

# FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

## MANIFEST DESTINY

Text: Hebrews 12:26-28

Introduction:

1. According to the Bible, the function of government is to maintain societal order that promotes peace and liberty (Romans 13:1-7).
  2. Through the concepts of "Nature's God," "Natural Law," and "People's Law," the founders of this country sought to pattern government after God's wisdom.
  3. Foundational to this type of government was the freedom of religion.
  4. The enumeration and protection of the rights of man came from a fundamental understanding of his nature and his God-given rights.
  5. Because man possesses free will, he is responsible for his own life, liberty, and happiness.
  6. A system of government patterned after the principles of Scripture is bound to prosper and thrive.
  7. As the American Government proved successful, its influence began to spread throughout the world...
- I. The Providence of God
    - A. Most of the Founding Fathers believed in the providence of God – and that He played a role in the establishment of the American experiment.
    - B. In fact, the Declaration of Independence concluded with these words:

*"We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States.... And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."*

- C. The Bible teaches that God works through providence.
  1. It is more than natural law
  2. It is less than miraculous power
  3. The word "providence" has to do with fore-thought and provision (Acts 24:2; Romans 13:14).
  4. Easton defines it as, "God's preserving and governing all things by means of second causes."
- D. Three Bible examples of God's providence:
  1. Joseph (Genesis 50:20)
  2. Esther (Esther 4:14)
  3. Jesus (Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:10)
- E. Many of the Founders saw God at work in their own lives and in the establishing of this nation.

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1. George Washington saw the providence of God in his remaining unharmed through many battles.
2. Following the battle for Fort Duquesne (1755), Washington wrote to his brother: "But by the miraculous care of Providence I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat and two horses shot under me yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me."
3. After witnessing this, a great Indian chief declared: "The Great Spirit protects that man and guides his destinies – he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire. I am come to pay homage to the man who is the particular favorite of Heaven and who can never die in battle."
4. In fact, Washington was never injured in any battle.
5. During the Revolutionary War (1777), Washington wrote: "I flatter myself that a superintending Providence is ordering everything for the best, and that, in due time, all will end well."
6. In 1778 he wrote to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson: "The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, 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; and therefore, I shall add no more on the Doctrine of Providence...."
7. On November 27, 1779, Washington issued general orders to the army stating: "Whereas it becomes us humbly to approach the throne of Almighty God, with gratitude and praise for the wonders which his goodness has wrought in conducting our fore-fathers to this western world...and above all, that he hath diffused the glorious light of the gospel, whereby, through the merits of our gracious Redeemer, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory."
8. In 1783 he wrote: "Glorious indeed has been our Contest: glorious, if we consider the Prize for which we have contended, and glorious in its Issue; but in the midst of our Joys, I hope we shall not forget that, to divine Providence is to be ascribed the Glory and the Praise."
9. On September 28, 1789, he wrote to Samuel Langdon declaring: "The Man must be bad indeed who can look upon the events of the American Revolution without feeling the warmest gratitude towards the great Author of the Universe whose divine interposition was so frequently manifested in our behalf."
10. He claimed that God's " Providential Agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent Nation."
11. As President, Washington issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation on October 3, 1789, stating: "And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other

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transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly..."

- F. Thus, many believed that God's hand was involved in the founding of the United States of America.

## II. Manifest Destiny

- A. Because of this belief, it was understood that America had a destiny to spread the light of freedom throughout the world.
- B. John Adams stated this belief when he wrote: "I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder, as the opening of a grand scene and design in Providence for the illumination of the ignorant, and the emancipation of the slavish part of mankind all over the earth."
- C. Thomas Jefferson wrote of freedom under the Constitution as "the world's best hope" and "a standing monument and example for the aim and imitation of the people of other countries."
- D. They viewed this gift of freedom as a great responsibility to maintain and to employ as a benefit and blessing toward others.
1. They did not seek to conquer others and rule over them.
  2. They did not seek to enforce liberty onto those who did not desire it or who would not labor to acquire it.
  3. They sought to lead by example and encourage by favor.
- E. In *Federalist Papers, #1*, Alexander Hamilton claimed that if the American people failed in this responsibility, it would be to "the general misfortune of mankind."
- F. John Adams said that to abandon Constitutional freedom would be "treason against the hopes of the world."
- G. In *Federalist Papers, #14*, James Madison emphasized this principle, stating: "Happily for America, happily we trust for the whole human race, they ... accomplished a revolution which has no parallel in the annals of human society. They reared the fabrics of governments which have no model on the face of the globe. They formed the design of a great Confederacy, which it is incumbent on their successors to improve and perpetuate."

## III. The Eternal Kingdom

- A. The kingdom of Jesus has an enduring purpose and an eternal destiny.
- B. The church is to shine the light of the Gospel into all the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:6, 23).
- C. This is not accomplished by coercion, but by the offering of liberty in Christ to the free will of man.
- D. Yet, the church's eternal manifest destiny is Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 5:23; Hebrews 12:26-28; Revelation 5:9-10).

### Conclusion:

1. The Christian must shine the light of true liberty and salvation to all (Matthew 5:16).
2. Live in freedom so that others will be led to freedom!