

Trump or Harris: Who Will Do the Best Job of Defending America's Faith and Freedom?

America was founded by devout Christians who were willing to leave family, friends and their homeland in search of a land where they could freely live out their faith without the interference of a tyrannical government. Ronald Reagan was right when he said, "It's always been my belief that by a Divine plan this nation was placed between the two oceans to be sought out and found by those with a special brand of courage and love of freedom."

Indeed, America's founding generation believed that the nation had come forth in the plan and purposes of God to be a land of faith and freedom. Samuel Adams (1722-1803) expressed this in a 1794 Proclamation for a Day of Fasting and Prayer while serving as governor of Massachusetts. He opened the proclamation by saying, "The Supreme Ruler of the Universe, having been pleased, in the course of His Providence, to establish the independence of the United States of America."

Even those who have suffered at the hands of those who did not understand the original American vision, have been convinced that there was something unique and special about America's birth. This was true of the former slave Frederick Douglass, who in an 1852 speech called the U.S. Constitution "a glorious liberty document," and then declared,

"Fellow Citizens, I am not wanting in respect for the fathers of this republic. The signers of the Declaration of Independence were brave men. They were great men too—great enough to give fame to a great age. It does not often happen to a nation to raise, at one time, such a number of truly great men."



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In his fight for civil rights, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. understood that the nation, especially the Jim Crow South, had departed from the original American vision of faith and freedom. Writing from the Birmingham City Jail, where he had been incarcerated, he declared his confidence that his efforts would succeed because of the "will of God" and America's "sacred heritage."

The "sacred heritage" of which he spoke was the vision of America's founding generation that this would be a land characterized by faith and freedom.

The Original American Vision of Faith and Freedom

Indeed, the original American vision was for a land of individual liberty where people would live out their faith without government interference and be free to spread their faith in Jesus to the ends of the earth.

This was the vision expressed by the Jamestown settlers who disembarked at Cape Henry, Virginia, on July 29, 1607. Their first act was to gather around a 7-foot oak cross they had brought from England and dedicate the land of their new home to God. In his dedicatory prayer, their chaplain, Rev. Robert Hunt, declared, "From these very shores the gospel shall go forth, not only to this New World, but to all the world."

Thirteen years later, the Pilgrims landed at Cape Cod in New England. Before disembarking from the Mayflower in their new home, they formulated the Mayflower Compact, in which they stated their two reasons for coming to America: for the glory of God and for the advancement of the Christian faith.

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Twenty-three years later, with thousands of new immigrants arriving and new towns springing up, the United Colonies of New England was formed. In their founding document they clearly stated why they had come to America. Dated May 19, 1643, the opening statement reads, "Whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and enjoy the Liberties of the Gospel in purity and peace."

Pennsylvania was founded in 1682 by the Quaker William Penn, and it became a haven for people being persecuted for their faith. In his "Fundamental Constitution of Pennsylvania" (1682), Penn guaranteed freedom of worship for all, but in it, he laid out the following conditions of that freedom:

"So long as every such person does not use this Christian liberty to licentiousness, that is to say, to speak loosely and profanely of God, Christ, or religion, or to commit any evil in their lifestyle."

America's Founders Impacted by the Vision of Faith and Freedom

America's founders were not shy in expressing this vision, for they believed real freedom could only be realized through faith in Jesus Christ.

In 1756, Benjamin Franklin wrote a letter to George Whitefield, the most famous preacher of the Great Awakening, and proposed that they partner in founding a new Christian colony in the area of present-day Ohio. In his proposal, Franklin presented a missionary motive for such a colony, saying, "Might it not greatly facilitate the introduction of pure religion among the heathen, if we could, by such a

colony, show them a better sample of Christians than they commonly see?"

In a prayer journal George Washington kept in his 20s are found many devout prayers expressing praise and honor to God. One entry reads, "Bless, O Lord, the whole race of mankind, and let the world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and Thy Son, Jesus Christ."

During the Revolutionary War, Washington wrote a letter to General Nelson in which he alluded to the numerous amazing circumstances, which he recognized as the hand of God, giving the colonial armies victories over the superior British forces. He then said,

"The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations—but it will be time enough for me to turn preacher, when my present appointment ceases."

This link between faith and freedom was expressed by America's second president, John Adams, just two weeks before the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. In a letter to his cousin, Zabdiel Adams, a minister of the gospel, Adams wrote, "Statesmen, my dear sir, may plan and speculate for Liberty, but it is Religion [Christianity] and Morality alone, which can establish the Principles, upon which Freedom can securely stand."

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John Hancock (1737-1793), president of the Second Continental Congress (1775-1781) and signer of the Declaration of Independence, wanted the entire earth to hear and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. He expressed this in a Prayer Proclamation he issued while governor of Massachusetts

(1780-1785; 1787-1793). In the 1793 Proclamation, he declared,

I do hereby appoint Thursday the eleventh day of April next, to be observed throughout this Commonwealth, as a day of solemn fasting, humiliation, and prayer . . . that with true contrition of heart we may confess our sins, resolve to forsake them, and implore the Divine forgiveness through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST our Savior ... and finally, to overrule all the commotion in the world, to the spreading of the true religion of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in its purity and power, among all the people of the earth.

Adams, Founding Father and signer of the Declaration of Independence, also served as governor of Massachusetts. During his tenure as governor, he proclaimed a “Public Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer” for April 2, 1795. In this proclamation, he said,

Calling upon the Ministers of the Gospel, of every Denomination, with their respective Congregations, to assemble on that Day, and devoutly implore the Divine forgiveness of our Sins, To pray that the Light of the Gospel, and the rights of Conscience, may be continued to the people of United America; and that his Holy Word may be improved by them, so that the name of God may be exalted, and their own Liberty and Happiness secured. And finally, that He would overrule all the commotions in the earth to the speedy establishment of the Redeemer’s kingdom, which consists in Righteousness and Peace.

No Real Freedom Without Faith

It is obvious from the mere sampling of above quotes that America’s founders believed freedom and Christian faith to be inextricably linked. They believed so strongly in faith in God as the basis of human freedom that they unashamedly prayed and

publicly expressed their desire to see it spread throughout the earth.

This is why the first two rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights are for religious liberty and freedom of speech. Faith and freedom were at the top of their list of freedoms that must be protected. This is why George Washington, in his Farewell Address, warned the fledgling nation that two things must be guarded if they were to be a happy people—Christianity and morality, which he called “indispensable supports” for political prosperity.

Who Will Carry Forward the Original American Vision of Faith and Freedom?

We are now in the midst of one of the most important elections in America’s history, which will have a profound bearing on whether the original American vision will continue for another generation. We must, therefore, ask ourselves, “Who will do the best job of carrying forward the original American vision for a land of faith and freedom?”

No politician or political party is perfect, but after reading the platforms of the two parties and listening to their declarations and speeches over the past several years, it is clear to me that Trump and Vance are the only choice for those who truly care about the continuation of the original American vision and the passing on of faith and freedom to the next generation.

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