
First Baptist Dyersburg • Sermon Notes

Glory to God for 250 Years of Freedom in the United States of America!

Sunday, July 5, 2026 • Mike Hickman, Senior Pastor

On this special weekend, before we give thanks for our nation, we must first acknowledge that our primary allegiance is to God and to His Kingdom and His Church. Our nation and all nations exist only because it is the will of God that they do as He writes His story of salvation over every generation.

In God's sovereign plan for creation, He has created the nations of this world and is working through them to accomplish His purpose – a purpose which will prevail. He has done all of this so that people will know that He alone is God, and that He is worthy of our praise and of our worship.

⁶ The LORD merely spoke,
and the heavens were created.

He breathed the word,
and all the stars were born.

⁷ He assigned the sea its boundaries
and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs.

⁸ Let the whole world fear the LORD,
and let everyone stand in awe of him.

⁹ For when he spoke, the world began!
It appeared at his command.

¹⁰ The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations
and thwarts all their schemes.

¹¹ But the LORD's plans stand firm forever;
his intentions can never be shaken.

¹² What joy for the nation whose God is the LORD,
whose people he has chosen as his inheritance.
(Psalm 33:6-12, NLT)

²⁶ From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. (Acts 17:26, NLT)

²⁷ The whole earth will acknowledge the LORD and return to him. All the families of the nations will bow down before him. ²⁸ For royal power belongs to the LORD. He rules all the nations. (Psalm 22:27-28, NLT)

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
to whom belong wisdom and might.

²¹ He changes times and seasons;

he removes kings and sets up kings;

he gives wisdom to the wise

and knowledge to those who have understanding;

²² he reveals deep and hidden things;

he knows what is in the darkness,

and the light dwells with him.

²³ To you, O God of my fathers,

I give thanks and praise.”

(Daniel 2:20-23a, ESV)

God has called us to be a people who are praying for the leaders He has placed in authority over us. They are not in leadership positions by accident, but by God’s plan. We can trust that He is guiding them – whether they believe in Him or not – working in ways that we can see and in ways that we cannot see.

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. ² Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4, NLT)

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. ³ For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. ⁴ The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. ⁵ So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. ⁶ Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe

them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority. (Romans 13:1-7, NLT)

The king's heart is like a stream of water directed by the LORD; he guides it wherever he pleases. (Proverbs 21:1, NLT)

God has done all these things so that people will come to know Him as their Lord and Savior; so that nations will honor Him; and so that we will understand how much He loves us as we grow stronger in Him. All glory to God, in the church and in Christ Jesus, through all generations forever and ever!

²² So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: "Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, ²³ for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: 'To an Unknown God.' This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about.

²⁴ "He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, ²⁵ and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. ²⁶ From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

²⁷ "His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' ²⁹ And since this is true, we shouldn't think of God as an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone.

³⁰ "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. ³¹ For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead." (Acts 17:22-31, NLT)

¹ God is our refuge and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.

² So we will not fear when earthquakes come
and the mountains crumble into the sea.

³ Let the oceans roar and foam.

Let the mountains tremble as the waters surge!

Interlude

- ⁴ A river brings joy to the city of our God,
the sacred home of the Most High.
⁵ God dwells in that city; it cannot be destroyed.
From the very break of day, God will protect it.
⁶ The nations are in chaos,
and their kingdoms crumble!
God's voice thunders,
and the earth melts!
⁷ The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress.

Interlude

- ⁸ Come, see the glorious works of the LORD:
See how he brings destruction upon the world.
⁹ He causes wars to end throughout the earth.
He breaks the bow and snaps the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God!
I will be honored by every nation.
I will be honored throughout the world."
¹¹ The LORD of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress. (Psalm 46, NLT)

¹⁴ When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father,
¹⁵ the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. ¹⁶ I pray that from
his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner
strength through his Spirit. ¹⁷ Then Christ will make his home in your
hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love
and keep you strong. ¹⁸ And may you have the power to understand, as
all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep
his love is. ¹⁹ May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too
great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the
fullness of life and power that comes from God.

²⁰ Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at
work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

²¹ Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations
forever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21, NLT)