



Outline

Part 4 - "Declaration of Dependence"

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Scripture: 2 Chronicles 6:12–13, 32–33; 7:11–14, Psalm 33:12

Idea: Recovery begins with a declaration of dependence.

Introduction

1. When current events intersect with biblical principles/teaching, folks like me ought to talk about it.
2. We may not be a Christian nation, but there are enough of us that if we would quit blaming and waiting around for someone to rescue us, we could be part of getting us on the road to recovery.
3. So, our first recovery statement said:
Recovery begins with WE not THEY.
4. Our second recovery statement said:
Recovery begins with a fearless moral inventory.
5. You can't recover until you are willing to tell yourself the truth. You have to acknowledge where you are before you can get to where you want to be.
6. Last week, we talked about the need for moral authority among our elected leaders:
Recovery begins when moral authority supersedes reelection as the value of choice among our national leaders.
7. Today, our fourth observation:
Recovery begins with a declaration of dependence. Specifically, dependence on God.

I. There is a growing discomfort among our nation's leaders to publically acknowledge God, our dependence on God, or gratitude to God.

- A. The most recent one being the planners of the 9/11 memorial service at Ground Zero deciding there would be no clergy or prayer . . . on the spot where there were more private prayers ten years ago than anywhere else on the planet.

Tragedy . . .

- B. Our leaders disguise this with talk of sensitivity, fairness, or don't want to offend anyone.
 1. **We would rather run the risk of offending God than the 8 percent of Americans who say they do not believe in God** (June 2011 Gallup Poll).
 2. Opinion: that's a mistake. History: that's a *radical* departure from the past.
- C. It's a radical departure from our national motto passed by an act of Congress in 1956: ***In God We Trust.***



II. In contrast to that is a remarkable story of the world's wisest king. [As we will see next week . . . don't miss next week . . . I'm going to tell you who to vote for . . .]

A. So wise that if we had taken his advice, we may not be in this mess.

Tenth century BC: Solomon just completed the temple and held a dedication celebration that went for days. It is a time of peace and yet there is still this sense of dependence and humility.

2 Chronicles 6:12–13 (TNIV)

¹² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. ¹³ Now he had made a bronze platform, five cubits [*cubit = 1.5 feet*] long, five cubits wide and three cubits high [*about 5 feet high*], and had placed it in the center of the outer court. He stood on the platform and **then knelt down before the whole assembly of Israel** and spread out his hands toward heaven.

How powerful! The leader of the nation kneeling and reaching to heaven . . . a physical demonstration that the king was under authority. How cool if Congress started on their knees. Our elders do. Not because we are a church, but because we need wisdom—how much more so the Congress.

Solomon prays an awesome prayer asking God to inhabit the temple. Hear the peoples' prayers and when they were disobedient . . . under divine discipline . . . as evidenced by famine, locusts, plagues, mildew . . . that God would hear their confession, see their repentance, and intervene on their behalf.

2 Chronicles 6:32–33 (TNIV)

³² “As for foreigners who do not belong to your people Israel . . . **Us gentiles** . . . when they come and pray toward this temple, ³³ then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and **fear you**, as do your own people Israel . . .”

When he finished praying, the glory of God filled the temple and everybody had to leave. And then later that night . . .

2 Chronicles 7:11–14 (TNIV)

¹¹ When Solomon had finished the temple of the Lord and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the Lord and in his own palace, ¹² the Lord appeared to him at night . . .

“I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

¹³ “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people [*When national disobedience leads to national discipline . . . so there is such a thing.*],



¹⁴ 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 . . .

then I will hear from heaven, and I will **forgive** their sin [*Lift the curse. End the discipline.*] and will **heal their land**.

B. Preachers love this promise and it has certainly been applied to the U.S. many times.

1. This was a promise to Israel.
2. We are not God's people in that way.

But . . .

C. It illustrates the correlation between national humility—public declaration of dependence and God's willingness to act on behalf of a nation.

1. God's desire is to make his name known.
2. Thus, "**Do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you . . .**" (2 Chronicles 6:33)

D. In the past, we have not hesitated to declare that kind of humility and dependence.

1. Lincoln's proclamation:

*Signed March 30, 1863, literally in the middle of the civil war, **Senator James Harlan of Iowa** introduced this **Resolution** in the **Senate** on March 2, 1863. The Resolution asked President Lincoln to proclaim a **national day of prayer and fasting**. The Resolution was adopted and signed by Lincoln.*

Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the Supreme Authority and just Government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer and humiliation.

And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their **dependence** upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

[Ref. to Psalm 33]

2. If it was good enough for Abraham Lincoln . . .
3. Our nation recovered from a civil war.

Recovery begins with a declaration of dependence upon Almighty God.



Conclusion

1. Recovery begins when we decide to quit using political correctness as a smokescreen for our lack of trust in God.
2. Recovery begins when we decide we are better off offending a few citizens than our Creator.
3. Recovery begins when our nation's leaders recognize what President Washington recognized, what President Lincoln recognized, what King David recognized:

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord . . . (Psalm 33:12)

4. Recovery begins when we are willing to change our rhetoric from "We are Americans; we can solve our problems" to "We are Americans; in God we trust; with his help we can/will recover."