**Declaration of Dependence on God**

R. Giglio 7/4/21

Review: The People asked God for a King so they could be like “other nations”

Samuel did all he could to convince them to NOT have a king…

**1st Sam 8:6-7**But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. **7**And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

(God told Samuel to explain how terrible their lives would become if they had a king, he did his best to convince them…)

**1st Sam. 8:19,20“**the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us.Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”

(They were completely motivated by envy, jealousy, covetousness…and were ignoring God!)

**1st Sam. 8:21,22“**When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the Lord. **22**The Lord answered, “Listen to them and give them a king.”

God gave them what they asked for, over time they would see the consequences of what they decided.

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So begins a new era in Israel’s history, the *time of the Kings*… (about 400 years)

Last week we were introduced to Saul, a man selected by God and summonsed by Samuel.

**1st Sam. 9:2** “Saul, as handsome a young man as could be found anywhere in Israel, and he was a head taller than anyone else.”

**1st Sam. 9:17** “**17**When Samuel caught sight of Saul, the Lord said to him, “This is the man I spoke to you about; he will govern my people.”

This was not the “birth” of the nation of Israel, but it was the *beginning of their government*, their self-government.

In a way, this was their ***Declaration of Independence from God.***

Their actions and decisions said to God, “we no longer want you to govern and protect us, we will do it ourselves, with a king.”

God in His wisdom, and compassion, allowed them to do it.

So, from Saul, to David to Solomon to the over 40 kings that ruled over Israel and Judah, they had a succession of kings.

Some of them were wise and righteousness, but most of them did not lead their people in the ways of God and the nation suffered terribly as a result.

The only time that they prospered, is when they confessed their total *dependence upon God* and walked in His ways.

**4th of July:**

Two Hundred and Forty-four years ago the Continental Congress signed the ***Declaration of Independence*** on July 4th, 1776.

In this document, the new Americans declared that the thirteen colonies were no longer bound by the laws of the English government and ceased to be under the rule of the crown.

The declared themselves, completely independent from Great Britain.

The Declaration of Independence was written primarily by Thomas Jefferson. It outlines the reason for “*dissolving political bands”* connecting them to Great Brittan, and lists the many “ repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny”

The document ends with this statement *“with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”*

In other words, while we declare independence from England, we firmly declare *dependence* upon God’s provision and protection over our lives.

As we have seen through American history, when our leaders submit their will and ways to God and look to the authority of His Word for guidance and wisdom, we reap the benefit of His blessing as a nation.

On the other hand, when they ignore or even blatantly dishonor God and disregard His Word, we reap the consequences.

This is why we act, speak, vote and most of all pray, for God to bless America, but also for America to bless God.

I for one am grateful for our country and feel honored to raise my family in a nation with a tremendous heritage of freedom, justice, and liberty. I pray for her welfare and hope to see God pour out His blessing upon the United States with peace and prosperity.

However, I know that my first and foremost citizenship, is not with the United States of America it is in the *Kingdom of God.*

My first pledge of allegiance is to God and *His will* for my life.

My primary *declaration* is a *declaration of total dependence* upon Him.

Without His will and purposes as our priority, we are lost as a nation, a church and as individuals.

*[ conversation with an unbelieving friend who is considering running for office as a liberal, to defeat the current conservative congressman…*

*He asked for my vote, and in a friendly way I said, not until I see that your policies line up with my priorities and worldviews.*

*He wanted to know what they were, and I told him that we can debate them at a later time.*

*The more I thought about it however, I was less interested in propagating conservatism, than I was about tell him the real truth about Jesus the Messiah, and how He held no political power (nor did his followers), but He changed their lives, and they changed the world.*

*Arguing over policies and issues, as important as they are, seems so shallow compared to that.]*

Am I passionate about issues that affect my family?, my freedoms?, the economy?, the church? etc.? Yes, I am!

But I am more passionate about seeing people *“brought out of darkness and into His wonderful light.” Yes!*

*Because…*

***1st Peter 2:9a*** “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession,

* We are a “chosen people” – That means we have a specially selected citizenship.
* We are a “Royal Priesthood” – That means that we are both Kings/Queens and priests.
* We are a “Holy Nation” – An even MORE perfect union that is set apart for God.
* We are God’s “special possession” – We are not owned by an earthly king or the property of a worldly government. We are God’s special people; He alone is our Lord.

Our primary calling is not necessarily to *declare Independence* from a worldly tyrant.

Or even *declare allegiance* to a republic.

It is to ***“declare the praises*** *of him who called us”*

***1st Peter 2:9*** (full verse) “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Washington’s Journal:

George Washington’s journal contains an entry called “Sunday Morning,” and reads as follows:

“Almighty God, and most merciful Father, who didst command the children of Israel to offer a daily sacrifice to Thee, that thereby they might glorify and praise Thee for Thy protection both night and day … I beseech Thee, my sins, remove them from Thy presence, as far as the east is from the west, and accept of me for the merits of Thy Son Jesus Christ….”

“Let me live according to those holy rules which Thou hast this day prescribed in Thy holy word … Direct me to the true object, Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life. Bless, O Lord, all the people of this land.”

As we celebrate Independence Day on behalf of our nation, let’s keep George Washington’s prayer in mind on behalf of ourselves;

*“Let me live according to Thy holy word … Direct me to the true object, Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life.”*

*Let’s renew our DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE upon God.*

*Upon His Word, for wisdom*

*And upon His Spirit, for power and guidance.*

*Let’s also direct our attention to the true object, Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life.”*

Keeping our eyes on Jesus, not the left, not the right or anything that competes for our attention, …the attention and devotion that belongs to Him alone.

**Hebrews 12:1-2** “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2**fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

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