

# THE HOPE FOR AMERICA

## 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18

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<sup>18</sup>For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

Introduction:

Some events in human history impact us so greatly, that we will forever remember the circumstance surrounding where we were when we heard the news.

I will never forget watching the news when they began to broadcast that there was a plane that had flown into the World Trade Center and then seeing smoke billowing up from the North Tower and moments later seeing the second plane crash into the South Tower.

Those images are forever embedded in our minds.

Today ten years later we still are saddened by the tragic results of ruthless deeds that transpired on that dreaded day.

Today we will Remember, Reflect, and Recognize as we consider – “The Hope for America.”

# **1. REMEMBER THE HERITAGE OF AMERICA**

This is a nation that has a godly heritage. A nation that was founded on God's Word and its precepts and principles.

Many today are attempting to revise our history to undermine the character and integrity of our founding fathers, saying they weren't who we know they were.

They say they weren't motivated by principle but by property, came seeking gold instead of God. Though that may have been the motive of some it wasn't the motive of the majority.

The men who signed the Declaration of Independence had far more to lose than to gain!

Most were very wealthy already.

- 24 were lawyers and such
- 9 were landowners or rich farmers
- 11 were merchants
- The others were physicians, ministers, politicians, etc.

They were educated men of standing in their communities...they knew security and prosperity, but felt there was something more important than security: freedom!

They knew that the penalty for treason was death by hanging, yet they signed our founding documents!

It has been said that these men who signed the Declaration of Independence made these statements when they signed:

- John Hancock — “Now his Majesty can read my name without his spectacles!”
- Stephen Hopkins — [old when he signed] His hand shook as he signed...looked up and said, “Gentlemen, my hand trembles, but my heart does not!”

Others recognized our dependence on God as well.

- Our first president, George Washington

Took the oath of office and put his hand on what? (The Bible)

- Congress

Determine to open sessions of Congress with prayer.

Who would lead in those prayers? (Chaplains)

How would they be paid? (Tax dollars)

- In 1776, 11 of the 13 colonies required that one had to be a Christian to be eligible to run for political office.
- In 1777, the Continental Congress voted to spend \$300,000 to purchase Bibles for distribution in the nation.
- The GETTYSBURG ADDRESS states "...this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom..."
- 94% OF THE WRITINGS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE U.S. CONTAINED QUOTATIONS FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.
- THE STATE CONSTITUTIONS OF ALL 50 STATES MENTION GOD
- The "Liberty Bell" has part of Leviticus 25:10 inscribed on it: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

- An image of Moses carrying the tablets of God's Law faces the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- The Supreme Court itself begins each of its sessions with the phrase 'God save the United States and this honorable court,'
- The first Vice President and Second President, John Adams wrote in 1798:

"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

- President Thomas Jefferson:

"I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever." - 1781

- Our sixth President, John Quincy Adams said:

"No book in the world deserves to be so unceasingly studied, and so profoundly meditated upon as the Bible."

- Theodore Roosevelt, America's 26th President wrote:

"In this actual world, a churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at, or ignored their religious needs, is a community on the rapid down-grade." - 1917

- Woodrow Wilson, our 28th President and Governor of New Jersey, said this:

"America was born a Christian nation. America was born to exemplify that devotion to the elements of righteousness which are derived from the revelations of the Holy Scripture." – 1911

- Calvin Coolidge, our 30th President, said this about our founding fathers:

"They were intent upon establishing a Christian commonwealth in accordance with the principle of self-government. They were an inspired body of men. It has been said that God sifted the nations that He might send choice grain into the wilderness... Who can fail to see it in the hand of destiny? Who can doubt that it has been guided by a Divine Providence." - 1923

- Franklin Roosevelt prayed this prayer on a national radio hookup on D-Day, June 6, 1944, as our troops stormed the beaches of Normandy, France:

"Almighty God... with Thy blessing we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogance. Lead us to the saving of our country. Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen."

- Harry Truman, our 33rd President, not known to be a committed believer, understood the spiritual heritage of this nation said:

"If men and nations would but live by the precepts of the ancient prophets and the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, problems which now seem so difficult would soon disappear"

- Gerald Ford, our 38th President, quoted a 1955 speech by Dwight D. Eisenhower on December 5, 1974:

"Without God there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first - the most basic - expression of Americanism. Thus the founding fathers of America saw it, and thus with

God's help, it will continue to be."

- President Ronald Reagan:

"If we ever forget that we are 'One nation, under God', then we will be one nation gone under."

- Benjamin Franklin – When challenged about having a political session opened with prayer said:

"I've lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing Proofs I see of this Truth —That God governs in the Affairs of Men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that except the Lord build the House they labor in vain who build it."

Regardless of what many think and some have said this nation was founded as a Christian nation, and when the rights and liberties that we enjoy cease to be wrapped in Biblical principles they will become a Travesty.



Illustration:

We have in this nation the right to bear arms, but when that right is not wrapped in Biblical principle – “Thou shalt not kill”; you have a travesty like that transpired not far from here just a few years ago on the campus of Virginia Tech.

Many of the liberties and freedoms that we enjoy today have been unwrapped from Biblical principle which brings me to my second point as we:

## **2. REFLECT ON THE HURT OF AMERICA**

What started out as a normal day suddenly changed. At 8:46 A.M. American Airlines flight 11 slammed in the North tower of the World Trade center which would be the beginning of a chain of attacks on this country which had for centuries enjoy peace within our borders.

In a matter of 90 minutes 2, 741 individuals who were husbands, wives, parents or children lost their lives.

This normal day became a:

- A day of sorrow and sadness
- A day of regret and remorse

- A day that we moved from passiveness to prayer
- A day that we were once again a united and not a divided nation

America went into a period of mourning. Flags were lowered to half-staff.

Members of Congress gathered on the capitol steps and sang, "God Bless America." It was a dark, dark day.

Churches around the nation were filled with people praying seeking reassurance, answers, comfort from God and hope in what seemed to be a hopeless time.

That leads me to this, we must:

### **3. RECOGNIZE THE HOPE FOR AMERICA**

On September 13, Frank Silecchia made his way through the smoldering ruins.

He stopped and rubbed his eyes in disbelief. In front of him stood a two-ton, twenty foot cross made of steel which you saw just moments ago in the video presentation

Silecchia testified to reporters, ""When I first saw the cross, it took my heart, and made me cry for about twenty minutes. It helped me heal the burden of my

despair and gave me closure on the whole catastrophe."

That cross became a powerful symbol of hope and comfort for rescue workers who were called upon to tenderly take the human remains out of their grim tomb for proper burial.

Many workers hauling away the wreckage stopped at the cross, prayed, and wrote their names on the cross.

On October 3, 2001, the cross was removed from the shattered shell of Building Six and placed on a forty foot pedestal to be easily seen by all.

Today, the cross stands in its permanent home at the National September 11th Memorial and Museum.

Though the cross that was found in the rubble of the Twin Towers brought comfort and hope for the rescue workers there is another cross that brings hope to each of us today.

### **1 Corinthians 1:18**

<sup>18</sup>For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

#### **A. The Preaching of the Cross**

- A Strange Message – That there should be life out of death.

- A Shocking Message

The death Christ died on the cross was one of absolute torture. You and I cannot even begin to imagine all the pain that Jesus was forced to endure for our sakes.

He was:

- Scourged – Matthew 27:26
- Beaten – Luke 22:63-64
- Spit Upon – Matthew 27:30
- His beard was plucked from His face – Isaiah 50:6
- Mocked – Matthew 27:26-29
- Stripped – Matthew 27:35
- Nailed to a cross – Matthew 27:38, John 20:25

- A Simple Message

The Bible is clear when it tells us that the way to be saved is for the sinner to accept by faith what the Bible teaches about Jesus and His atoning death on the cross.

## **Romans 10:9-10**

<sup>9</sup>That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. <sup>10</sup>For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

This is what the preaching of the cross is all about! It is not about you quitting your sins! It is about you coming to Jesus by faith! It's not about turning over a new leaf, it's about placing your faith in Jesus and Him alone for salvation!

### **B. The Purpose of the Cross**

- **Make a Statement – God Loves You and Me**

Christ's death on the cross, God was able to declare boldly, for all to see, His boundless, matchless love for the lost of this world.

The cross is God's statement of love to the world.

## **John 15:13**

<sup>13</sup>Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

- **Provide Salvation**

The Bible, tells us that there is no other way to cleanse sin, but through the sacrifice of an innocent one in the place of the guilty one.

Close:

That cross found at Ground Zero shines as a beacon of God's love because it was on the cross where Christ embraced our pain and suffering and paid the debt for our sin and provided salvation to whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord.

The light from the cross brings comfort in tribulation, hope in despair, and life in the midst of death.