

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, August 26, 2017

Goodness can lead to greatness. The question we must obviously ask is “What comprises goodness?” Virtue, righteousness and morality are some of the thoughts that come to my mind, when I think about goodness. Then we also must ask “What constitutes greatness?” Words like importance, significance, prominence and worth come to mind. Some of us strive for greatness or at least that was our goal when we were younger. Greatness is certainly not easily achieved and the process in reaching greatness may take much of one’s life and energy.

A people’s corporate goodness can lead to greatness as well. There’s no better example of this than the forming of the United States of America. From the departure of the Pilgrims from Plymouth, England in 1620 to Twentieth Century America, our history contains many amazing accomplishments within the borders of this great nation. For several centuries the United States of America was considered by the rest of the world to be truly significant and prominent. The USA is still considered the land of opportunity and freedom from oppression for many even today. Yet many these days from foreign lands do not look upon this country favorably.

Our founding fathers built the legacy upon which this great nation was formed and it must be renewed. There are five distinctive principles they laid down: 1) our individual rights are derived from a Creator; 2) there must be enduring principles compatible with the laws of nature and God’s nature; 3) our human imperfection and the human heart’s natural tendency to abuse power must be recognized; 4) a Constitution must be drafted to skillfully divide, balance and separate powers of government and implement a system to control abuses through checks and balances; and 5) all powers must be left with the people except those delegated to government by the people.

These courageous men were visionaries with a strong belief in the God of the Universe. They called upon Him and trusted in His principles as we can see today by the placement of The Ten Commandments and many other biblical references in stone on so many of our landmarks throughout this great land. It’s quite easy to see that America was founded on Judeo-Christians principles. Most of our forefathers were either Christians or Deists who realized the wonderful heritage and sacrifices made by those who came before them. They continued to be passionate in their desire to make this *the land of the free*, where all can experience *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*.

No doubt, they were aware of the words of Joshua found in Joshua 24. In verses 14 and 15 Joshua tells the Israelites, *“Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshipped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”* The people of Israel responded favorably that day and followed the God of the Universe for a time until Joshua’s death.

I truly believe that we too must get back to a corporate belief in our Heavenly Father, if we want to gain His favor once again. America’s greatness is directly related to His goodness and our obedience to His plan for this nation. This Great American Experiment is founded on His principles and His anointing of the goodness of our forefathers. Together we can make America great again! So, where do we start? I believe we need to start in our individual lives and our relationship to our Father in Heaven.

Let me challenge you to deepen your relationship with our Heavenly Father and place your trust in Him alone. Then, corporately we can watch America become great again and give God the glory He deserves!

Passages to Ponder: 2 Chronicles 7:13-16; Psalm 106:1-5; Proverbs 3:5-6; Galatians 5:16-18;

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2 Chronicles 7:13-16 New International Version (NIV)

¹³“When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, ¹⁴if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. ¹⁶I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.

Psalm 106:1-5 New International Version (NIV)

¹Praise the LORD.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

²Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the LORD
or fully declare his praise?

³Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.

⁴Remember me, LORD, when you show favor to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,

⁵that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may share in the joy of your nation
and join your inheritance in giving praise.

Proverbs 3:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;

⁶in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.

Galatians 5:16-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.