

The Declaration of Dependence

Scripture: Jeremiah 10:23 *“I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.”*

Introduction:

Next Sunday will be the 4th of July. We will be going down to Oklahoma that weekend to perform the wedding ceremony for Blake and Addison and then we are going to stay the following week for a little vacation time, so we will be missing you guys for the next couple of weekends.

July 4th time is really the greatest time to take vacation because the one thing about Iowa that is hard for me to swallow is that you can't shot fireworks here.

Every year, while growing up, the 4th of July was a time of celebration, we had big cookouts and bought and shot fireworks. To me it just seems patriotic....somehow it runs through my blood and it brings out the little boy in me.

But let's stop and consider what the 4th of July is really about. It is about the celebration our nations independence.

In the early 1700's the first American colonists from England had arrived and were settling in. They had come over on the Mayflower and landed at Plymouth Rock. The King of England thought that America was his and did everything in his power to rule over it. But the colonist found it hard to work with the king and especially hard to take his exertions of authority from across the pond.

In 1773 with double taxation and the Boston tea party the colonists were at the end of their rope with the king. On April 19 1775 at Lexington Mass. the first shot of the revolutionary war was fired... “the shot that was heard around the world”. The revolutionary war was America saying that England would not be in authority over her.

So on July 4th, 1776 the second continental congress drafted a written resolution called the (Declaration of Independence) in order to proclaim the sovereignty of America to the world. Sovereignty being our right to stand alone and not be governed or controlled by any other country.

I would like to remind you of some of the words of The Declaration of Independence today. It begins like this:

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

.....But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

.....The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

(Next they specifically list some 28 complaints about the King of England)

Followed by:

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved..."

Transitional Statement:

Our country made a mistake that day. We basically said we don't need anybody to be over us, because we are sovereign and if you just happened to catch the tail end of this declaration, you must have noted on whose authority it was enacted... by the authority of the colonies.

This seemingly small glitch in our nations beginning has taken us from the humble beginning of "In God We Trust" to the current declaration by our president that "we are not a Christian nation".

Through the course of time many individuals have made similar personal stands. But it is my thinking that on July 4th 1776 we would have done much better to make a Declaration of Dependence on God and proclaimed before all the world that we would be dependent on the sovereignty of God Almighty.

Today we are going to look at 5 areas of biblical history to collectively remind us of our need to depend on God.

I. First, let's think God's desire before the beginning of time.

- A. Before the earth was ever made...in eternity past...God desired to make mankind.
 - 1. He desired to create a people to love and be loved by.
 - 2. To be extensions of His glory and His purposes.
- B. But in order for man to love God mankind would have to be given the ability to make "choices"
 - 1. I'm glad that God didn't make a colony of Christians who had no choice but to love Him, because love can only develop by choice.
 - 2. But, with choices, comes the ability to fail
- C. God, in His divine providence, knew that man would fail, that is he would sin and not be able to make payment for that sin.
 - 1. But God choose to make us anyway
 - 2. God made a grand plan to make the payment Himself, so man would have opportunity if he choose to come back to God.
- D. In 1 Peter 1:18-20, where redemption is being discussed, God says that "*Christ was chosen before the creation of the world*"
 - 1. In this verse we can see that the salvation of man was in the mind of God before the dawn of the first day! It's really great to know that God wanted us even with our imperfections
 - 2. And that He created us to be a saved people.
- E. **So by any standard of measurement we see God as dependable before the beginning of time.**

II. Next, let's look at God's creation and man's choice in the beginning.

- A. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and the earth was formless and void.
 - 1. But God shaped the earth in such a way as to support life and so that mankind could survive on the face of it.
- B. And then created the most spectacular of all his creations.
 - 1. God made mankind ...in His own image Gen 1:27
- C. He provided a garden of food and water for them Gen 2:8
- D. God laid out His expectation for them.

1. By making a covenant with man and told him not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Gen 2:16

E. God also gave the man direction and purpose.

1. Gen 2:15 to cultivate garden

F. **So by any standard of measurement we see God as dependable in the beginning of time.**

G. But....man's reaction to God's dependability wasn't good.

1. Understanding that God gave them His love....by giving them the ability to choose Him or not.

- a. Man desired his independence more than God.

2. Satan told man that it was ok to break the rule and eat of the tree that God commanded them not to.

- a. So man willfully sinned against God.

- b. Isaiah 59:1-2 tells us that sin separates man from God and that is just what happened.

- c. So man was thrown out of the presence of God and became slaves to sin.

G. Thus man ended up right where God knew he would be without Him, in a bind and unable to bale himself out.

III. Now, let's think about God's redemptive plan for mankind during the Patriarch Age.

A. God knowing man is now slave to sin must set into motion His eternal plan to throw man a lifeline.

1. In Gen 3:15 right after the fall of man, even before God ever pronounces Judgment, He gives His plan for saving mankind.

- a. When He curses the serpent He says "you will strike his heel and He will crush your head" This is talking about the salvation that is offered by Christ when He defeats Satan by paying the price for our sins on the cross and allowing man to return to God.

2. The lifeline described in scripture is called redemption. It was a word used to describe the process of buying a slave out of slavery.

B. This lifeline was guaranteed by covenant promise with Abraham

1. Gen 12:2-3, God tells Abraham that all people will be blessed through you.

- a. Gen 22:18 goes on to elaborate on this promise by saying that in your seed all nations will be blessed,

- 1) And Paul in Gal 3:16 identifies that lifeline seed to be Christ.

C. From Adam until the time of Moses, death reigned. (Romans 5:14)

1. Sin was allowed to become fully developed.
2. Then God displayed His sovereign justice on sin by destroying all those evil people with a great flood.
3. No place can we more clearly understand that the wages of sin is death...Romans 6:23

- a. I believe this happened so that man could see the result of sin and I certainly think it is a foreshadowing of the end of time in which God will punish the wicked and save but a few....

- b. Sounds like the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:13-14

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it”

D. But God provided escape for His faithful.

1. Only eight people of the earth choose God.
2. Noah and his family.

E. **So by any standard of measurement we see God as dependable during the Patriarch Age.**

IV. Then from Moses till Christ we see the great class room of God.

A. For the implementation of God’s plan, preparation needs to be done and training needs to happen.

1. So in Gal 3:24 we see that the Law of Moses was given as tutor, KJV says a schoolmaster, to lead us to Christ.
2. In simpler terms God takes His people and leads them by the hand to Jesus

B. Hebrews 10:1 reminds us today that the Law was but a shadow of a future reality.

1. It is kind of like seeing a shadow of an air plane. Sometimes you can see the shadow long before you see the air plane. The shadow is an image but its not reality.

2. So as we look at God's training that happened under the Law of Moses we must understand that there would be a like reality under Christ.
So let's take a look at this shadow in the Law of Moses which will represent Christ.

C. It is really interesting where God begins His training process.

1. The Israelites are enslaved in Egypt, just as all mankind were slaves of sin.
2. So God sends them a mediator (a go between) which was Moses to communicate with them and for them.
 - a. God doesn't just strand them and hope they find their way.

D. During the last plague of Egypt, God gives His people the most clear representation of who Jesus would be and what He would be about.

1. The last plague was the death of the first born, in which the destroyer would march through Egypt and kill all the first born children.
2. God told Moses to tell the Israelites to take the blood of a sacrificial Pascal lamb, which was to be the first born and without blemish, and put its blood on the doorframes of their homes and destroyer would pass by and the people would be saved.

E. Here God begins to teach His people that life was related to blood. Just as God had told Noah not to eat an animal with blood still in it because the life was in the blood.

F. Later at Mount Sinai when God actually gives them the Law they are going to learn the same principles again. By all these laws given, some 350, they easily recognize that they were slaves of their own sins and according to Duet 27:26 that those outside of these laws were wicked and would be cursed

1. Within the Law was the institution of the high priest and by this they understood the separation that existed between them and God and the need for a mediator.
2. Through the sacrificial system they learned that sin could symbolically be atoned for. A step by step procedure of sacrificial rules taught them that sin had to be transferred and that blood is where the atonement was. According to Heb 10:4 the blood of bulls and goats could not remove sin....so this great training ultimately taught them that they couldn't save themselves.

G. So by the Law God taught them that they were slaves to sin, that those not in covenant relationship with God would be destroyed, that a mediator between God and man was required, that blood was required for atonement and that man couldn't save himself.

H. **So by any standard of measurement we see God as dependable during the Mosaic Age.**

V. Finally at the cross and until the Lord comes again

- A. At the cross, Christ fulfills the training of the Old Covenant in reality by presenting Himself as our perfect high priest and there on that cross He offered Himself as a perfect atoning sacrifice for the sins of all who would choose Him.
- B. Maybe it is a bit ironic that Patrick Henry said give me liberty or give me death
 - 1. Because it is through the death, burial and resurrection of baptism that true liberty comes. See Gal 2:20
- C. So the lifeline of God (Jesus) was cast for the salvation of all who would believe.
 - 1. And to those who would believe....they will become heirs of the promise given to Abraham according to Galatians chapter 3
 - 2. Justified by the blood of the lamb to be in the presence of God.
- D. Romans 8:1 says that those in Christ no longer stand condemned. Because now they have a perfect high priest (Jesus) to represent their case before God, they have the perfect sacrifice to buy them from slavery and to be restored to a perfect relationship with God.

Conclusion:

Whether our country gets it right or not, we as Christians should make a Declaration of Dependence on God and remember to live that way, because God has always been dependable.