

Historian Shares the Real Truth of America's Past

My Faith Votes recently sat down with Tim Barton, the president of WallBuilders, an organization committed to sharing the forgotten history of America and its heroes. Barton is also an ordained minister and friend of *My Faith Votes*.

This conversation has been edited for clarity and length. You can watch the full discussion at *My Faith Votes* [here](#).

Q: Why did you write your newest book *The American Story: The Beginnings*, and what do you mean by “beginnings”?

A: At WallBuilders, we do a lot with American history. We try to present America's forgotten history and heroes. We emphasize the religious, moral and constitutional heritage of the nation. And so what we do is go back to the original sources and try to tell those stories.

A couple of years ago, I told my dad we ought to put together a history book and we started working on it. Little did we know, in God's providence, our book was going to be released around the same time that The 1619 Project was coming out. I told my dad we needed to answer some of these questions because The 1619 Project was making some pretty horrendous accusations against America. But if you don't know history, you don't realize how poor of a job The 1619 Project is doing in telling the story of America.

Our starting place with our book is that everybody is a sinner who needs a Savior. The reason that matters is that apart from Jesus several thousand years ago, you're not going to find a perfect person in history. We're never surprised by someone having a sin nature or weaker fleshly moments as we study history. But we can always be impressed when we see God use

one of these imperfect people and do great things through them.

Q: We live in a cultural moment that seems to be driven by headlines and feelings. How do we understand the historical background of the issues we're talking about today?

A: That's one of the challenges we're navigating right now in our culture and world because there used to be a sense of trust in people and the systems, like news anchors and college professors.

Unfortunately, we've grown up with a level of trust in institutions and now we realize that trust may have been misplaced. Questioning what is true is healthy. We should question what is true because the truth isn't scared of honest questions.

So first and foremost, if you're looking for the truth historically, you want to look for as many original sources and citations as possible. You should go back and see what these people actually wrote, what they actually said, what they actually did. Truth is discoverable and knowable when it comes to American history. We have to do our due diligence.

Q: There's much debate today about whether America was founded as a Christian nation. Is that true?

A: Historically, what is clear is that America unquestionably was influenced by the impact of the Bible. We had a republican form of government, religious liberty, the Bill of Rights, private property – a litany of things – because of the influence of the Bible. This is very well documented.

Now, whether we are a Christian nation today would depend on how we define a "Christian nation." I would have a hard time saying America is a "Christian nation." However, the foundation of Christianity upon which our nation was built still heavily influences us today.

America is the most benevolent nation in the history of the world. Even if you are an atheist in America, you have learned the principle that you should treat other people the way you want to be treated. That is a biblical idea and it was the influence of Christianity that led many Americans to be generous people.

Q: What is one particular prayer from a former president that has stood out to you and is a call to action for us today?

A: Abraham Lincoln wrote a prayer and fasting proclamation during the Civil War. One of the things he acknowledges in that proclamation is that in our blessing, we've forgotten God.

We live in such abundance that we're not always as grateful as we should be for our prosperity and we have often forgotten God. As Christians and Americans, we need to do a better job of recognizing God's blessings in our lives. No matter if our cup is running over or if we're praying for God to put something in our cup, we can still recognize the goodness of God; that God is a good God and God has done good things for us on our behalf. We need to be thankful people.

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