

Many Tribulations

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Since yesterday was Independence Day, I want to briefly consider just one interesting comparison between those people in 1775 and now in America today. I've titled this, "What Are We Becoming?"

A number of years ago, I gave a series of sermons proving, I feel, beyond a shadow of a doubt to anybody with a true knowledge of both biblical doctrines and American history that America, despite all the claims to the contrary made by many, has never been a Christian nation. Neither the founding fathers, with names like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison and many, many others, were Christians, nor were the average American citizens. That they were better educated regarding Christian truths, of that there is no doubt in my mind. Were they more consistent in their obedience to Christian truths than today's Americans calling themselves "Christian"? Absolutely. But there were huge gaps in their practice, knowledge about God Himself, His purpose, and other teachings essential to salvation and preparation for His kingdom.

That God was involved in the revolt against King George III and his parliament in order to separate Manasseh from Ephraim so as to shape end time events—I have no doubt of his involvement. I also have no doubt that most of the original settlers came here to secure religious freedom and that most of them emigrated from Britain to get re-established in life. And once they got here, they very much liked what they found and worked diligently to build themselves and the colony.

But when the very government they left behind in order to build a new life here began imposing some of the very burdens on them that they were escaping from, they became angry, not only quickly, but also heatedly enough to attempt to throw them off by means of a revolt. Unlike those living in other colonies that Britain founded, these people were made of pretty stern stuff.

By 1775, when open warfare began, the average American colonist was better educated than the average Brit. In fact, he had a fairly good grasp of history, and he had a standard of living much higher than the average British subject in the homeland. The education they received was given primarily by the churches they attended and private schools because there were no government schools then operating.

Think about the challenge that these people accepted. They were taking on what was then the entire world's leading power. They had no standing United States Army because no United States even existed. At best, they had only 13 militias that belonged to the 13 disunited colonies. They had no Constitution they were defending. And in one sense, all they had was a lot of guts, and perhaps exaggerated concepts of self-government.

What they did have going for them was that God provided the colonies with excellent human leadership for that kind of circumstance, an ocean of distance between them and Britain, and they had the French meddling in the situation, seeking advantages for themselves while Britain was distracted by the war with their colonies. The French (Reuben) were very helpful, keeping the British preoccupied, and thus divided, while the actual warfare was going on over here.

George Washington and his staff were excellent defensive leaders, good at conserving, thus making efficient use of what little they did have militarily. The hurriedly-assembled army gradually retreated but fought just enough to lure the British army into this part of the colonies—to southern Virginia, North Carolina, and northern South Carolina, where the colonists could best fight the kind of warfare that they were very good at. It was a guerilla operation in which small groups of American soldiers more or less operated independently, wounding the British army with hundreds of bleeding wounds that of themselves were nothing, but cumulatively, they were severely weakening the British army.

This, combined with the French Navy very effectively blockading the ports on the East Coast, kept the British army from being well supplied until General Cornwallis and his army had no alternative but to surrender because they were running out of soldiers and had neither food nor munitions to

continue the war. The seemingly impossible was accomplished. This ragtag group won their freedom from Britain.

One of the major powder kegs that set off this conflict was King George's parliament imposing taxes on the colonists that they felt were extremely unfair. You remember the cry from your school days, don't you? The colonists despised the imposition of taxes in which they had no opportunity to have any input. The imperial government in London simply decreed them, and the colonists were incensed. So their rallying cry was, "No taxation without representation." What followed that was the Boston Tea Party, and it in turn was followed by small skirmishes, and the unrest that led to open rebellion was beginning to take shape.

Do you have any idea how high British taxation was on the colonies? The British Parliament made that move because they attempted to make money on the rapidly growing prosperity of this particular colony, so this particular imposition was at one percent. A duty tax. And Britain—listen to this—imposed no income tax on the colonies either. Now listen. A 1% increase, and the colonists went to war—over 1%. Now I understand that there were other inconveniences to their concepts of liberty, and the colonists had to endure this because of the British presence. But this was the match that lit the rebellion: a 1% tax increase.

Do you know how much the tax increase was in the United States by the imposition of Obamacare? It's almost unbelievable by comparison.

It's no mystery as to why there is a Second Amendment to our Constitution. The framers of the Constitution wanted to ensure that the citizenry had the power to defend themselves against a government that corrupted itself by working against the stated purposes of the Constitution.

Today we have a president who rules over us in an imperial way so openly that authors are now clearly comparing him to Roman emperors. We have a Congress of supposedly-elected representatives of both parties who do not truly represent us, but rather special interests who contribute large offerings (we might say bribes) to ensure their reelection. And we have a Supreme

Court that ignores the Constitution and history, deciding issues on the basis of political expediency rather than historically-proven legal principles. And yet there is no rebellion. Americans are largely passively taking it.

Where are we headed? What are we becoming? It seems, brethren that many, many Americans are in a self-imposed march to keep from having to live according to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It is as though the concepts in those two documents are foreign to them—un-American, as it were, and rejected. This to me is a major, head-shaking pity compared to what we were a little over 200 years ago.