

We the People II



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As we are about to celebrate Independence Day, I wonder, what does it mean to you? Do you reflect on how our country came to be and Whose she really is? Do you share the goodness of America's past with your family and teach them why we celebrate this day?

Do you pledge your allegiance to our flag and to the republic for which it stands? Do you know your responsibility in keeping that republic – for the people and by the people? Are you doing your part? And are you bought into the notion that our great nation was created under God to be indivisible, with liberty and justice for all?

Last year I wrote an article entitled “We the people”. In it, I spoke at length about these things. I’ve never had such incredible responses to any of my articles the way I did with that one. Likely this is because it struck a chord with many as the truths I spoke about were agreed with. My intent today was to do a reprint of that article because of how utterly important it is to each of us as Americans. But as I was editing it to prepare for the reprint, I felt led to expand upon it instead. If you did not read “We the people”, you can find it here: <https://www.babcockautocare.com/blog/we-the-people>

How America came to be is oh-so-important. And just like so many things in history, it should be discussed, contemplated, and carefully considered. But what is perhaps even more important is the future—the future of our country, the future of our people, the future of our children, and the future of our children’s children. And though we must have an understanding of our nation’s beginnings, we must also reflect on how she got to her present in order to change her future for the better.

So let us take a journey together. First, let us regain an understanding of how our country came to be and what she was built upon. I invite you to reread my article at the website listed above. When you’ve done this, please rejoin me here so that we can review the last couple of centuries in order to see together how we have strayed from where we started. And then, let us explore how we—you and I—might go forth in more boldly doing our part to keep the republic for which our nation stands and begin to reweave the moral fabric in order to thrive once again.

A few quotes from the infamous evangelist, Billy Graham are bound to help us gain insight into America—past and present:

“America has probably been the most successful experiment in history. The American Dream was a glorious attempt. It was built on a religious foundation. Its earliest concepts came from Holy Scripture.”

“Spiritually, we have wandered far from the faith of our fathers ... no nation which relegates the Bible to the background, which disregards the love of God and flouts the claims of the Man of Galilee, can long survive.”

“Our nation grew strong in an era when moral standards were emphasized, and it will grow weak when we condone that which we once condemned.”

These quotes from Dr. Graham speak to where America was and where America has come. With these words, he emphasizes what others have said, specifically magnifying Eric Metaxes’s views in his book “If You Can Keep It: The Forgotten Promise of American Liberty”.

What factors do you believe are responsible for the decline of our nation and the erosion of moral values among our citizens? How did we veer so far away from the virtuous nation that America was initially founded as? Though we cannot turn back

the hands of time, do you think we can turn back to our virtuous ways of old?

I would like to preface what I am about to share, with this: I am a sinner and fall short of the glory of God. I do not have all of the answers nor have I lived a perfect, sinless life. I am not writing out of judgment of others, I am writing out of truth and out of great love for my country and my Savior, Jesus Christ whom I need every single day. His word is what guides my life and His Spirit, which lives in me, is what I rely on to guide my words. My greatest desire is for all to know Him in order to come together to do our best to live like Him, serve like Him and love like Him. This, I believe, is the way back for our nation.

Recently, while driving, I witnessed incidents that left me shocked:

- When leaving Apache Mall, I saw a passenger in a vehicle roll down his window to thoughtlessly toss a can into the ditch while laughing mirthlessly with the others in the vehicle.

- While searching for a parking spot, I observed a motorist remove trash from her car, place it on the ground next to her vehicle, then drive off, leaving the trash behind.

- I entered a lane with ample space between myself and an approaching vehicle. However, the vehicle behind me, which was visibly damaged and completely missing its front bumper, suddenly accelerated and recklessly swerved around me. I was taken aback when I glanced over and noticed the driver displaying an offensive hand gesture, all while driving aggressively and carelessly—with children present in the backseat.

Don’t get me wrong—I’ve encountered litter on the roadside and in parking lots in the past, and I’ve witnessed motorists expressing anger towards other drivers, even with children present. However, what struck me this time was the nonchalant and reckless manner in which these offenses were committed right before my very eyes.

Certainly, these instances may seem relatively small compared to other issues transpiring in our country. What sorts of things have been shocking to you? What about the transgender activist flashing at the White House? Were you appalled to hear of this and did it make you wonder, “why are ‘pride events’ even being held at the residence of the President?”. Were you equally shocked, as I was, when learning of the new amendment to a California state bill, which states that parents who do not affirm their children’s gender identity could be accused of child abuse? Isn’t it a parent’s responsibility to protect and guide their children? Why are children now able to make such decisions without that protection?

Whether big or small, every issue that goes against what is good and moral behavior has left me pondering the state of civility, morals, and responsible behavior in America. How could our beautiful American tapestry have become so unraveled?

For centuries, religion and moral values have played a crucial role in shaping the identity and fabric of American society. They have provided a moral compass, guiding individuals towards principles such as integrity, compassion, and respect for one another. However, in recent times, there has been a noticeable departure from good morals and religion in America. This erosion has had far-reaching consequences, affecting various aspects of our society and contributing to the decline of our nation. Let’s look at what has changed, the impact it has made, and what “We the People” can do about it.

Directionally Lost

Religion has traditionally provided a moral framework that has helped individuals navigate right from wrong. It instills virtues such as honesty, forgiveness, and empathy, which are vital for

maintaining a harmonious and ethical society. However, as religious observance has declined in America, so too has the influence of these moral values. This loss of a moral compass has resulted in a society where self-interest often takes precedence over communal well-being, leading to an increase in unethical behavior, such as dishonesty, corruption, and exploitation.

Envision in your mind an actual compass. A compass typically consists of a magnetized needle that aligns itself with the Earth’s magnetic field, allowing the user to determine the cardinal directions (north, south, east, west). When America was founded, the “magnetized needle” aligned itself with God—His ways, His goodness—trusting that He would lead one in the right direction. You would hold that compass in front of you and watch it make incremental adjustments in order to get you where God was leading. With the majority of society following that compass, God’s holy hand was on our nation and lifting her to a place of power and goodness as “We the People”—one nation, under God.

As I consider what that compass might look like today, I see it spinning wildly out of control. Everyone is confused in which direction to take. Some people are following whichever direction “feels good” and will bring the most personal “happiness”. Some are following other people’s compasses because they want to feel important and that makes them feel like they are going in the right direction. While still others, like me, are staring at that compass of old—the one that is magnetized with God, and wondering what we can do to show others the goodness of His direction.

The truth is, the peace so many seek, the happiness so many pursue, and the love so many yearn for are all found in that compass of old. And when we collectively embrace and follow that compass once more, and stop condoning or even tolerating that which goes against it, we will gradually transform into a virtuous nation where “We the people” have a voice and can help guide others towards the righteous path set by God.

Me the People

Religion has long been a cornerstone of family values, promoting concepts such as fidelity, commitment, and the sanctity of marriage. With the decline in religious adherence, these values have been eroded, leading to a breakdown in the traditional family structure. High divorce rates, an increase in single-parent households, and a decline in parental involvement have had a profound impact on children’s well-being and the overall stability of society. Strong families are the foundation of a healthy society, providing support, guidance, and moral upbringing for future generations.

When my younger sister was preparing to get married for the first time, she said to me “I need to get a good college degree so if I get divorced, I will be able to provide for myself and my kids”. Her statement boggled my mind ... and yet, it became a self-fulfilled prophesy. What has seemed to happen in our society is that divorce begets divorce in the minds of so many individuals and they adopt the thought of “if the marriage doesn’t work, we will just get a divorce.” Do they not think of or see the people in this scenario that will be negatively affected?

Here’s the deal, we have become so self-consumed and so wrapped up in the wedding, that we forget about the marriage. We want to say “Yes to the dress” but “Maybe to the marriage”. It’s all about having the perfect dreamy day and impressing all of the attendees—who cares about what happens when the party ends?

Friends, how have we come to this? Why aren’t we telling our children how hard but rewarding marriage is? Why aren’t we preparing them for their marriages instead of gushing about the weddings? Why aren’t they seeing us opening our

Bibles to learn from God? Why aren’t we modeling selflessness, kindness, and servanthood in our marriages and all of our roles in life?

We live in a society that’s all about “me”—me time, me first, me want, me has to have. The pursuit of personal success, fulfillment, and happiness is often seen as a fundamental aspect of the “American Dream”. And while the focus of bettering one’s self with personal growth and care can have many positive effects, it can also lead to self-centeredness and growing in ways that only benefit “me”. What is often lost is everyone else—that doesn’t seem very “dreamy” to me.

The reason Jesus came was not only to seek and save the lost—but to show us how to serve one another. His Word emphasizes humility, compassion, and selflessness. He was a servant leader who prioritized the needs of others above His own. He taught His followers to love one another, help those in need, and practice acts of kindness and generosity. Though He shows us how to do this with everyone, shouldn’t it start within the four walls of our homes?

What if we began to model His ways with our families? What if we asked our spouses what we can do to help them? Better yet, what if we find ways to serve without asking? And even better yet, what if we sacrifice our time in something we want to do in order to serve them? What if we remember everything in God’s Word about how much more blessed it is to give than to receive and live this out?

What if instead of spending time on devices (social media, news, sports, video games, etc) that divide us, we spend quality time with the people living under our roofs to unite us? What if instead of demanding that our spouses change, we make changes and learn how to better serve them? Do you think it would make a difference?

I can speak from first-hand experience that it absolutely does. And when we learn to serve within our families in these ways, it overflows outside of our homes. So instead of divorce begets divorce, staying married will beget staying married. What’s more, as “We the People” start to reweave new tapestries within our homes, the beauty will be seen outside of our homes—in who we are, in who our spouses are, and in who our children are, and we will leave a beautiful legacy. Now that is what I call the “American Dream”.

Divisible and Alone

The church has always provided comfort and hope to people facing difficulties, brought communities together (fostering a sense of belonging), and given America a united purpose under God. As religious practices and morals have decreased, isolation has increased which has given rise to the almighty “me, myself, and I” phenomenon. Again, life becomes about “Me the people” rather than “We the people”. When this happens, individuals search for meaning within themselves and create other gods, like wealth, power, “likes”, etc to fill the void in their souls.

When we replace the Almighty God with false gods, the lack of moral guidance and spiritual support leads to feelings of loneliness, despair, and declining mental health. As the church fails to unite and foster love and support for one another, social cohesion diminishes, leaving individuals to navigate life on their own. With a reduced emphasis on humility, selflessness, and loving others, personal gain, consumerism, and immediate gratification become the primary focus. This shift undermines community and shared responsibility, hindering progress in addressing social issues and inequality. It also leads to the pursuit of wealth and possessions which become more important than caring for others, ultimately harming communal well-being.

Recently, I visited my oldest son, Jake, in New York City. He had just had his thirtieth birthday and graduated from Columbia University and I went to celebrate him and see his life. On day two of my three-day trip, it was raining, so we decided to spend the majority of it indoors at the 9/11 Memorial. As I listened to the recorded voice of Robert De Niro speak to me from headphones while I toured the memorial, floods of memories came pouring into my mind.

Like any tragic event, we often remember where we were and what we were doing when it took place. Do you remember that horrific day as smoke billowed from the twin towers? Where were you? What were you doing? What else do you remember and what feelings does it evoke now?

Though I remember the pure shock and terror of it all, there are other specific things I remember. I remember the images of heroes—not just the emergency responders, but of citizens looking

out for the well-being of others. I remember our nation coming together in a way I had never witnessed—with a feeling of comradery, respect, and united love. And I remember people flocking to churches by the thousands.

“We the people” needed one another—we needed to feel safe, secure, loved, supported, and united. We needed to be assured that the bad in this world could be trumped by the goodness of God. And we needed the hope we received from the Word of God and the embraces from His people.

We are not a people made to do life in isolation and without God. In Ecclesiastes 4, Solomon speaks at length of this and how together we can love more, do more, and overcome more. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of how we are all needed to be the church—though we are all made in the image of God, He made us unique in our gifts and talents and we are all needed to love and serve together. There are no if, ands, or buts about it. Our skin color matters not, our gender matters not, our age matters not. “We the people” were all created to work together for God’s glory.

Power Struggles

The separation of church and state has been a foundational principle of American democracy, ensuring freedom of religion and protecting the rights of all citizens. However, the abandonment of good morals and religious principles in public life has left a void that has been filled by unethical behavior and self-serving agendas. The absence of strong moral values in politics, business, and other influential spheres has contributed to corruption, dishonesty, and a loss of public trust. This erosion of trust weakens democratic institutions and undermines the social contract between citizens and their leaders.

We have a responsibility to preserve the republic for which our flag stands. We don’t have to passively watch as the fabric of our society unravels until nothing remains. And yet, “We the people” become fearful that if we stand for what is right as the moral compass of our nation spins out of control, we might be shunned or even “cancelled”. Friends, 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us clearly that “... God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind.” When will “We the people” stop being afraid of the powers of this world and start being confident in the God which created it?

How about right now? What if we reclaim the power bestowed upon us by the Constitution and reaffirm the values on which our nation was founded? What if our voices become louder than those who are twirling around, being guided by the wrong compass? What if we renounce the fear which is from satan and proclaim the Word of God once again over our nation? What if we pick up our needles and our thread and together reweave the fabric of our nation more beautiful than it ever was?

Have you seen the movie “Jesus Revolution”? It is about the spiritual and cultural movement that took place primarily in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was a significant wave of religious revival and renewal within the Christian faith, particularly among young people.

The Jesus Revolution emerged against the backdrop of the counterculture and social changes of the time. It was characterized by a desire for personal spiritual experiences, a rejection of traditional religious institutions, and an emphasis on living out the teachings of Jesus Christ in everyday life. Many people who were part of the Jesus Revolution sought a more authentic and personal relationship with God.

The Jesus Revolution had a lasting impact on the Christian landscape, leading to the establishment of new churches, ministries, and organizations focused on discipleship, social justice, and evangelism. It brought attention to the importance of faith in the lives of individuals and revitalized the faith of many.

As I sat in the theater alongside my family, a surge of excitement pulsed through my veins, for I recognized the significance of what I was watching—a stirring that our country so desperately needs today! “Jesus Revolution” came to theaters on the heels of a smaller-scale revival at Asbury University and seeing the movie reignited my excitement for what God has the power to do. These revivals hold the power to ignite personal transformation, drive social change, and renew our commitment to following the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, especially during times of cultural upheaval and uncertainty.

Sadly, today, there is a prevailing perception among non-Christians that Christians are hypocritical in their words as they don’t align with their actions. This perception dissuades unbelievers

from embracing the Christian way of life, as they do not witness the embodiment of Jesus in their behavior. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. eloquently captures this issue in a well-known quote:

"It is a lamentable tragedy of life that individuals rarely bridge the gap between their professed beliefs and their actual conduct. A persistent inner conflict leaves many of us tragically divided within ourselves. On one hand, we proudly declare our adherence to noble and elevated principles, but on the other hand, we sadly engage in actions that contradict these very principles. How frequently do our lives display an incongruity, where we emphasize our commitment to Christian ideals, yet our actions reflect practices contrary to those principles? We proclaim our devotion to democracy while concurrently acting in opposition to its fundamental values. We passionately advocate for peace, even as we diligently prepare for war. We fervently plead for the pursuit of justice, only to persistently walk the path of injustice. This perplexing duality, this painful divide between what is expected and what is actually practiced, embodies the tragic theme of humanity's journey on Earth."

The Jesus Revolution not only resulted in the conversion of thousands who committed to follow Christ, but it also sparked a profound awakening among Christians to live in a manner that reflects Jesus and faithfully follow Him. Friends, this is what we need now!

So how can “We the people” advocate for this and help to keep the republic for which our flag stands?

“We the people” must pull out the compass of old, then hold it in front of us and follow the direction that is magnetized to God’s truth and ways. “We the people” must be an example and show others the goodness that comes from living a life in obedience to Him and the peace, joy, and love it brings.

“We the people” must bring back the “we” and get rid of the “me” by breaking free from the excessive preoccupation with ourselves and our individual interests. Instead, “We the people” must unite in our efforts to imitate Jesus and demonstrate His character to others. Our aim should be to live, serve, and love as He did, becoming a living example of His teachings and values. In order to do this well, “We the people” must actively pursue a deep and personal relationship with Jesus by reading His Word, committing it to memory, sharing it with others, and faithfully adhering to its guidance.

“We the people” must prioritize the role of the church in providing comfort, hope, and a sense of belonging and unity. By emphasizing moral guidance, spiritual support, and fostering love for one another, “We the people” in the church can help combat feelings of isolation and promote social cohesion. In living and loving like Jesus, “We the people” can shift the focus away from personal gain and immediate gratification, and instead work together for the well-being of our communities to the glory of God.

“We the people” must actively support political leaders who uphold high moral standards and principles. “We the people” need to overcome fear and raise our voices when leaders and officials deviate from these ethical standards and associate themselves with individuals whose values are questionable. By taking a stand and advocating for integrity, “We the people” can help ensure that our leaders are aligned with the values that promote a just and righteous society.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, “We the people” must be prayer warriors. Billy Graham once said, “We have many battles going on in America today that we should be a people of prayer. Our government needs prayer. Our leaders need prayer. Our schools need prayer. Our youth need our prayers. Our families need our prayers.”

Prayer, especially in numbers, holds unparalleled power, acting as the ultimate weapon capable of sparking a revival and restoring God’s presence in our nation. Prayer has the ability to restore good moral values, foster the emergence of righteous leaders, and amplify the voice of “We the people” to be louder than those advocating immorality. Through prayer, God can give “We the people” strength to triumph over evil with goodness and bring light to the darkness.

What do you say? Will you do your part as “We the people”? Will you strengthen your relationship with Jesus and selflessly live, serve and love like Him in ways you never have before? Will you stand up for truth, having confidence that God goes before you? And will you join me in praying boldly that God would reweave the moral fabric of our nation to an even more beautiful tapestry than ever before?