

[Psalm 33:12](#) (NIV)

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I. Brief History of how the U.S. became its own nation

People from other nations, mainly people from England came as explorers and settlers to America as early as 1607. The first established a permanent settlement in Jamestown, Virginia. (Actually, if you count the Spanish, they were coming since 1565) Many of the Colonists, when they first came apparently did not have a good plan on how to survive in America. So, many died by starvation, or fights with Indians, or even disease.

It is important to note before we go on that England united with Scotland in 1707 and became Great Britain. So, starting with the next paragraph, we will use the word "British" a lot.

By the early 1700's, 13 British colonies had been established on the east coast. Those Colonies were called: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Each colony had its own character and government, but was still controlled by the British. The word Colony meant someone else was in control of them. Later, when the Colonies broke away from British control, the various large locations were called States.

The Colonists became more and more angry with the British control due to what the Colonists felt were unfair taxes placed on them, as well as the fact that they had no representation to oppose the things they disliked. In other words, they had no "say-so." That led to many rebellious acts with the British, including what is infamously called the Boston Tea Party, which was a protest against highly taxed tea. The Colonists ended up boarding 3 British ships and dumping 343 chests of tea that was on 3 British ships, into the Boston harbor.

The British went to war with the Colonists in April, 1775. That war was called the Revolutionary war. Approximately 376,000 Colonists fought in the war, although never more than 48,000 soldiers at a time. The 376,000 total represented 12.5% of the total Colonist population. But, they were outnumbered by the British about 4 to 1.

The highest ranking general for the Colonists was George Washington. Another great military leader who turned traitor, was Benedict Arnold. He decided to change sides for money and a similar position with the British. He then began to fight the Colonists.

What we celebrate on July 4, 1776 is NOT the ending of that war, but the Colonists official signing of a Declaration of Independence from Britain. The war actually went on another 7 years. The Colonists, also referred to as the Continental Army, lost many of those battles, but they won many of them, too. They were helped greatly during the war by the French. In fact, if it were not for the French, they may not have ever won.

The war finally ended with the Treaty of Paris on Sept 3 of 1783. What famous American leaders were a part of that? Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Jon Jay.

During that war, that started in 1775, we have the famous story of Paul Revere riding his horse through the streets in Massachusetts yelling "The British are coming. The British are Coming." And, we also have the famous event where lanterns were put in a church steeple of a church in Boston. That church was called Old North Church. Those lanterns alerted the citizen that the British were coming.

Without knowing this history, it would be easy to think that we officially became the U.S. on July 4th, 1776. Which we now know is not really the case. We declared our independence then, but if we had lost the Revolutionary War we never would have become the United States.

My personal opinion is the day we celebrate would have been better on the day of the Treaty of Paris, on Sept 3, 1783. What we celebrated this week was the day 13 Colonies signing a Declaration of Independence from Britain control.

You might ask what I asked myself while putting this together this week "When was the war where our flag was still there, which brought about the song "Star Spangled Banner?" That was another war that occurred with Britain 29 years later, in 1812. That war came about because of British violation of maritime rights, interference with American trade, & their support of the Indians fighting. It also stemmed from the U.S. wanting to expand its territory.

II. Developing Citizen Protection that Has Guided our Nation and Its Future

I don't want to spend much time on this because it is not specific to the holiday we just celebrated on Friday of this week. The only reason I mention it is it is vital to America running right for 249 years. Next year, on July 4th, we will celebrate 250 years since the Declaration of Independence. Trump is already planning some kind of events for a year long celebration for that.

The "Constitution" was written in 1787, 11 years after the Colonists declared it was independent, and 4 years after the Treat of Paris. Key players in that were James Madison, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, etc

A big part of the Constitution was separating the powers of Government into 3 areas:

1. Legislative (Law writing)
2. Judicial (interpretation of law)
3. Executive (the "doing" branch which includes the President's power)

The add-on "Bill of Rights" was written 2 years later. It was called that because it had to do with protecting the rights of each citizen. Key players in that was James Madison, George Mason, and Thomas Jefferson.

1. **Right to practice any religion and to be free from pressure of religion.** Free speech, freedom of the press.
2. Right to Keep and bear arms
3. It restricted being forced to house soldiers in your home.
4. Freedom from unreasonable search and seizure.
5. Right of due process of the law, right to not self-incriminate, no double jeopardy.
6. Trial by jury, speedy trial (basically criminal cases)
7. Right to jury trial in Federal civil cases.
8. Bars excessive bail, excessive fines, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment.
9. Just because these list specific rights does not mean they might not have more rights.
10. Limits powers of Federal government to the constitution.

When I think of the Constitution and the add on Bill of Rights, I find myself thinking that our founding fathers were pretty brilliant with what they came up with.

The point to be made here is the Consitution and the Bill of Rights protects this country and the people in this country so they are not treated wrong by the government. It has worked very successfully, since it was written, for 238 yrs.

As we look at July 4th from a spiritual standpoint.

III. We have like a Spiritual Constitution and Spiritual Bill of Rights that we call the bible. It is meant to protect us in our lives. It is God telling us "**Follow this, and it will protect you. I know what is best for you.**" But, it is also a pattern on how to be guided in our lives, guided to what God wants for each of us to do, but also guided to be successful in our lives from God's standpoint.

As brilliant as the Constitution and the add-on Bill of Rights was to our nation, the bible is more brilliant. Everything about it is about living unselfishly, being guided by God, helping people, doing the right things in life, etc. The Christian teachings of the bible have made our country much better than it would have ever been without Christianity.

And, if EVERYONE in America truly lived a life for God, we would be even better than we are. There is nothing in the bible that is negative for people. It all has the potential to make people and this world better. It improves our relationships. It all is meant to bring blessings into our lives. It goes way farther than the manmade Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Christianity has already changed the world for the better. It has definitely made the world a better place than it would have been. I'm looking at the possibility of a specific sermon about this topic possibly in 2 weeks, probably July 20. I want to look at all the ways living for God has already made the world a better place, and more specifically, the U.S.

For now, I will give you just some of the examples, specifically, how it helped the U.S.:

- Orphanages, a place for children who lost their parents, or they were abandoned by their parents, most were started by Christians.
- Long before the development of hospitals, Christians were the main ones helping the helpless, the sick, and those with financial needs.
- Most hospitals were started by Christians. Many of which, still have Christian, or at least religious, names. Some of these hospitals were given names associated with bible saints like St Joseph hospital. Other names are Mercy hospital, which is a Catholic hospital, St Maries Hospital, and there are a bunch in St Louis like Missouri Baptist hospital, St Lukes, Barnes Jewish hospital, Christian hospital, or Christian Northwest hospital. Look at the history of hospitals and you will find most were started by Christians.
- Most organizations to help the poor and needy, like the Salvation Army, were started by Christians. Other great organizations today are Samaritan Purse, and Convoy of Hope.

Here is another great point: The United States has definitely helped change the world for the better. They have stepped in many times to take down evil nations, and to send aid to other nations. Even though we have a separation of church and state in our constitution, in most ways we really are a Christian, or we could say religious, nation.

Atheists do not believe at all in God. Agnostics believe a god started all of this, but He is not personal in anyone's lives. They believe He doesn't answer prayers, nor is there an afterlife. Tell me how many great things have come about in America through Atheists and Agnostics.

Even if you were an Atheist or an Agnostic, you absolutely could not deny the powerful impact Christianity, and even the Jews, have had on their own nation, and the world.

Summary -

Today, we celebrate with America the events surrounding our Declaration of Independence as a breakaway from the British.

We can also celebrate all the good things that this nation has done for the world. We are fortunate to live in a nation that is the best nation in the world. We are free from the control of an evil leader like Russia has, Iran has, North Korea has, and many other countries have. We can fortunately still celebrate the words "in God we Trust" on our money. We still have freedom of religion whereby we can pursue the religious belief of our choice. We can still serve the God of the Bible, which is the best life we could ever live.

For the United States, you really cannot separate it from God. I believe God made this a strong nation because He knew we would help the world. Most any of the beliefs that could end up destroying this nation are by the influence of non-Christians. And, there is a certain political

party that has lots and lots of those ideas that could really hurt our nation. They are full of leaders behind things that could do us great damage.

I, for one, am proud to be an American. We truly do represent God, probably more than any nation in the world, with the exception of Israel.

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Ending song Lee Williams

CLOSING PRAYER LEE CONNER