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OUR MOMENT IN HISTORY

In moments of imminent danger facing our nation, American believers, with faith in Almighty God, have been the light and hope of our republic. Thankfully, our American Founders were not like the atheist leaders of the French Revolution who drowned the Christian leaders of France by the thousands in the Seine River.

In contrast, the strength of the Founders was their “true alliance between Politics and Religion...They invoked God in their civil assemblies, called upon their chosen teachers of religion for counsel from the Bible, and recognized its precepts as the law of their public conduct. The fathers did not divorce Politics and Religion, but they denounced the separation as ungodly.”¹

A brief look back at the darkest days of the American Revolution can give us hope today as we struggle against multiple armies and ideologies, both without and within.

By the fall of 1777, George Washington and America’s one-year-old republic were on the verge of total defeat at the hands of the most powerful empire in the world, the British Empire. The Continental Army had been chased across New York and New Jersey for a year after they had lost New York City in August 1776. In Pennsylvania, on September 11th, 1777, Washington’s army was defeated at Brandywine. That was followed by another defeat on September 21st. The British were now about to take Philadelphia, the



colonies’ biggest city. To make matters worse, another British army was marching on New England from Canada under General John Burgoyne. What was left of Washington’s army was soon going to be exiled for the winter on the desolate, frozen hills overlooking the village of Valley Forge.

As the British were approaching Philadelphia the Continental Congress was forced to flee to York, about one hundred miles to the west. Of the fifty-six delegates who had signed the Declaration of Independence the year before, only twenty remained present at Congress.

As these men met in a candlelit room in York, one delegate had written silently in his diary, “The prospect is chilling, on every side: Gloomy, dark, melancholy and dispiriting.” But there was one delegate who spoke out with a clear, steady voice of hope and faith. It was Samuel Adams, a man who had lost so much already. Before the war his wife and four of their children had died. The British had demolished his home, beheaded his good friend and turned his church into a dung-strewn stable for their horses. He had been away from his surviving family for over three years, laboring in Philadelphia. But in spite of his trials, Samuel Adams admonished the men not to lose faith in God’s power to save. He said that if they as leaders despaired, both public confidence and American liberty would be destroyed. He then challenged them:

¹ J. W. Thornton, *Election Day Sermons*, David Hall, ed., p.23

continued on back

“Let us awaken then, and evince a different spirit ... a spirit that will encourage them to persevere in this glorious struggle, until their rights and liberties shall be established on a rock ... We have appealed to Heaven for the justice of our cause, and in Heaven we have placed our trust. Numerous have been the manifestations of God’s providence in sustaining us ... We have been reduced to distress, and the arm of Omnipotence has raised us up. Let us still rely in humble confidence on Him who is mighty to save. Good tidings will soon arrive. We shall never be abandoned by Heaven while we act worthy of its aid and protection.”²

Within a few short weeks the Almighty answered their expectation of good news with word of the miraculous victory at the Battle of Saratoga. British General Burgoyne had surrendered nearly 6,000 soldiers and all his artillery and supplies to American General Horatio Gates! Expressing their gratitude, Congress adopted Samuel Adam’s resolution declaring December 18, 1777 a Day of Thanksgiving to the Lord.

But as December 1777 approached it was obvious that the war was far from over. British forces marched into Philadelphia and General Howe and his men spent the winter nights dancing and feasting with the women of Philadelphia and sleeping in the beds and homes of the patriots. What was left of Washington’s army, twelve thousand men, staggered into Valley Forge for the winter. Over 1,000 of those troops were barefoot, their bloody footprints evident in the snow. In the next five months over 2,000 American soldiers would die of disease or freeze to death. Twenty-five hundred more would desert or fail to reenlist.

But in June of 1778, out of this dreadful crucible, 6,000 tested and trained soldiers emerged to become the Continental Army that won the final victory at Yorktown in 1781 against the British. Much credit is rightly given to the training and discipline imparted to the army by German General Frederick von Stuben that spring. But what was the bedrock force

that kept the army from disintegrating during the dark days of Valley Forge? It was the faith and character of General George Washington. Henry Muhlenberg, one of Washington’s generals, reveals the man of faith who inspired them to persevere:

“His Excellency General Washington rode around among his army yesterday and admonished each and every one to fear God, to put away the wickedness that has set in and become so general, and to practice the Christian virtues. From all appearances this gentleman does not belong to the so-called world of society, for he respects God’s Word, believes in the atonement through Christ, and bears himself in humility and gentleness. Therefore, the Lord God has also singularly, yea, marvelously, preserved him from harm in the midst of countless perils, ambuscades, fatigues, etc. and has hitherto graciously held him in His hand as a chosen vessel.”³

Today we face a revolt against our liberties as destructive as that faced by American patriots over two centuries ago. The twin religions of global socialism and global secularism are attempting to highjack the Christian constitutional republic passed down to us by our Founders.

Is it not time for us, like our Founders, to pledge our “lives, fortunes and sacred honor” for the preservation of liberty and God’s honor? As Samuel Adams said, “We shall never be abandoned by Heaven while we act worthy of its aid and protection. “

American Christians, it is our moment in history to stand up and reclaim our national covenant with God in the Declaration of Independence. It is time pray, repent, to love, to give, to teach, to lead and...**TO VOTE!**

— Marshall Foster

² Ira Stall, *Samuel Adams, A Life*, p.4

³ Henry Muhlenberg, *America’s God and Country*, W. J. Federer, ed., p.641



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