“Make America GODLY Again!”
Proverbs 14:34 (NKJV)

While we are still in this season of celebrating America’s independence, I thought it would be appropriate to preach a message on a patriotic theme.

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Proverbs 14, and let’s read verse 34.

Proverbs 14:34 (NKJV)

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

Fifty four years ago the Supreme Court of the United States made a crucial decision that effected the course of America ever since.

It was on June 17, 1963 that the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to have prayer in our public schools.

Many Christians point to that court ruling as “the day America turned her back on GOD.”
Now let's back up exactly one hundred years before the Supreme Court made that ruling. The date was **April 30, 1863.** It was on that date that President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation for our country to observe **A National Day of Prayer and Fasting.**

**In that proclamation, President Lincoln said.......**

*We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power, as no other nation has ever grown.*

*But we have forgotten GOD. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us.*

*And we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace..... we have become too proud to pray to the GOD that made us.*

*It behooves us then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, and to confess our national sins, and pray for clemency and forgiveness.*

The other day when I read this proclamation that was written by President Lincoln **154 years ago** it made me realize that America was already starting to turn her back on GOD less than one hundred years after she became a nation.

*********This evening for just a few minutes, I would like to answer three very important questions.*********
First of all......

I. What Made America Great? ANSWER: RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. Our scripture text says, “Righteousness exalts a nation” not power not wealth not military might but RIGHTEOUSNESS. RIGHTEOUSNESS exalts a nation.

2. When a nation exalts GOD and honors GOD and obeys GOD and worships GOD GOD blesses that nation richly! He sets that nation apart from all other nations. He raises that nation up to be admired and respected by all other nations.

3. Over the past three or four decades we have seen liberal educators try to re-write history and sever our nation's spiritual roots. But no matter how much they would like to re-write our history books, it does not and cannot change the truth that AMERICA was established by RIGHTEOUS men who believed and trusted in almighty GOD.

4. Just listen to what some of our great American forefathers said.

As the “Declaration of Independence” was being signed, Samuel Adams said: “We have this day restored the Sovereign Lord to whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting sun. Let His kingdom come!”
At the first Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia on June 29, 1787 Benjamin Franklin spoke these now familiar words: “In the beginning of our contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, sirs, were heard and graciously answered. We have been assured in the sacred writings that except the LORD build the house they labor in vain who build it. I firmly believe this and I also believe that that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.”

In the will of PATRICK HENRY, who made the famous speech on “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death”, Henry wrote: “I have now disposed of all my property to my family. There is one thing more that I wish I could give to them. That is the Christian religion. If they had that and I had not one schilling, they would have been rich; and if they had not that and I had given them the world they would have been poor.”

In 1923 President Woodrow Wilson said….. “Our civilization cannot survive materially unless it is redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated by the Spirit of Christ and being made free and happy by the practices that spring out of that Spirit.”

5. If you don't believe America was a “righteous” nation in her humble beginnings just listen to this:

- In 1776, eleven of the thirteen original colonies required one to be a Christian in order to run for any political office. (don't you wish we still had that law in effect?)

- In 1777 the Continental Congress voted to spend $300,000 to purchase Bibles to be distributed throughout the colonies.

- 94% of the writings of our nation’s founding forefathers contain direct quotes from the word of GOD.
-Did you know the State Constitutions of all fifty of our states mention GOD?

-Did you know the Liberty Bell has Leviticus 25:10 inscribed on it, which says: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

6. Let the liberal educators and historians re-write the history books and try erase America's Christian heritage all they want.

   But nothing erases the truth that America was established by God-fearing men who believed and trusted in GOD for this country's success and prosperity.

7. **What Made America Great? ANSWER: RIGHTEOUSNESS**

   “Righteous exalts a nation!”

Now here's our second question.......
II. What Has Cost America Her Greatness?  ANSWER:  SIN

1. Listen once again to Proverbs 14:34........

   “Righteousness exalts a nation, but SIN is a reproach to any people.”

2. In his commentary on Proverbs, the late John Gill writes:

   “Where vice reigns, iniquity abounds, profaneness, impiety, and immorality of all sorts prevail, a people become mean and despicable; they fall into poverty and contempt; are neither able to defend themselves, nor help their neighbors, and so are despised by them.”

3. It only stands to reason that if righteousness “exalts” a nation, unrighteousness will bring a nation down.

4. To say that AMERICA has not moved a long way from her righteous beginnings is to be blinded to the truth.

   Since 1960 there has been...........

   -A 560% increase in violent crime.

   -A 400% increase in the number of illegitimate births.

   -A quadrupling of the divorce rate.

   -A tripling of the percentage of children living in single parent homes.

   -More than a 200% increase in the number of teenage suicides.
-We have seen a **75 point drop** in the average SAT **scores** of High School Students.

-Today **30% of all births in this country** and **68% of all black births** are illegitimate.

-Even though the United States has only **6% of the world's population** we have **80% of the world's divorces**.

-America is the world leader in **murder, rape, and violent crime**.

-**80%** of the whiskey consumed in the world is consumed by Americans.

5. Minister and Christian author James Merritt has described modern America in this sobering terms.

*We have become a nation where the criminal is deified, the victim is vilified, and where evil is called good, and good is called evil. We have become a nation where the life of the snail darter has become more valued than the baby in the womb.*

*We are a nation that is marked by moral regression, sexual revolution, and spiritual rebellion. I predict that before America is conquered from without, she is going to corrode from within. America will not die by homicide, she's going to die by suicide. We will not ultimately be destroyed by what someone else will do to us, but what we do to ourselves.*
Hear me, and hear me well. America's biggest problem is not inflation, interest rates, budget deficits, or even crime. Her biggest problem is sin. America's greatest enemy is not Iraq, Iran, North Korea, or Russia. America's greatest enemy is herself.”

6. In our lifetime we have seen America go from being the most respected nation in the world to becoming a by-word and a laughing stock. We have seen this country go from the pinnacle of glory to the pit of dishonor and despair, and it is all because of SIN!

7. What Made This Country Great? RIGHTeousness
What Has Cost This Country Her Greatness? SIN

Now here is the third question we want to consider......

III. What Can Truly Make America Great Again? ANSWER: RIGHTeousness

1. Listen once again to Proverbs 14:34........

   “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

2. If righteousness made our country great in her humble beginnings........and sin cost us our greatness........it only stands to reason that If America is to truly be great again, America must go back to her righteous “roots.”
3. As you remember, Donald Trump's campaign slogan was “Make America Great Again!” That slogan resonated with the American people. The promises to repeal Obamacare......to lower taxes for the middle class......to bring jobs back to America......to strengthen our military ......to secure our borders......to aggressively go after ISIS terrorists......to rebuild America's Infrastructure......and to nominate a conservative judge for the vacant seat in the Supreme Court really struck a cord in the hearts of the American people. And last November Mr. Trump was elected to become our nation's 45th President.

My prayer, and perhaps yours' also is that God's blessings will be on President Trump and Vice President Pence, and that He will grant success to their agenda to truly “Make America Great Again.”

4. But you and I must understand that in order to “Make America Great Again” we must “Make America GODLY Again.” And brothers and sisters, that starts with you and me. That starts in our Church houses all across this great land.

5. Remember that familiar admonition in 11 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV)

   If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

6. GOD doesn't say, “If all you corrupt politicians” or “If all you Hollywood elites” or “If all you liberal educators” will do these things, He says, “If my people, who are called by my name” will do these things.
7. I don't know if you have ever considered this, but this verse implies that when a nation falls from glory......when a nation falls in disgrace......that much of the blame lies rests squarely upon the shoulders of God's people. When God's people don't live like God's people ought to live.....and don't act like God's people ought to act.....and don't do the things God's people ought to do.....the whole nation suffers for it.

8. If America is ever to be great again, America must be godly again! There must be a revival sweep across this land like the revivals that took place in the “Great Awakening” of the early 1700's.

   Listen to how the powerful preacher Jonathan Edwards described the spirit of revival that came over his Church in March and April of 1735.

   "Our public assemblies were then beautiful, the congregation was then alive in God's service, everyone earnestly intent on the public worship, every hearer eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth; the assembly in general were, from time to time in tears while the Word was preached; some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love, others with pity and concern for the souls of their neighbors."
9. That is the kind of revival we need here at
Christian Hope and in all our Churches across
America.

10. The truth is many of today's professing Christians
are just as worldly, just as materialistic, and just
as sinful as their non-believing friends.

The truth is many of today's Christians have grown
cold and calloused towards gospel preaching and
instead are seeking out those who will “tickle their
ears” with sugar-coated, feel-good sermons.

The truth is many of today's Christians could care
less about lost souls, which is evident in the fact
that our Churches are no longer evangelizing.

11. That verse in II Chronicles 7:14 tells us four things
that we as God's people must do in order to see
GOD heal our nation of her woes.

First, we need to HUMBLE ourselves towards God.
“If My people who are called by My name will
do what? “HUMBLE THEMSELVES.”
Second, we need to **HUNGER** for God.  
“If my people who are called by My name will **humble themselves** and do what? **PRAY!** We have got to become a praying people once again. We have got to get back to praying as though everything depends upon GOD!

Third, we need a **HEART** for God.  
“If My people who are called by My name will **humble themselves**......and pray......and do what? **SEEK my face.”** We have got to stop going through the motions of worship and get back to truly loving GOD with all our hearts, all our soul, and with all our mind.

We need to **HUMBLE** ourselves towards God.  
We need to **HUNGER** for God.  
We need a **HEART** for God.

And fourthly, we need a **HOLINESS** before God.  
“If My people who are called by My name will **humble themselves**......and pray......and seek my face......and do what? “Turn from their wicked ways” I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
12. **What Can Truly Make America Great Again?**

**RIGHTeousness!** If America is to be “GREAT” again, we who are God’s people must become “GODLY” again!

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**C O N C L U S I O N**

Christian author and speaker Josh McDowell has written a very sobering book entitled: “The Last Christian Generation.”

In his book, McDowell talks about the spiritual crisis we are seeing in America’s Churches, especially regarding our youth. A study conducted of teenagers in today’s churches reveals a very disturbing picture:

**Two-thirds of the teenagers surveyed believe.......**

- that there is no absolute moral truth (*blatant denial of Bible*)
- that there is no way to tell which religion is true
- that Jesus is not the Son of the one true God

McDowell’s premise is that if this is the belief system adhered to by most of today’s teenagers in our Churches, this may very well be America’s last Christian generation.

Does that disturb you like it does me?
During the American Revolution Tom Payne uttered those now famous words, “These are times that try men's souls.”

As America continues down her current path of immorality and godlessness, the validity of our faith and trust in GOD is going to be tried and tested like never before.

We need to HUMBLE ourselves before God.
We need to HUNGER for God.
We need a HEART for God.
And we need HOLINESS before God.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”