



SPOTLIGHT

Times That Try Men's Souls

"And there is nothing new under the sun."
- King Solomon, Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NKJV)

Since the Bible refers to Solomon as the wisest man (besides Jesus) who ever lived, I think it is safe to say that there is nothing new to the gross miscarriage of justice that took place in a New York City courtroom recently. In fact, Jesus himself was falsely accused, wrongly convicted in a show trial overseen by a corrupt judge, and then executed for His alleged crimes.

But we all know what happened three days later!

And so, in times like these, it is often helpful to look back on previous such episodes in American history when we, the people, had our backs to the wall but overcame seemingly impossible odds to emerge victorious over the powers of tyranny and despotism.

With this in mind, I call your attention to the words of Thomas Paine in *The American Crisis*, a series of 13 pamphlets that were written and published under the pseudonym "Common Sense" between 1776 and 1783.

"These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot

continued on page 2

Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

By the time you read this, Deanna and I will be back from a 5-day trip to Kentucky. So why did we take a week off work to spend time in the Bluegrass State? To see a horse race at Churchill Downs or explore the wonders of Mammoth Cave? No, although I wouldn't mind doing either of those things. However, the singular reason why we traveled to Kentucky was to invest in the spiritual welfare of our four oldest grandchildren.

At the top of our itinerary was the Ark Encounter, a life-size replica of Noah's original ark. Yes, THAT ark that carried and protected eight people and two of every animal (as well as ones used for food and sacrifice) during the worldwide flood that covered the entire earth.

Yes, my friend, Mount Everest was once underwater!

We also took in the Creation Museum where the story of Adam and Eve - two real people who were our original ancestors, not apes - was depicted with stunning biblical accuracy. For those who aren't familiar with our first set of parents, God created them on Day Six after which He rested.

Fables and fairy tales? Not for a minute! You see, I firmly believe with every fiber of my being that the biblical accounts of creation and the Great Flood are 100% historically accurate. In fact, they are part of the

bedrock foundation of the Christian faith, and I want to expose my precious grandchildren to those eternal truths as early and often as possible.

Sure, there were loads of secular fun and games this week as well, but nothing in my life is more important than seeing Brady, Sadie, Levi, and Dylan - as well as Bella and Charlotte Grace, who were too young to make the trip - come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. And not just saving faith, but to become true men and women of God who are sold out to Him... lock, stock, and barrel.

That, and that alone, is the #1 priority in my life as I round the clubhouse turn and head into the homestretch. Before I cross the finish line, I want to be absolutely sure that those six precious souls will join me in heaven for all eternity. And so, I guess this trip, which cost Deanna and me several thousand dollars, is simply a case of putting our money where our mouth - and our faith - is.

Ronald Reagan once said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. It has to be fought for and defended by each generation." Faith is no different. It, too, must be passed down purposely and passionately from one generation to the next to survive and flourish.

My friend, what are the top priorities in YOUR life? I pray that they are Jesus, your faith, and your family... in that order. After that, at least for me,

continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE...



America's Growing Cultural Divide...page 3

Is America Heading Over the Cliff?

According to a recent study conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute, more than 25% of Americans now consider themselves “religiously unaffiliated.” Likewise, the importance of religious faith in the life of everyday Americans has also declined. Ten years ago, 63% of Americans said that their faith was the most - or one of the most - critical aspects of their life. Today, that number stands at just 52%.

And you wonder why the United States is going to hell in a handbasket?

Ronald Reagan, quoting Alexis de Toqueville, famously said that “America is great because America is good. And if she ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.” In my humble opinion, the “Gipper” hit the proverbial nail on the head.

For more than 200 years, Americans were united by a common moral code based on solid Judeo-Christian principles. We mutually agreed to treat others as we would have them treat us, and to work hard to support ourselves so that others wouldn't have to. Murder, including the killing of a preborn child, was wrong and so was stealing, looting, and causing public mayhem.

Today, abortion is a main - perhaps THE main - plank of the Democrat Party as it desperately tries to woo white suburban women to the polls.

In the same manner, we now celebrate sexual perversion, subsidize laziness and out-of-wedlock birth, and refuse to prosecute shoplifters and looters.

The bottom line is that we have become a nation of weak-willed excuse makers with skin as thin as tissue paper. We don't go to church anymore because (1) the service is too early, too long, or too boring; (2) the pastor hurts my feelings when he talks about sin and hell; or (3) I can worship God just as well while fishing, golfing, or sunbathing. For that matter, why should I worship God - let alone submit to Him - when I am my own Higher Power?



Forget about the all-for-one and one-for-all mantra that unified the original 13 colonies... or that banded us together to abolish slavery, defeat Nazism and Fascism, codify Civil Rights, and win the Cold War. We beat the Soviet Union to the moon because we took to heart the words in JFK's inaugural address, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” When Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin stepped foot on the lunar surface, we all did.

Sadly, our national fabric started to unravel due to the anti-establishment attitudes and sexual revolution of the 1960s, a process that accelerated because of the Vietnam and Watergate debacles. The hedonism and self-absorption of the 1980s and 1990s exacerbated matters as did subsequent decades of government incompetence, overreach, and deception. Now, America finds itself immersed

in an ever-deepening moral and economic quagmire with no relief or rescue in sight.

Who knows if we can pull ourselves out of this self-inflicted death spiral that threatens to end the great American experiment in democracy. But if we do, it will be because Americans woke up to our rich spiritual heritage and started taking their faith more seriously.

And yes, that means heading back to church to sit alongside fellow sinners in desperate need of God's grace... like you and me.

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continued from page 1

will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.”

My friends, if the 13 American colonies could defeat the largest navy and the most powerful army in the world at the time, surely we can overcome the combined forces of the Socialist Democrats and the Progressive left. And when we do, our ultimate victory will be that much more glorious.

Don't lose heart, fellow patriots. It is always darkest before the dawn and, as Ronald Reagan reminded us, it is still “Morning in America.”

The day of reckoning - November 5, 2024 - is coming!

America's Growing Cultural Divide

The Continental Divide of the Americas - also known as the Great Divide, the Western Divide, or simply the Continental Divide - is the largely mountainous divide in North America that determines to which ocean or sea watersheds drain. Waters west of the divide drain into the Pacific Ocean while waters to the east drain into the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the Hudson Bay.

In recent years, America has experienced an even more pronounced divide known as the Culture Wars. Conservatives have one set of values that determines their worldview, and liberals have another... and ne'er the twain shall meet. A recent poll conducted by the Pew Research Center surveyed 8,000 adults of which 7,000 were registered voters, and the results couldn't have been more pronounced.

When asked if society is better off if people make marriage and having children a priority, 59% of prospective Trump voters agreed with the statement compared to just 19% of prospective Biden voters. "If you want to understand why Americans are so divided, look no further than how partisanship affects views on family formation and childbearing," said Matt Carpenter of the Family Research Council. "If Americans are so divided on something as basic as forming families and having children, then it stands to reason there is not much else that would bring us together."

On cultural issue after cultural issue, the disparity between conservatives and liberals was aston-

ishing. Pew reported that "88% of Biden supporters say abortion should be legal in all or most cases," compared to just 38% of Trump supporters who say the same. Likewise, only 23% of Biden supporters agreed with the statement, "Gun ownership does more to increase safety by allowing law-abiding citizens to protect themselves," compared to 86% of Trump supporters.

Whereas 79% of Biden supporters said that slavery, which was abolished in 1865, still affects Black Americans, only 27% of Trump supporters agreed. However, 59% of Biden supporters embraced transgenderism while just 9% of Trump supporters believed that "Someone can be a man or a woman even if that is different from the sex they were assigned at birth."

Pew went on to note that support for the idea that biological sex can be changed appears to be reversing. "[A] growing share of voters (65%) say that whether a person is a man or woman is determined by the sex they were assigned at birth," the report stated, signaling a modest victory for both science and common sense.

Finally, when asked if "The criminal justice system in this country is generally not tough enough on criminals," 81% of Trump supporters agreed with the statement compared to just 40% of Biden supporters.

As Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito said in a recent interview with liberal filmmaker Lauren Windsor for which he was roundly criticized by the Progressive left, "One side or the other is

going to win. There can be a working, a way of living together peacefully, but it's difficult, you know, because there are differences on fundamental things that really can't be compromised."

Alito also agreed with what Windsor clearly intended to be a "gotcha" moment. When asked "if people in this country who believe in God have got to keep fighting for that, to return our country to a place of godliness," Alito replied, "I agree with you."

Well, just for the record, I do, too; and so do the vast majority of Trump supporters. Biden supporters? Not so much... hence the growing divide.

God-fearing vs. God-loathing. Basically, it all comes down to this singular question and, as Justice Alito prophesized, only one side can win.

For the sake of future generations - and the survival of our constitutional republic-- I pray that the forces of good defeat the forces of evil this November and for the rest of American and world history.

Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

continued from page 1

comes country and friends. My career comes in a distant sixth place, if that.

After all, countries and careers are temporal at best, but eternal souls are priceless, especially the ones who were seated in rows 22 and 23 on our return flight into Orlando.

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