

“What Do We Celebrate Today”

New Life Church, 2 July 2009

A greeting to all here at New Life Church and it is truly an honor to be here with you this evening. Deerfield Beach has a real special place in my heart because it was here that I taught HS for a year upon my retirement from 22 years active duty service.

Here we are together at an event called “Celebrate America” and I believe a good speaker should always pose a question for the audience. Therefore, “What do we Celebrate Today?”

Read Psalms 33:12

Sit and imagine a select group of men, some 56, on 2 July 1776, 233 years ago. Imagine being Thomas Jefferson with the unenviable task of creating a document which basically was an act of treason and would mean the death warrant for those who would later sign.

You are about to capture in words one of the two greatest political documents ever known, the Declaration of Independence...later came the Constitution of the United States.

So what drove these men to such a conviction? What did they hope we would be here celebrating 233 years later?

On this same day 233 years ago, Gen George Washington stated;

“We have therefore to resolve to conquer or die: Our Country’s Honor, all call upon us for vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world.

Let us therefore rely upon the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions”.

Today we should be celebrating the beginnings of America and Americans. Today we should celebrate the triumph of the indomitable human will to seek out Freedom from tyrannical rule.

But then if I were to ask 200 people on the street this evening, “What is America and what is an American?” Do you think there would be one common answer or unifying theme?

Would the respondents understand that our Republic stands as a beacon of Liberty, Sacrifice, and Faith?

The 4th of July is more than just BBQ and fireworks, and time off from work. It is a day when we should reflect upon the fabric of this Nation, its history, struggles, challenges, defeats, and triumphs.....everyone should rent and watch “The Patriot” and “John Adams”.

It is a day when we should examine ourselves as America and Americans and recommit ourselves to our foundational principles, beliefs, and yes Faith.....is there something wrong with embracing those basic American values?

Lets us look at some things that have recently occurred:

1. We have a government that has castigated those who believe in certain foundational principles as extremists... and labeled returning military veterans as potential domestic terrorists.
2. Just two days ago in the NY State Senate, there were legislators who refused to stand and give honor to the Pledge of Allegiance...and even restrained a comrade who attempted to stand and recite the pledge.
3. A homegrown convert to islam gunned down two US Soldiers, killing one, outside an Army recruiting station in Little Rock, Ark.
4. There is legislation being developed to “give away” American citizenship to individuals who have entered our Country illegally...and we even have to “Press 1” for our own language, which no one in our Nation’s capitol wish to make official.
5. Lastly, we have our President state before a foreign nation that we are not a Christian Nation but one of many religions.

Why? How have we forgotten what we are supposed to celebrate?

Patrick Henry stated, “Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone that approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force you are inevitable ruined”.

And we all recall his most famous quote, “Give me liberty or give me death”.

The Freedoms we enjoy in America truly are not free; they come with a bill of personal sacrifice, responsibility, and accountability. We must hold ourselves to the highest degree of accountability to this Nation, under God indivisible with Liberty and Justice for all.

America is indeed a Land of Mutt's, you know that is true but there must be a common fabric bonding us as Americans, language, beliefs, principles, shared goals, and Faith.

Inclusiveness of all cannot come at the detriment of our Society; for when tolerance becomes a one way street it leads to cultural suicide.

Washington stated, "We are either a people, or we are not. If the former, let us, in all matters of great concern act as a Nation, which has National objects to promote, and a National character to support. If we are not, let us no longer act a farce by pretending to it".

What do we Celebrate Today?

We celebrate a rich Judeo-Christian heritage which is the foundational premise upon which America was birthed and exists today... sorry Mr President, you got it wrong!

Here are examples from our Founding Fathers;

Washington: "While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and Soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of Christian."

John Adams: "The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity. I will avow that I then believed and now believe that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God."

Jefferson: "God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of people that these liberties are of the Gift of God?.....I tremble for my Country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Hancock: Resistance to tyranny becomes the Christian and social duty of each individual...Continue steadfast and, with a proper sense of your dependence on God, nobly defend those rights which Heaven gave, and no man ought to take from us."

Patrick Henry: It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here."

And if there is any doubt about what guided the construction of our branches of government.... Read Isaiah 33:22.

Our Founding Fathers believed as David did in Psalms 20:7.....

Today we celebrate a rich heritage born of Men of Conviction, (24) of the (56) signers held seminary or Bible school degrees. (15) became POWs, (12) had their homes destroyed, and (9) fought and died.

As Christ gave us Freedom from sin...these Men gave us Freedom from tyranny, earthly Liberty.

Do not focus on the seemingly constant negative messages and hate driven upon us by our media. Celebrate that which is truly the "shining city which sits upon a hill". Never forget that you ARE the "Salt of the earth, the lamp which burns brightest".

Never forget that we must be committed to fighting for this rich heritage, our National objects and character...or else we shall just be another chapter in a history book in the future.

John Stuart Mill stated, "War is an ugly thing, not the ugliest of things: the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feelings which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse."

In conclusion, I am not advocating constant war or conflict, but I do advocate this, know that for which we should celebrate, honor it, and defend it. When the National Anthem is played correct someone that continues to talk or not remove their hat.

Teach our children and grandchildren the history of this Country, good, bad, and otherwise, develop in them a sense of pride in being an American, never ashamed to simply state, "I am an American".

In December 1776 after our young Nation had suffered defeats by the British, Thomas Paine stated, "These are the times that try Men's souls. The summer Soldier and sunshine Patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his Country; but he (she) that stands now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

As I depart, I humbly beseech you not be the sunshine Patriot, celebrate the 4th of July every day honoring our Judeo-Christian heritage, honoring America.

Faithful and True.

God be with you all, God Bless America