

One Nation Under God – Psalm 33:10-22

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In light of the 250th anniversary of our nation this weekend, I'd love for you to turn with me to [Psalm 33:10-22](#). It's the semi-quincentennial of our nation's founding, and nobody can say it. Let alone knows what it means. So I'll stick with America 250.

Intro

If you were like me, you grew up reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Every morning at school.

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands [referring to our form of government], one Nation under God, indivisible [*emphasizing* our oneness], with liberty and justice for all."

I could say it in my sleep. And wish *more* people could. And that they meant it.

But little did I know, it wasn't even written until 1892. And even then, it didn't include the words "under God." That didn't happen until 1954. Declaring once and for all that we are indeed "one Nation" under God's guidance, protection, provision, and *authority*. At least that's the *intent* of the phrase. One nation under God.

And that matters because Psalm 33 says . . .

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD

Blessed is the nation that truly *is* under him. The nation that truly *does* follow him. The nation that truly *does* live for him.

[12] *Blessed is the nation whose God is [Yahweh]. The LORD. Blessed, as in fortunate, graced, favored, happy. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!* (ESV) One and the same.

When God's people, *whom he has chosen*, comprise a nation that he leads, a nation that follows him, they're blessed. When God's people comprise a nation that follows him, they're blessed.

And just in case you're jumping to conclusions, I'm not saying that the United States of America is God's chosen people. By any stretch. And there's far too much of that in some circles. The conflation of *this* land with the Promised Land. *This* people with God's people. We're not.

The *church* is God's chosen people. Those who respond to him in faith and repentance. *They're* the ones *he has chosen*.

But the extent to which a nation is *comprised* of such people, and the extent to which they live it out, is the extent to which they will be blessed. Because *blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD*. (12a)

• **Including ours**

We're not God's chosen people, but we sure are blessed. Exceedingly so. And the overwhelming, undeniable reason is that our nation was founded on Christian principles. Biblical principles. Insights from the very heart of God. We didn't apply them all perfectly. But we sure are blessed to have a foundation so we could. A foundation that led to even more blessing.

Think about it. We live in the most prosperous nation in the history of the world. By far. We have more expendable income than most of our *grandparents* thought possible. Not to mention our forefathers.

We have more time on our hands than most second and third world nations put together. While they're gathering food, we're watching Netflix. We have more opportunities, more leisure, more education, and more freedom than our founding fathers could have imagined.

And then there's our form of government. A republic. Where we elect representatives to oversee the country, appoint an independent judiciary, and follow the law. One of the best governments ever created. Not perfect, but better than the other options by far. We get to vote. We're free to speak. Free to gather. Free to change it. What a blessing.

Same for our economic system. Capitalism. Where private property is protected under the law, hard work and ingenuity is rewarded, and prices are determined by the market; buyers and sellers. We're blessed.

Especially in light of the alternatives. Like Democratic Socialism. The rage of the age these days. Where private property is *not* protected, hard work and entrepreneurs *aren't* rewarded, and prices are determined by the government.

All of which means we're blessed, but the enemy is at the gates. The hordes are gathering.

Meanwhile, on the moral front, they've broken through. Abortion continues to be legal, and with the abortion pill it's easier to access than ever before. Marriages continue to break, and fewer are even *getting* married. Kids are considered a burden. Birthrates are falling. Families are failing. Worldviews are colliding. Hatred is mounting.

All of which means we're barely one *nation* these days, let alone under God. And he's certainly not our Lord. For some people, yes. But the vast majority? No.

And God *doesn't* bless that. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD . . .

• **Not the nation whose God isn't**

The nation whose supreme being *isn't* Yahweh. The nation whose God *isn't* our creator and redeemer. It's not blessed. Not fortunate. Not favored. In fact, it's brought to nothing.

[10] *The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing* [the nations who *aren't* under him; the nations who *don't* trust him or look to him]; *he frustrates the plans of the peoples*. The opposite of blessing.

And according to v11, there's no changing it. [11] *The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations*. Choose to sin, choose to suffer. Individually and culturally. God doesn't bless nations that forsake him.

Look at Europe. What used to be strong bastions of orthodox Christianity, are now barely *shadows* of their former selves. Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland. Most of them outright forsaking Christianity or retaining it in name only.

They're not unified, they're not happy, and they're not hopeful. They're post-Christian and falling apart. Because they've long since fallen away. And God help us, we're on the *same* path. Pursuing the same things.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, not . . .

- The nation whose God is money

The nation who *lives* to make it. The nation who loves money more than anything else. The nation whose idol is the dollar. The nation who obsesses on it and can't get enough. God *doesn't* bless that.

1 Timothy 6:10 – *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.* Many pains. Including nations.

And then there's power. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, not . . .

- The nation whose God is power

The nation who loves it and lives for more. The nation who flaunts it and abuses it.

I'm not talking about wielding the sword to punish and restrain wrongdoers, Romans 13. I'm talking about nations in the course of history who *abused* their power to oppress the *weak*. And persecute the righteous. Murder the masses. Like Cambodia in the 70's. Nazi Germany. 20th century Russia. Modern day Iran. North Korea. They're not blessed.

And neither are we to the extent power is *our* God. Look at v16 – *The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. [17] The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue.* Cannot.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, not the nation whose God is power.

And certainly not . . .

- The nation whose God is sports

I've said it before and I'll say it again, I love sports. They're life written small. They have a *place* in developing kids. And a place in entertainment. I've been watching the World Cup like it's my job.

But a nation and people who *live* for sports; eat, sleep, and breath sports; orient their entire life around sports; gamble on sports; offer their kids at the altar of sports; gain the whole world and lose their own soul to sports – is too much. And God doesn't bless it. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.

And last, not . . .

- The nation whose God is sex

If there's a national god in these United States, sex is it. We are obsessed with it. From rampant pornography and self-indulgence to hyper-sexualized advertising and self-mutilating surgery. Not to mention homosexuality and gay marriage. And the normalizing of every other fetish you can think of.

All in the name of doing what *feels* good. Not what *is* good, but feels good. "Whatever you want." "What somebody does in their bedroom is their business." Except it's not. And never has been. Because they *make* it our business. Clamor for our agreement. Push for

our acceptance. Which just goes to show that sin never stops at our skin. Unconfessed, it always spills, always creeps, and always infects. Especially sexual sin.

None of which God blesses. Not the individuals, and not the nation.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, not the nation whose God isn't.

• **And God knows**

Make no mistake. He knows how we are individually, and he knows how we are as a nation. *Nothing* is hidden from his sight. *Everything* is laid bare. (Hebrews 4:13)

[13] The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; [14] from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, [15] he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.

God *knows* us inside and out, and *sees* us inside and out. Our heart as individuals, and our heart as a nation. He knows our sin, he knows our culture, he knows our past, and he knows our present.

He knows the good we've done as a nation – and there's been a ton of it, here *and* around the world – and he knows the bad we've done. God sees and God knows.

And thank God he cares. That's the implication. Thank God he loves us. Thank God he's patient. And merciful. Otherwise we'd be Sodom and Gomorrah, and barely a *blip* on the radar screen of history.

But here's the deal. The clock is ticking, and . . .

The solution isn't more of the same

God is patient, but it won't last forever. And the *solution* to our problems, the solution to our idolatry and cultural sin is not more of the same. More sex, more money, more power, and more laws. That's insanity. Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

- It's not more laws, it's more morals.

John Adams put it perfectly back in 1798, when **he wrote**:

"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. . . . Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government [or governing] of any other." (*The Works of John Adams*, vol. 9, 228–229)

The solution to our problems is not more laws, it's more morals.

- It's not more government, it's more initiative.

Instead of expecting "the government" to take care of us, *we* should. Instead of expecting "the government" to solve our problems, *we* should. Instead of expecting "the government" to take the initiative, *we* should. Anything else is just more of the same.

Third . . .

- It's not more handouts, it's more hard work.

My mom used to say, "Mister, them that don't work don't eat."

And though she was talking to me about dinner, it applies to our nation.

I'm so thankful for the upcoming requirement that those eligible for certain government benefits must work, or go to school, or do community service to receive them. So thankful. Because we have a welfare state that's out of control and more of the same is not the solution.

Fourth . . .

- It's not more education, it's more edification.

As in, education from a *biblical* worldview. One is knowledge for knowledge's sake, the other is knowledge for God's sake. To know him and know him more. To love him and live for him. Far from just *education*, that's edification. What we do in our school.

Out with the unbiblical theories of evolution, and in with the truth of God's Word. Out with psychology and in with soul care. Out with every way that seems right, and in with the only way that is right. It's not more *education* that we need, it's more edification.

Fifth . . .

- It's not more victimhood, it's more responsibility.

Talk about the spirit of the age. *Everybody's* a victim these days. And everything is always somebody else's fault.

Problems at church? It's not you, it's them. Problems at home? It's your parents. Problems at school? It's the teachers. Problems in life, it's the system; it's whiteness; it's bigotry, it's xenophobia. Anybody and everybody except yourself.

And it's not going to stop, the victimhood will never stop, until people take *responsibility* for themselves. Because the solution is not more of the same.

And last . . .

- It's not more clubs, it's more churches.

Biblical churches. The solution to our problems in these United States is not more organizations for people to feel less isolated and more connected, it's more churches where people are less about themselves and more about God. Less about themselves and more about others.

I could go on. But the point is that the solution isn't more of the same . . .

• It's more godliness

Look at v18-19 – [18] *Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, [19] that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.* If we fear the Lord and hope in his love, we're godly. We honor him and look to him. We obey him and follow him.

And because of *that*, we have his attention. V18 again. *The eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love.* Why? To deliver our soul and keep us alive. The blessing of all blessings.

The solution to our problems is not more of the same, it's more godliness.

Proverbs 14:34 is explicit. *Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.* A disparagement. And cause for rebuke.

Same for Ezra 8:22 – *“The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him.”* (22b)

Bottom line? The solution to our problems is not more conservatism, it's more godliness. It's not better politicians, it's better citizens. It's not getting back to basics, it's getting back to God.

The battle for this country is not going to be won and lost in the ballot box, it's going to be won and lost in the heart. And godliness is the key.

We will only be great again if we're godly again. Economic greatness won't cut it; a golden age of investment won't achieve it; world leadership won't do it; only godliness will. Only godliness is greatness.

Don't get me wrong. Those things are all right and good, and I'm as much of a political conservative as anyone. Good laws and good leadership are absolutely *necessary* for God's blessing on our nation. But if we get all of those things right, and godliness wrong, we'll gain the whole world and lose our own soul. Our national soul.

The solution is more godliness . . .

• And more trust

Trust in *God*. It's on every dollar bill in our pocket. “In God We Trust.” And it's spot on. Look at v20 – *Our soul waits for the LORD* [a huge part of trust]; *he is our help and our shield. [21] For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. [22] Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.* Rely on you.

The solution to our problems is not more *independence*, but dependence. Dependence on God. Leaning on him, and looking to him, and following him no matter what. In good times and bad.

“In God We Trust” can't be an empty slogan. A meaningless phrase that makes us feel good. A thing of the past with no bearing on the present.

If we're going to be one nation *under* God, we have to trust in God.

Prayer – *Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.* (Psalm 33:22) It's easy to do, Lord, because you've been so good to us. Will you continue? Will you bless America even more? Do whatever it takes. Do a work of revival and start with us. Fill this land with your people and your glory. Raise up more churches. Tear down more idols. Increase our godliness and trust so that we truly are one nation under you.

You Are Loved