

## GOD SPEAKS TO AMERICA

By Dr. Herbert Fitzpatrick

Thank you, Mike. It is a real joy to be here. Cold chills go up and down my spine when we sing those songs. I truly love our great nation.

Today, I want to speak to you on the subject, "God Speaks to America." I will say I love our nation, and I hope I won't say anything that would lead you to think otherwise. I do thank Him for His Providence today. If there was ever a time we need to pray, it is now.

I usually say, "Open your Bibles" to a text, but I have several texts today that all have to do with the message. So I would like you just to listen as I read these scriptures. Ps. 127:1. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Ps. 33:12. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for his own inheritance." John 8:36. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Prov. 14:34. "Righteousness exhalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

Let us pray: Our Father and our God as we come to Thee in prayer, we pray that today as we celebrate the birth of our nation, we may be humbled before Thee, and we pray that Thou wouldst bless us as we look into Thy Word. We pray that we may sense anew our responsibility as citizens, as Christians, to pray for our nation. We pray that Thou will give us understanding as we look into Thy Word and the things You have to say to us concerning our nation. In Jesus name. Amen.

July 4th is a day that has been set aside by our government to celebrate our independence as a nation. Sensible men know that freedom is not just the right to demonstrate in the streets, to protest, or let our unhappiness be known about conditions that exist, but that freedom comes from discipline and structure. If we all decide, here today, that, because we're free, we're going to go out here and do what we want to do. We are not going to pay any attention to the signs. We'll go as fast as we want to. We'll do what we want to do and do as we please; we'll kill one another and none of us will be free. So, freedom comes from structure and discipline

### **1. NOW, THERE'S A TREMENDOUS PRICE TO BE PAID FOR FREEDOM.**

Now, that has been made known in the song service today. There's a price to be paid for freedom. And this great country was born in the sacrifice of blood. And, as Christians today and Americans, we want to express our gratitude for those who paid the price, who gave their lives, who shed their blood that we may live as a free people in this great nation. We want to express our gratitude that they have not died in vain, and we appreciate the freedoms that we have as Americans today. Now, George Washington was a man of prayer. I heard last night on the television...George Washington spent an hour a day on his knees praying for this great nation. One of the great national parks is here in your state, Valley Forge, where the soldiers fought in the Revolutionary War. Their blood was seen in the snow. And there's a great bronze statue of George Washington kneeling in prayer.

I'm sure that you all have read the tribute to each of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. They made a tremendous sacrifice, and they were not wild-eyed ruffians just rebelling, but they were men of character. Many of them had seminary degrees. They were

wonderful Christians ...most of them. Twenty-four of them were lawyers and jurists, eleven were merchants, nine were large plantation owners. And they signed that document knowing that if they were captured they would be tortured and put to death. Nine of the fifty-six fought and died in the Revolutionary War...Five of the fifty-six were captured by the British, were tortured, and put to death...Two lost their sons in the war. Two others had their sons captured, tortured, and put to death...and twelve of the fifty-six that signed the Declaration of Independence had their homes ransacked and burned. One man, named John Hart, returned after the war and saw his fields laid in waste and the mill burned. For more than a year he lived in the forest, in caves. When he returned home, he found that his wife had died, and his children had vanished. A few days later, he died of a broken heart.

Most of us are familiar with the story of Patrick Henry who stood in that great church, St. John's Church, in Richmond, Virginia, and made the statement, "Give me liberty or give me death."

I love that song:

MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE,  
SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY,  
OF THEE I SING:  
LAND OF THE PILGRIM'S PRIDE;  
FROM EVERY MOUNTAIN SIDE  
LET FREEDOM RING.

## **2. NOW, FREEDOM IS THE UNIVERSAL PASSION OF THE HUMAN SOUL. PEOPLE WANT TO BE FREE.**

When our forefathers were framing the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they thought of an example of where men could be free. They looked to Spain, and they reasoned that if a monarchy could give you freedom, they could take it away. And so they said they did not want a monarchy.

They looked to England, and they reasoned that if the Parliament could give you freedom, they could also take it away. And they did not want that. They looked to France, and they said if the majority can give you freedom and liberty, they could also take it away. And it was then that our forefathers looked toward heaven and looked in the Word of God, and they saw that the basis of our freedom is that all men are created equal. And that if we would be obedient to the Word of God and look to God Almighty for His blessings upon us, we could be free. And that was the only safeguard against oppression and opposition, so they founded our country upon biblical principles. So, God is the one that we look to for justice, for liberty, and to proclaim that all men are free and are created equal. And they made a commitment to the Word of God.

You know, the Bible was first translated into English by Congress so that it could be taught in our schools. Can you imagine that ...the way things are today, that our founding fathers translated the Bible so that we could go by the Bible, and it could be taught in the public schools. And so, they looked to God. They looked to heaven and they prayed for the blessings of Almighty God upon this infant Republic.

## **3. WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION WAS CALLED, THOSE 13 COLONIES WERE HOPELESSLY DEADLOCKED.**

It was then that the aged Benjamin Franklin stood and said that we could not hope to succeed except by the blessings of Almighty God. And he made the motion that Congress go to God in prayer, that they seek the will of God, and that they pray. And since that time Congress has

always opened with the invocation of God's blessings upon their debate and deliberations and what they accomplished. You know, George Washington, our first President, looked to the Lord and asked God's blessings upon the infant Republic.

A distinguished visitor from England came to America and visited Congress. And he asked the Honorable Thompson, "Which one is Mr. Washington?" And the Secretary of State replied, "When Congress goes to prayer, the one that kneels is George Washington." So that's the heritage we have as a great nation today. As we sing about our liberty and our freedom, we know that we had forefathers that believed in the Word of God, believed in the Lord, looked to God, and asked God's blessings upon this nation. What a great heritage we have had.

After the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln made his way to Richmond, Virginia. He didn't have any bodyguards or anybody with him. He walked down the streets in Richmond, went to the Statehouse and was seated at the desk of Jefferson Davis, and he bowed his head and prayed for the healing of the nation. Abraham Lincoln did not live to see his prayer answered, but today Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas are just as much a part of the Union as Connecticut, New York or Illinois. So God answered the prayer of Abraham Lincoln.

#### **4. ONE OF THE GREAT PHENOMENA OF ALL HISTORY IS THE SPLENDOR AND GLORY OF AMERICA.**

This is the greatest nation in all the world. I have had the privilege of traveling to many countries of the world: China, Japan, Korea, Israel, Europe and most of the countries in the world. I'm always happy to come back home. There's no place like America. When we sing "God Bless America," we mean it because this is a great, great nation. And so we look at our history, and we find that America has excelled in affluence. We have made great advancements in technology, educational achievement, and industrial might. We could go on and on and name the great things about our nation. That's why we sing:

OH BEAUTIFUL FOR SPACIOUS SKIES,  
FOR AMBER WAVES OF GRAIN;  
FOR PURPLE MOUNTAIN MAJESTIES  
ABOVE THE FRUITED PLAIN.  
AMERICA. AMERICA.  
GOD SHED HIS GRACE ON THEE,  
AND CROWN THY GOOD WITH BROTHERHOOD  
FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA.

The foundation and strength of America is in our Christian commitment. That's our heritage. But this freedom that we enjoy today comes to us because our forefathers paid a tremendous price. And I believe that the success of our nation lies in our spiritual commitment. There are things about our nation that are different from other nations. One is our reverence for God. I'm glad "In God we trust" is still on our coins, our currency. "In God we trust." Our constitution, our judicial law, and our government are founded upon the Mosaic legislation, the Sermon on the Mount. That's our Constitution. Not only our reverence for God, but also our reverence for the human soul.... Now I know we face a real problem today in our nation with the problem of abortion, but basically America respects life. We believe that God is the author of life and has given us life. We pursue life, liberty, and happiness. Not only our reverence for the human soul, but also reverence for work. You know, our nation was founded upon hard work. You read the history of our nation, and you realize how hard they had to work. And all that we have today is because of the

hard work of our forefathers. And we were taught self-reliance, responsibility, and that we have the right to work, strive, achieve, and excel. I love what the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." You notice how American is spelled. AmerICAN, the last part ends with, "I can." "I can." And that's been the secret of the success of this great nation. We believe that we can achieve and with that determination, I can. "I can...through Christ, which strengthens me."

And so, that's the basis of the freedoms that we enjoy today. I trust that you are grateful. Today, I'm sorry to say, there's been a decline in the faith that has made our nation great. Everything seems to be turned backwards, and people do not appreciate the freedoms that we have. We see it in the decay of our citizenship. Public welfare has become a way of life. And that's so contrary to the way that God planned. We read in 2 Thessalonians 3:8-10: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but worked with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example for you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat." Now that's the biblical principle. And that's what's made America great. Now so many people think that the government owes them a living. They want the government to take care of them. I'll tell you we need to be grieved as we see the government taking control of more and more of our lives. The government usually messes things up. I live near Washington, DC. And I'll tell you, I'm greatly troubled as I listen to the TV and the things that are going on in Washington. If there was ever a time that we needed to pray, it's today, because we may not always enjoy the freedoms that we sang about today.

And so, it is time for us to wake up. God speaks to America. Someone asked me what I thought about the political scene today. And I said that my only hope is the fact that we serve a sovereign God. He is in control, and He may be allowing the things that are happening today as judgment because we walked away from God. I'm amazed at how few people go to church. Every Sunday when I drive to church, I look at my neighbors' driveways and the cars are still there. Nobody, it seems, on my street, goes to church. I am concerned that there is a lack of reverence and concern for spiritual things in our nation. You know it is possible to be free and yet be enslaved. There is freedom from want, but we can be a slave to indulgence. We can be slaves to our appetites, slaves to food and drink, materialism, sex and drugs. Many people are bound by the cords of sin, and they live to satisfy the lust of the flesh.

We have freedom of speech, but we can be slaves to profanity, blasphemy and lewd language. There's freedom of the press, but we're slaves to pornography. I can't tell you how many people have come to me that have a problem with pornography. That's a prevailing thing in our land; the filth that's in our magazines; pornography on every hand. We can be free but enslaved by sin. So, I say to you, today, we need, as your Pastor prayed, revival in America. We need a revival because so many people are enslaved by sin. We enjoy the freedom of religion, but most people believe that to be freedom from religion. They don't want to have anything to do with God, the Bible, or spiritual things. They don't go to church. Sunday is not a holy day but a holiday. They do what they want to do instead of worshipping God. John 8:36: "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What we need is for people to turn from their sins, repent of their sins, and look to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. He's the one that can truly set us free. I am thankful for the freedom we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, who delivers us from the power of sin and gives us the glorious privilege of serving Him.

As we consider the conditions in our country today, a challenge goes out for us to pray and to seek God. I am reminded of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles, chapter 20. He was really caught in a spot. News came to him that a multitude from the sea was coming against Judah: the Ammonites and the Moabites and the inhabitants of mount Seir. Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast, and they began to pray. They reminded God who they were, that they were descendents of Abraham, the friend of God. They asked God what they should do, and the Lord spoke to Jehoshaphat and said, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." They organized by putting the singers first, then the priests, and then the army, and they went down to meet the enemy. They began singing, "The mercy of the Lord endureth forever." They were singing praises to God. God set ambushments among the enemies of Judah and when Judah got there, they found the people were dead. They had killed one another, and all they had to do was go in and take the spoil of the battle. It took them three days to gather all the jewels, the gold and silver. Then, they couldn't even carry it. God had wrought a greater victory that they could ever have hoped to win. So, it pays to trust the Lord. He is the one who gives us the victory. The Lord will fight our battles for us. We just have to meet the conditions of His Word. Henry Grady, who was the editor of the Atlanta Constitution, said that he stood in Hampton Roads, looked out over the naval fleet, and thought, "That's the strength of America, in her military might." Then he watched the army as it paraded down the streets and he said, "There's our strength, our great army." Then he went to Washington and visited the halls of Congress. He said, "That's the strength of our nation, our legislative process." But then he said he was invited to the home of a boyhood friend and that evening, as they gathered around the table, this friend took the Word of God and read to his family. They sang hymns, they prayed and Henry Grady said, "I had my answer. The strength of America is not in her military might, not in the halls of Congress but the strength of America is in the Christian home." And the best, the most patriotic thing you can do today is to establish a good Christian home. Pray for our nation. That is the strength of our nation. So, I say to you, today, if you are not a Christian, the best thing you can do on this patriotic Sunday is to give your heart and life to Jesus Christ, establish a Christian home, and then to pray for our nation for certainly we stand in the need of prayer.

Shall we stand with our heads bowed and our eyes closed. Our Father and our God, as we come to Thee in prayer. We thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast bestowed upon our nation. We today as our nation has drifted from God. We pray that the Holy Spirit would work very tenderly in our hearts, and if there are those here today who do not know Christ as their personal Savior, help them to come and put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. And Lord, we pray that Thou wouldst search the hearts of Thy people and if we have not been doing our part, we pray that Thou wouldst help us to rededicate our lives, to be greater patriots, and to pray and seek God's blessings upon our nation. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

As we sing the hymn of invitation, if God is speaking to your heart, for any reason at all, the Pastor is here, make your way to the front, and let us talk with you and pray with you.