's latest survey, reaching the lowest since they began asking the question in the 1950s. Is it causal or merely parallel? Either way, it's critical that we love America back to where she should be.

I don't love her poor decisions or vacillating values, but I love America.

It's critical that we do, especially now, when she needs

patriotism and God's truth most urgently—because of our declining values and bad choices. My neighbors of all description: Let's love God. Love our families. Let's value human life.

And let's gratefully love this, our country, America. {eo}

Rev. Alex McFarland is heard daily on the American Family Radio network. He directs Biblical Worldview for Charis Bible College, located in Colorado. Alex speaks frequently throughout the U.S. Visit his website at www.alexmcfarland.com.