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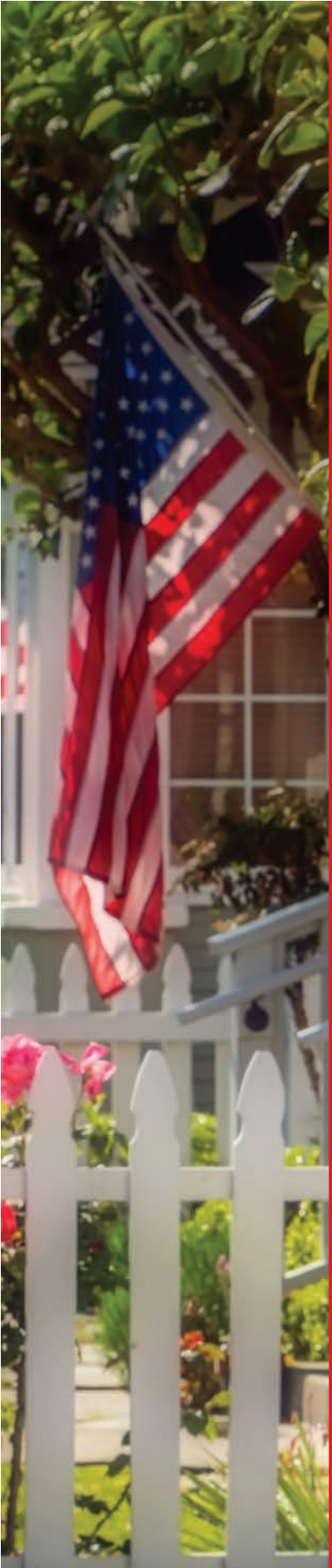
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contents

PathPointe Magazine

Volume 25, Issue 7

July 2024

- Page 2 **Ambivalent Americans**
Dr. T. D. Worthington
- Page 6 **Radio Bits**
Your Christian Superstations!
- Page 8 **May I Die... Daily**
Mrs. Sherry Worthington
- Page 10 **Nothing but Truth**
Dr. Glenn Mills
- Page 12 **AfterGlow**
Mrs. Connie Peters

President and Publisher: Dr. T. D. Worthington
Editor: Tiffany W. Johnson
Advertising Director: Ashley W. Lovett
Contributors: Glenn Mills, Tiffany Johnson,
Connie Peters, and Sherry Worthington
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“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Psalms 1:1-3

This Fourth of July, many Christians are feeling a bit ambivalent about patriotism and the American nation. At least in my circle, ambivalent is a word not often used. It means having mixed feelings or conflicting ideas about something. That is kind of how I feel about my country right now. I love America and there is still much here to celebrate and to be proud of, yet there is also much to be ashamed of. I am embarrassed by her morals, and I am threatened by the corruption unleashed upon the ordinary citizen. So, my feelings are in conflict. I am ambivalent.

Easy abortions, gay marriage, government corruption, and other moral and legal problems in America make some believers feel more like they’re living in a degenerating Roman Empire than in a vibrant moral nation. Some say that things have always been this way. Perhaps, but I have lived long enough to know that things have not always been this way and that society is getting worse.

It is true that we have always had reasons to celebrate and reasons to lament America’s history. Even in 1776, Christians shared in the founding of America, but they did not dominate in the new nation’s leadership as we might think. Many of our founding principles were Biblical and moral, decent and just. But, at the same time we could somehow justify the mistreatment of Native Americans and the institution of slavery while writing noble words about universal liberty and God-given rights. At least our founder’s seemed to strive for the high ground even though often constrained by cultural and economic pressures to compromise

on some issues. It is honestly hard to see how they could have done better.

We find much to commend in the American tradition, but it can’t be our ultimate allegiance. As with Christians everywhere, we know our citizenship is in heaven. Nevertheless, as we keep our eyes on the heavenly kingdom, Christians in America have many reasons to thank our Heavenly King for the blessings He has bestowed upon this imperfect nation. What should Christians celebrate regarding the founding of America? Religious liberty should be at the top of the list. Americans in the 1770s had little experience with religious liberty, as both England and most of the colonies had official state-backed denominations. Pastors were often on the government payroll, breeding complacency and political compromise among many ministers. Even though groups like the Puritans had fled England to find religious freedom in America, colonists often did not afford religious freedom to those outside their particular faith or mode of worship. For example, Puritans had very little tolerance for non-Puritans.

Baptists received some of the roughest treatment, as they endured episodes of expulsion, public whippings, and imprisonment from the earliest colonial times to the eve of the Revolution. Dozens of Baptist ministers languished in Virginia jails in the 1760s and 1770s. This was one of the things that inspired men like James Madison and Thomas Jefferson of the urgent need for full religious freedom. Jefferson, although

appearing to be a bit of a skeptic about certain aspects of Christianity, yet he joined with Madison, legions of Baptists, and other evangelical Christians in securing a Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom in Virginia in 1786. This was a critical precedent to the First Amendment's guarantee of the ***“free exercise of religion,”*** and its prohibition on congressional laws respecting an ***“establishment of religion,”*** or a national denomination. These commitments to religious liberty, espoused by imperfect men years ago, have resonated down to give us the religious freedoms we have today.

We can also be thankful that the Founders based many of the our nation's principles on biblical concepts. One of the most amazing Bible based principles of the Revolution had to be the statements that ***“all men are created equal”*** and that the best governments had to take into account that all men are sinners; including those in power. As James Madison put it in Federalist #51, ***“What is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary.”***

Biblical principles and even biblical quotations come up so often in the Founders' writings that we could easily get the impression that they were all converted believers. But we know that all were not believers in Christ. But, and here is an important key, for the most part they did understand truth. Whether that truth came from Greek or Roman history, from the writings of great men, or from the pages of the Word of God. To

the Founder's, proven truth must be respected and accepted regardless of who proclaimed it.

Although Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson both harbored serious doubts about the Trinity, those doubts did not stop them from proposing an image (*not the one ultimately adopted*) from Exodus for the new nation's seal. It would show ***“Moses standing on the shore, and extending his hand over the sea, thereby causing the same to overwhelm Pharaoh.”*** Over this image, Franklin suggested, a banner would read, ***“Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God.”***

Many rank-and-file Patriots, and some leading Founders such as Patrick Henry, were serious Christians. But ironically, the American founding was led by some key men who did not completely accept the Bible. How do we explain that? Here again, I think we get back to the point that they were willing to recognize and accept truth regardless of its source. I think that is where we are failing today.

For example, I have often given my Dad and Mom as an example of a non-Christian family who accepted and taught a lot of Biblical truth. Now, I would like for all men to become Christians, but I am willing to accept less. Okay, so you may choose to reject the fact that God's Word is perfect, that hell really exists, and even that Christ was God. Fine, go ahead and refuse to embrace things you can't understand like the virgin birth or the resurrection. Don't become a Christian, if that is your wish—that is not what I want for you, but it is your right. But you should at least accept the easy proven facts of the Bible. That is precisely what several of our Founder's did.

The moral teachings of the Parables and the Proverbs contain enough wisdom to build a wholesome and vibrant society. Fine, as an American it is your right not to be a Christian, but why would you discount historically proven formulas for building a good life and a good home, just because they come from the Bible? I can be willing to follow instructions for





putting a table together although written in some language I don't understand. I try to follow these instructions, not because I think they are the Word of God, but because I think they will work. Biblical principles work. They even work for non-Christians, like my parents who were not believers until later in life. Non-Christians do not have the illumination that comes from the Holy Spirit or from the Mind of Christ, but to the extent they follow it, the Bible will work for them. My parents proved that! That is quite simply what many of our founder's were willing to do.

Why not accept the proven truth of the Bible as it deals with wisdom, power, pride, money, marriage, leadership, loyalty, honesty, human weakness, and a host of other easily provable facts? Reject Christ if you wish. It is your right as an American. But, it is not your right to reject truth because that effects all of us. That seemed to be the philosophy of the Founders. These were imperfect men creating an

imperfect government to govern an imperfect people. Yet, it has stood the test of time because it was, by and large, based on proven truth as they understood it. Historical truth, moral truth, and yes—even Biblical truth—not because they were all fundamental Christians, but because they knew it worked.

Think about it for a moment. If I were king of the land, and let's assume I did not embrace all the doctrines of Christianity, wouldn't it still be in my best interest to promote Biblical values? Wouldn't it make my job easier if people were honest? If people paid their bills, didn't steal, treated their neighbors with respect, if they were hard working people of integrity—wouldn't that be a good thing? Honorable people don't need a lot of rules. They govern themselves. As king I can just sit back and sip lemonade. But, immoral people, like rebellious children, need rules, regulations, and boundaries to keep them in order. This is a big part of what we have lost today.

Yes, I am thankful that America overall remains a place where Christians *“may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,”* as Paul wrote in **I Timothy 2:2**. That kind of peace and quiet is what the Founders hoped for when they adopted the First Amendment's guarantee of free exercise of religion.

So, here is my challenge. Walk in truth. As long as it is legitimate truth you might find it in accurate history books, science books, or in the instructions for putting a table together—if it is truth...walk in it. However, do not discount that the Bible is also a book of truth; proven truth. As a Christian, I believe that it is a truth so perfect that if we choose to walk in this truth we will prosper; and so will our nation.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for over forty-five years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.



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The United States of America has a unique spiritual heritage. There is a reason we became the richest, freest, and most envied nation in the world. God honored His promise, ***“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.”*** Candace Owens, author and political commentator, recently stated, *“You know you live in a great country when the people who absolutely despise it refuse to leave.”*

That doesn't make Americans superior to anyone, but it should make us more grateful than everyone. To believe that America has been a favored land is not nationalism; it's an awareness of our blessings and a tribute to the One who is the giver of every good and perfect gift.

There is also a reason why America is currently struggling with division and despair. The same Scripture that promises a blessing to those who honor God, warns of disaster for those who forget Him.

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”

Psalm 9:17

We have forgotten *“from whom all blessings flow,”* broken our promises, and turned our backs on God and His Word. As a result, God's hand of blessing is being withdrawn, and it appears we are on the verge of divine judgment. But there is still hope. God made a promise to Israel, but that promise could also bless us.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

II Chronicles 7:14

God would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah for ten righteous people (**Genesis 18**). Perhaps if even a few of His people in our nation would genuinely humble themselves, repent of sin, and turn to Him, He will once again hear from heaven and miraculously heal our land.

Just as He rescued Israel from entrapment at the Red Sea, He can rescue us. Just as He rescued the Continental army from certain disaster on Long Island, He can once again rescue us from impending disaster and enable us to pass along to our children and grandchildren, ***“One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”***



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He's Calling

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God has warned mankind for centuries that this world would one day become a heap of ruins as His hand of judgment is poured out against sin. The earth as we know it will cease to exist as evil is cast into the pits of Hell for all eternity.

Judgment is coming, but it isn't here yet. Our God is long-suffering and not willing that ANY should perish. It may seem at times like He is being silent, but He is speaking in the hearts of His people. He is still calling the lost to repentance. He is still offering His love, hope, and everlasting life to as many that will receive it... Even His enemies... Even your enemies.

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I woke up very early this morning. It was a couple of hours before the alarm clock went off. This usually happens when the Lord wants to get my attention. I was lying there thinking about the problems people are facing.

I had been talking to Him about things quite a bit, but I hadn't been listening. I asked Him, "*Lord what is the answer?*" Of course, I began talking instead of listening. I told Him, "*They just need to die to self. That is the simple but difficult answer. Isn't it Lord?*"

For what seemed like an eternity, God was silent. He was waiting for me to be quiet and listen. He softly whispered, "*Yes, but isn't that true for you, too.*" I could almost see His tender eyes looking at me. He wasn't being harsh or judging. He wanted me to understand what He was telling me.

I realize there are levels of dying to self. Some people never put others ahead of themselves, others do so when it is convenient, and others do so quite often. But none of us have it mastered. I felt I was in

the latter category, which showed I definitely had some growing to do.

The Lord was letting me know that before I could counsel others to die to self, I needed to die to my wishes and desires. God has blessed me in so many ways. I am not saying He never grants my desires, but He does expect me to put His will first. I began to debate with Him, which was foolish on my part. I said, "*But, Lord, I do put You first. I try to be the best I can be in all areas of my life. It seems like I work all of the time doing something. What*

do you mean I need to die to my wishes? I am already sacrificing as much as I know how. Is it so bad to want to slow down a bit?"

Then He says, "So you feel you are sacrificing. How so? In what ways are you sacrificing for me?" Then I began to realize what He was trying to tell me. I felt I was serving Him because I loved Him, but I thought I was doing more than my share. Since my Lord suffered and died for me, how could I feel I was doing too much?

Don't get me wrong. I know the Lord wants me to have balance in my life. He gave me a family, a church, a job, and friends along with many other blessings. These are all areas of ministry in my life, and by making sure He is first; I will be able to have that balance.

I can sometimes unwittingly become a complainer. In **Luke 10:2**, the Bible teaches there is plenty of work to do, but the laborers are few. I sometimes get disheartened in this area. I complain because if everyone would do their share, I wouldn't have to work so hard. I want to have more time with my husband, my family, and my friends. I would like to have more time to do things I enjoy. So yes, I would like to slow down a bit.

In itself, it is not bad to want to have more time with my husband. I think it honors God that I want to spend time with those I love. The problem comes when I no longer have the attitude, "Whatever you want, Lord, not my will, but thine." When Jesus was in the garden, He asked God if this cup could pass from Him. But He wanted God's



will, no matter what the cost. He was clear that God's will was the most important.

"Okay, Lord, help me to desire to do whatever it takes. In Your strength, I will die to my wishes. I will pray that you will send more laborers. I will pray that you help me to keep my eyes focused on you. And I will pray that you will help me to keep life balanced. Most of all, Lord, I want You to love through me."

I have always understood that God doesn't force us to serve. I believe He has called many laborers to serve, and they have refused. We are not puppets on a string. We are His children, and just as we cannot force our adult children to live for Him, He will not force His children to serve Him.

"Lord, I desire to die daily for you. Help me to totally lean on you. May I always remember my time belongs to you. Help me to use each minute for your glory and do what you want me to do with each

second of each day. May I always remember that when I share with others the secrets of walking with You I need to be following those secrets. I love you, Lord. May my love for You and others be selfless and unconditional."

When we look at others today, we need to be sure we look at ourselves first. When we believe we know what they need to do to fix their problems, we need to apply those principles to our own problems. When we are judgmental of others, we should realize we have not walked in their shoes. It is so important to love as Christ loved and realize we really don't have all of the answers.

"Lord, help me to die to self today, ...and every day!"



Mrs. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
John 8:32

Truth is that which is consistent with the mind, will, character, glory, and being of God. Everything God reveals truth. Jesus said He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We know truth when we abide in Christ Jesus and follow His leading, whether by His Word or His Holy Spirit. Abide means to comply with, obey, observe, follow, keep to, hold to, conform to, act in accordance with, respect, and defer to. It simply means we put our total trust in Christ for every area of our lives.

So, what is this freedom we have by knowing the truth and abiding in Christ Jesus? It is freedom from all lies. If something is not the truth, then it is a lie. Some people confess to telling a “little white lie” from time to time. First, lies don’t have color. Second, lies don’t have size. A lie is a lie. Sadly, we live in a world today where many feel and think it is alright to lie. I remember just a few years ago when a news anchor could be fired for lying in a report. People could be sued for slander. Today the news is filled with lies, told by bold liars without consequences. It is truly a prophecy being fulfilled. A lie is not the opposite of truth. A lie is the absence of the truth. God is Truth and Satan is the Father of lies.

Nothing divides truth and yet truth divides everything. There is no such thing as a half-truth, only total truth.

Anything short of total truth is a lie. Jesus did not say He was *a* way, *a* truth and *a* life. He said He was “*...the way, the truth, and the life...*” (John 14:6b). The Bible reveals the Israelites didn’t break one portion of the Law when they sinned, but that they broke the whole Law.

I have heard preachers say churches are diluting God’s Word (*Truth*). Dilute means to make something weaker in force, content, or value by modifying it or adding other elements to it. In the physical, there are many things that one can dilute such as paint, fluids, fertilizer, colors, etc. Truth, because it is in the spiritual, can’t be diluted. Truth is eternal and unchangeable. It is absolute in every way. It is not affected by time, culture, space, race, or location. What people may think as diluting the truth, is actually *rejecting* the truth.

In **Galatians 1:8** and **2 Corinthians 11:4**, Paul gave warning to those who would preach “another” gospel. What is the gospel? It is the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and soon return of Christ Jesus. Paul said that if anyone preached anything other than the truth of who Jesus was, what He did, and what He is going to do, it is another gospel. Paul did not say it was diluting the gospel, but another gospel all together. Why? Because there is only ONE Gospel. Likewise, there is only One Truth.

The danger we are facing today is that many are rejecting the Truth. To reject truth on any level is to reject God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. It is bad enough that the world

is rejecting truth, but sadly, too many so-called Christians are as well. It is for this reason God said judgment must begin at the house of God.

We can't expect the world to know truth when they don't know God. The Body of Christ must not only know the Truth (*Christ*), but we must also abide in Him and follow Him through the Word and Holy Spirit. We must clean up our lives to line up with the truth in everything we say and do. To accept sin is to reject truth. We must stop making excuses for sin and disobedience. Once right with God, then we can show the world around us what Truth is and Who Truth is.

It is not enough to tell people the truth, we must first and foremost live the truth. I once heard a preacher say, "*don't live a lie.*" He went on to explain that living a lie was living outside the principles of the truth. Many in America and the world today think they can change the truth to fit their agendas. They may change the way they live and think, but it will never change the Truth. They can deny it, refuse it, hide it, cover it up, re-label it, and even change the package, but it will always be Truth that exposes the lies, darkness, selfishness, greed, sin, disobedience, and much more.

My friends, hold to the Truth at all costs. Please consider the seriousness of rejecting the Truth of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Great are the rewards of those who know the Truth, live the Truth, speak the Truth, and share the Truth. Dark days are ahead for America with more and more rejecting the Truth and promoting their lies. Many are choosing darkness over the Light. Little by little the Church is being silenced by the roar of the immoral. God is soon to give this Nation over to its own desires and remove His hand of protection. However, God will protect His children who stand and live in the Truth. They are referred to in the Bible as the Overcomers. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill your daily life with God's Truth and let it direct your every step and decision. Then, you will be free indeed.



Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with Glenn Mills Ministries. More information is available at www.glennmillsministries.com

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A Righteous Remnant

Watching the news recently, I reasoned that life would be so much more encouraging if I didn't make news watching a part of my daily routine. Could things get any worse? (*Scripture teaches us that things will be much worse indeed before our world has a righteous King Who rules in peace.*) But without some knowledge of the news, how can I cast an intelligent vote, serve as a good citizen, or pray for my country and its leaders?

Looking at the difference in the America of my youth and America today can be very discouraging. I see a nation that led the world in strength and glory reduced to a nation of indebtedness and divisiveness. With the exception of a small righteous remnant, the nation that once trusted in God has forsaken the God Who established us as a nation. How would our founders respond to our present condition?

And what about that righteous remnant? Is our righteousness all that it could be? Out of rebellion, complacency, or fear, how often do we resort to following our own will instead of trusting God? Although I generally see myself as trusting God and living righteously, I sometimes battle with giving up activities that preoccupy my time when I sense that He is calling me away for a deeper purpose. Do we each have areas of daily life that we clutch even though we know that God wants us to surrender them for a more righteous replacement? When others look at our lives, do they perceive righteousness in us?

Psalm 11 tells of David under threat of the wicked trying to destroy him. His advisors told him to *“flee as a bird to your mountain”* (**verse 1**). How tempting it is to retreat to my place of safety away from what is happening in the world! But David knew that his only hope was to trust in the LORD. **Verse 3** asks, *“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* We can trust in the LORD. The rest of that short psalm explains that God sees and that He will repay. He is still in control. He hates wickedness and loves righteousness. We only need to continue trusting God and living righteously.

When we are faced with this world's troubles, remember that God is in control of every situation. Ultimately, our citizenship is in heavenly places where peace and perfection reign under our strong and glorious King. Ponder that.



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. She serves as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.

After Glow
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