

The Miracle of America

By Pastor Charles Garrison

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Joshua 7

Preached on: Sunday, July 6, 2014

Calvary Memorial Church

400 S Bennett St

Southern Pines NC 28387

Website: www.calvarymemorialsp.com

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/calvarymemorial

Turn in your Bibles this morning to Joshua 7. We want to read the first verse,

“1 But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.”

Let's stop reading there and look to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we thank you as we come to the end of this July 4th holiday, this day of remembrance when we remember the birth of our nation. We thank you for this great land. We thank you for allowing us to have the privilege of living here in this land of liberty and freedom. We thank you for the fact that we still have the freedom in this country to preach your word, we have the freedom to gather in your name, to gather in your presence with you and study this book together. We pray that we may ever enjoy that freedom and never take it for granted. We pray that you would help us as we look into your word today. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

This morning, we want to continue our studies in the book of Joshua. For the last several messages, we've been looking at Jericho and the conquest of Jericho and the saving and the deliverance of Rahab the harlot and her family from the judgment of God that came upon that city. At Jericho, God gave the people of Israel not just a victory but a miraculous victory. We talked last week how no one knows the size of the walls of Jericho but the Spirit of God gives us a hint of their enormity in Joshua 2:15 where he tells us that the walls were so high that the spies had to be let down by a line of scarlet thread. Rahab did not suggest when the spies were trying to escape that they should just, “Here's the wall. Jump out and happy landings,” because the walls were so high it wasn't an option to jump. Jumping from that height would have meant certain injury or perhaps even death. The width of the wall is suggested to us by the fact that Rahab's house was built upon the town wall and she dwelt up on the wall and her house was obviously not a small house because as we talked about last week, it was big enough to hold Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all of her kindred and all that she had and perhaps even all that they had as well.

So, the Spirit of God doesn't give us the numeric dimensions of the wall of Jericho but he doesn't have to because he gives us enough information to know that Israel could not get over that wall, they could not get under that wall, they could not get through that wall. He emphasizes that fact in chapter 6, verse 1, where he tells us that, "Jericho was straitly shut up," shut up tightly. No one could come in. No one could go out. That's how sound their defense was. The only way for the armies of Israel to conquer Jericho was for that nation, the people of Israel, to humble themselves before the word of God, before his instructions and believe his word and obey his word and allow the Lord to do what only he could do and that is to perform a miracle and bring down the wall of Jericho and that's exactly what he did.

I want us to think this morning about Independence Day and I want us to think of it in the context of the wall of Jericho. Two days ago we celebrated the 238th birthday of this land that we love and as we think back to the birth of this nation and the war for independence, George Washington and his rag-tag army of farmers and shop keepers and bakers and barrel makers and fur traders and sailors, they had about as much chance of bringing down the high and wide and powerful wall of British military power as the children of Israel did of bringing down the wall of Jericho. The only way that our forefathers could break through that wall was to humble themselves before the word of God and believe his word and obey his word and allow the Lord to do what only he could do and that is to perform a miracle and bring down the wall of British military power and thus bring down the wall of the tyranny that this nation was living under and that's exactly what he did. And the skeptics and the revisionists and those who despise God in this country that he founded with one voice oppose and deny the true history of this nation.

This morning, I want to give you one voice. I want to give you one voice for the proof of what you and I know to be true. At the Constitutional Convention and something that I think we forget sometimes, is that that convention was not a bed of roses; it was not a walk in the park. There were very serious problems; there were very serious issues facing this as it literally gasped for the air of liberty as a newborn baby is gasping for those initial breaths of air. God had miraculously...full of British military power and that country's rule and tyranny over the Colonies to fall down flat. But after the war and miraculous military victory, there was now another wall, another wall whose height and width are measured and described by two words: dissent and turmoil. After the victory in the Revolutionary War, there were all sorts of factions in this country that wanted their will and their way. There was a military faction and that faction wanted the new government to be a monarchy and the man that they wanted to be king over that monarchy was George Washington. In May of 1782, a man by the name of Colonel Lewis Nicola wrote a letter to General Washington and in that letter he outlined to General Washington what he considered to be the wrongs that had been suffered by the army under the Continental Congress. Just to give you an idea of how strong these emotions were and how strong these sentiments were in June of 1783, there were 100 soldiers from Pennsylvania who invaded the halls of Congress in Philadelphia; they invaded where the Continental Congress was meeting and the Congressman had to flee

for their lives. Had a good effect. That Congress never met there in that building again so I'm not suggesting, just giving you that for what it's worth. It's true history.

So Colonel Nicola's letter reflected a very real sentiment...Washington because he had the support of the army to declare himself to be George I. but George Washington was not an ambitious man. He was a man who denied himself and I believe it's an indication of his faith in Christ, his humble spirit. Washington rejected the idea and he rejected it because he told Colonel Nicola that it was a contradiction, that it was a betrayal of the very principles that men had just fought and died for in the Revolution. In March of 1783, there was a letter that was circulated within the army and it called for a military revolt of a military government that, again, George Washington....George Washington brought his officers together and he condemned the plan and he told them that he didn't want to hear anymore of that kind of talk and so there was dissent and there was turmoil on the political front. There was dissent and turmoil on the economic front in this country. The economy of infant America was in total disarray. There was depression. There was inflation because the paper currency that had been printed and issued by the Continental Congress was worthless. The taxation in some states was reaching the levels that the Colonies had experienced and revolted against under King George. In Massachusetts, there was a man by the name of Daniel Shays who had been a captain in the Continental Army. He was so distressed about the level of taxation that he got together an army of 1,100 men and in the fall of 1786, he began what turned out to be a six month rebellion. It was aimed at preventing the trials and the imprisonment of citizens and farmers who were just covered over with debt. His army attacked Springfield, Massachusetts in January of 17....it was put down on January 24 of 1787.

Now, the economic depression and the economic circumstances, runaway inflation, brought out another faction. That faction was made up of intellectuals and liberals and central planners who said they had a solution for the economic problems. It was a system called leveling. Leveling was just another name for socialism. There were still others that were part of this group who proposed something called a community of goods. We know that as communism. They proposed that, by the way, 75 years or so before Karl Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto, you see, his ideas weren't new. The proponents, of course, didn't call it communism, they called it a community of goods but it's the same thing. The state, the government would own and operate all the property and all the businesses for the good of the people, of course. Samuel Adams had a comment about those two proposals. He said, "The utopian schemes of leveling and a community of goods are as visionary and impractical as those which vest all property in the crown. Those ideas are arbitrary, despotic and in our government, unconstitutional." Isn't it interesting that here we are in 2014, going back and being governed under the very arbitrary and despotic and tyrannical principles that this nation revolted against and fought against and rejected 238 years ago.

But those weren't the only problems. There were states that refused to pay their war debt. The army wasn't being paid. The army wasn't being taken care of. Veterans weren't being taken care of. Have you heard that song before? The widows of veterans, those who had given their lives for this country were not being given the pensions that they had been

promised. They had a problem in the VA, if you will. 238 years later, we still have the problem, don't we? The merchants that were being paid, the businesses that were being paid were being paid off with currency that was basically worthless...that Alexander Hamilton said, "We may indeed with propriety be said to have reached almost the last stage of national humiliation. There is scarcely anything that can wound the pride or degrade the character of an independent nation which we do not experience."

That's the material that made up the wall that this nation faced immediately following the military victory in the Revolution. That's the wall whose height and width are measured and described by the words "dissent" and "turmoil." That's the wall that faced the 55 men who gathered in Philadelphia on May 25, 1787 and the height and the width and even the depth of the wall were evident in the debates that took place. As you read about the conditions in Philadelphia in 1787, one of the things that you constantly come across in your reading will be that it was an incredibly hot and muggy summer there. They didn't have any air conditioning. They just went to the meetings and they endured whatever the conditions were. The debate centered around three primary things: how the states were going to be represented in the new Congress, the big states wanted one type of representation and the little states wanted another type of representation; another thing was how trade was going to be regulated by the new federal government; and the other thing, of course, was the issue of slavery, how was that going to be dealt with.

The wall that was faced by these 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention was so overwhelming and daunting that George Washington, who was the President of the Convention, wrote a letter to Alexander Hamilton. Alexander Hamilton, of course, was at the Constitutional Convention but he had to leave for some reason but while he was gone, during his temporary absence, George Washington wrote him a letter and he said, "I almost despair of seeing a favorable issue to the proceedings of the Convention and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business." That's how things were in Philadelphia.

By the end of June, things had reached a critical point. William Few was a delegate from Georgia and he described the Convention as being at an awful and critical moment. He said that if the Convention had then adjourned, the dissolution of the Union of the State seemed inevitable. That was the impregnable and impenetrable wall that the delegates faced on June 28, 1787. And the only way for these men to conquer this wall, this Jericho, if you will, that existed in that Convention Hall in Philadelphia with these various factions, these factions that were so different in their manners and in their circumstances and in their customs and in their thinking, that place was straitly shut up even to the point that there was no exchanging anymore of ideas, there was only acrimony, there was only arguing and debating. The only way for these men to conquer that Jericho was for the wall of dissent and turmoil to fall down flat and the only way that was going to happen was if they were willing to humble themselves before the Lord; if they were willing to humble themselves and pray and seek his face and allow him to perform a miracle that only he could do and bring down the wall of impasse there and that's exactly what the Lord did.

The man who cried aloud, the man who spared not, the man who lifted up his voice like a trumpet, was none other than Benjamin Franklin. I say that because Benjamin Franklin, by his own testimony, had never been saved. If from his testimony that I'm going to read to you in just a minute stayed true to the day of his death, he lost his soul forever.

George Whitefield was one of two main preachers during the time of the Great Awakening, and the Lord used the Great Awakening, he used the preaching of George Whitefield and the preaching of Jonathan Edwards to start the fire of revival in the Colonies. In fact, that Great Awakening was one of the things that led to the American Revolution. When George Whitefield came to Philadelphia, he came to preach there and one of the people who went out into the fields to hear him was Benjamin Franklin. I think it was interesting that the people of Philadelphia and Ben Franklin had to go out into the fields to hear George Whitefield preach. When he first came to town, he was accepted as Paris Reidhead described it as the ministerial assassination, the ministerial association, so to speak. He was accepted there and he was invited to speak at some of the churches but they didn't like this guy. They didn't like the way he preached and so he had to go out into the fields and Franklin went out to hear him many times. Listen to how Franklin described Whitefield's preaching, when you listen to how he describes it, you'll understand why the clergy there in Philadelphia didn't like him. He said, "The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them." He abused these people in his preaching. Now what does that mean? Doing what Paul said in 2 Timothy "in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Franklin saw that as abusing his listeners and how did he abuse them? "By assuring them they were naturally half beast and half devils."

Based on Franklin's word, you can imagine what George Whitefield was preaching. He must have been telling the multitudes that they were of their father the devil and the lusts of their father they would do. He must have told them that in their flesh there dwelleth no good thing. There was none good, no not one. That every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually and their hearts were deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The abuse of his audience, as Franklin described it, was nothing more than the teaching of the Scriptures that we are all as an unclean thing. From the top of our head to the sole of our feet, there is nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Because of man's total depravity, the only hope that we have is to be saved. The only hope that we have is to be born-again and that was George Whitefield's message, "Ye must be born-again."

Someone came to him one day and said, "Why do you preach all the time, You must be born-again?" He said, "Because you must be born-again. That's why." That's the message of the book. This was a message that Franklin went out into the fields of Philadelphia and heard. This was the message that these multitudes from that town went out and heard. Benjamin Franklin admired George Whitefield. He admired this great preacher of the gospel and one of the reasons that he did is because he saw the effect that Whitefield's

preaching was having on the people of Philadelphia. Listen to what he said about it, “It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.” That's why Benjamin Franklin admired this great preacher of the gospel.

There came a time when one of the things that George Whitefield had a burden about was a ministry to orphans and he wanted to build an orphanage and he was accused, falsely by his enemies, you can imagine who probably some of them were, that he was taking some of the money and using it on himself. It was Benjamin Franklin that came to George Whitefield's defense and said, “I, who was intimately acquainted with him, being employed in printing his sermons and journals, never had the least suspicion of his integrity but am to this day decidedly of the opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly honest man and methinks my testimony in his favor ought to have the more weight as we had,” listen, we talked about Franklin's testimony a minute ago, “as we had no religious connection.” Now, I want you to listen to Franklin's next words, “He,” George Whitefield, “used to indeed sometimes to pray for my conversion but never had the satisfaction of believing that his...was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides and lasted to his death. George Whitefield died in 1770 and Franklin's personal testimony was that he was never converted. His personal testimony is that he never believed the message of the gospel but, folks, the preaching of the word of God that Benjamin Franklin heard had an impact on his life.

God says in Isaiah 55:10, “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Seventeen years after George Whitefield's death, it is Benjamin Franklin, a saved man? No, but a man who had a reverential fear of God and a reverential fear of his word. It's Benjamin Franklin who stands up and cries aloud and spares not and lifts up his voice like a trumpet, like one of the seven priests that blew the trumpets on the seventh day at Jericho and he said, “Mr. President, The small progress we have made after four or five weeks close attendance and continual reasonings with each other, our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ays, is methinks a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of Government, and examined the different forms of those Republics which having been formed with the seeds of their own dissolution now no longer exist. And we have viewed Modern States all round Europe, but find none of their Constitutions suitable to our circumstances. In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us,” that's this idea that that Convention was straitly shut up. None went out. None came in. Not even the truth when presented to them was allowed in. “How has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of

lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the Contest with G. Britain, when we were sensible of danger we had daily prayer in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending providence in our favor. To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity.”

Folks, what Franklin is reminding these men of is the miraculous victory that God gave the Americans over the British. What he's reminding them of is the miraculous victory that God gave this nation when he caused the high and thick wall of British military power to fall down flat. Franklin is reminding these delegates that the only way that they could have broken through the wall of British dominance and superiority on land and on sea was for them to humble themselves and pray and seek God's face. When they did that, not once in awhile, when they did that in that Hall during the Revolutionary War, when they did that daily, their prayers were heard and answered and God performed a miracle and the wall of British rule and the wall of British tyranny over these Colonies fell down flat. Folks, I don't think this is a radical statement to make but I believe the miracle that God performed in the American Revolution, that miracle was tantamount to the walls of Jericho falling down flat before the armies of Israel.

Then Dr. Franklin asked a question and this is the question that he asked, “And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance?” The thought that is being expressed right there ought to sound familiar to us. Last Sunday night, we talked about the difference between Jericho, Joshua 6, and Ai in Joshua 7. At Jericho, Israel acknowledged that they had no strength and so they sought the Lord and they followed his commands, they followed his instructions, they obeyed his word and God gave them a miracle. Then they came to Ai and they thought they could handle Ai, “Oh, it's just a little...all the army, let's just send out a few.” And so they didn't seek the Lord and they went forth in their own strength and they went forth in their own power and they were defeated. Benjamin Franklin is telling us that this is where America was. From 1775 to 1783 during the War for Independence, the attitude of America's heart was the same as Israel's was: America acknowledged, the leaders of this nation acknowledged daily in prayer, “We have no power. We have no strength against the wall of British military power. They're superior everywhere we look.” And so they sought the Lord; they followed his commands; they obeyed his word and he gave America a great victory.

In the Revolution, this nation lived in Joshua 6 but in the aftermath when it came to establish a Constitution, when it came to establish a form of government, “Well, we look out there and we've got these ancient patterns to go by and we've got the models over there in Europe to go by...when these men came to the Constitutional Convention, America had left Joshua 6 and they had moved to Joshua 7 and they didn't seek the Lord because they thought we could handle it, we can handle setting up a government, we can handle writing a Constitution. So just as Israel did at Ai, we didn't seek the Lord and we went forth in our own strength and we went forth in our own power and the result was

this high and thick wall of dissent and turmoil, the result was a....up and deadlocked. None went out and none came in.

It's at this critical moment that Benjamin Franklin stands up. I'm so happy it was him. I hope somewhere down the line before that man left this world, I hope he got saved because I'd love to spend some time with him in heaven. I'd like to thank him. I'd like to thank him for the day he stood up, June 28, 1787, and said, "Sir, I have lived a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth - that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that 'except the Lord build the House they labour in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better, than the Builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and bye word down to future ages. I therefore beg leave to move - that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the Clergy of this City be requested to officiate in that Service."

Folks, those are amazing words. Amazing words. I'll tell you how amazing they were. There was a man that was a delegate from New Jersey by the name of Jonathan Dayton and this is what he said after Benjamin Franklin. He said, "The Doctor sat down; and never did I behold a countenance at once so dignified and delighted, as was that of Washington at the close of this address." I've never seen a countenance on a man after Franklin said that. "Nor were the members of the Convention, generally, less affected. The words of the venerable Franklin fell upon our ears with a weight and authority, even greater than we may suppose an oracle to have had in a Roman senate!" Could I express Mr. Dayton's words in another way? The wall of dissent and turmoil fell down flat. It fell down flat and it fell so flat that Alexander Hamilton would write in years to come, "For my own part, I sincerely esteem it a system which without the finger of God, never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests." That wall fell down so flat that George Washington, the man that had earlier said that he repented of having had any agency in the business said, "It appears to me, then, little short of a miracle, that the Delegates from so many different States should unite in forming a system of national Government." And James Madison said, "The real wonder is that so many difficulties should have been surmounted and surmounted with a unanimity almost as unprecedented as it must have been unexpected. It is impossible for any man of candor to reflect on this circumstance without partaking of the astonishment. It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty Hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the Revolution."

That's how the wall fell flat. It fell flat when Benjamin Franklin cried aloud and spared not but lifted up his voice like a trumpet. We're talking this morning about the miracle of America and we're talking about it in the context of Joshua 6 and the falling down flat of the wall of Jericho. I'm going to tell you something: on the 238th birthday of this nation,

we need to remember Dr. Franklin's question to the delegates of the Constitutional Convention because the words of that question are so needed in this hour. I wish somebody had the backbone to stand up on the floor of the House of Representatives and ask it. I wish somebody had the backbone to stand up on the floor of the Senate and ask that question. Have we now forgotten that powerful friend or do we imagine we no longer need his assistance? We are living in this nation's answer to Benjamin Franklin's question. We have forgotten that powerful friend and we do imagine that we no longer need his assistance and the result is a wall of dissent and turmoil in this country. We've adopted what our founders rejected: socialism, leveling is what they called it, is the policy of this government. We are well on our way to a community of goods. We're well on our way to communism where the state, the government owns and operates all property and businesses, banks, car companies, medical.

We're well on the way and, of course, it's going to be operated for the good of the people. We're witnessing an imperial presidency where the President acts on his own and issues edicts and decrees like a king. We call them Executive Orders now. They are issued without the consent of Congress; they're issued without the consent of the government. That's the very type of government that George Washington rejected. He rejected it as a betrayal of the principles of our Revolution. He rejected it because that would mean tyranny. We're building a house in this country as the builders of Babel did with the uniform bricks of conformity: with only one language and one speech that's acceptable and that language and that speech is political correctness. We've rejected the stone. We've rejected the chief cornerstone which God has exalted and made the head of the corner, the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and on whom this nation was built. This nation was fitly framed together and it grew and it became the light of the world. It became a city set on a hill that could not be hid. Now we're trying to build a house and we're trying to build a nation in our strength and in our own power and we're laboring in vain...the Lord which built it.

It's happening to us just exactly the way Dr. Benjamin Franklin said it would. We're being divided by our little, partial, local interests. When you look on your money, you look on a dollar bill and you read the words "E pluribus unum": out of many, one. I don't know what the Latin for the reverse is but that's where we're headed. Out of one, many. Division. Turmoil. Confusion. Our projects are being confounded. We ourselves are becoming a reproach and a bye word in the world and it's all because we have forgotten that powerful friend and we imagine that we no longer need his assistance. That's a miracle on our 238th birthday and...believe that it's going to get better because this nation despises anyone who stands up and cries aloud and spares not and lifts up their voice like a trumpet and shows God's people their transgression and shows the house of America their sin. They are despised. This nation has rejected knowledge and God has rejected this nation. This nation has forgotten the law of God and God has forgotten the children of this nation...of the founders of this nation that God is forgetting. That God is forgetting. That's where we are in America today. That sounds negative, I know. It doesn't sound like much of a birthday party to come to, does it? To open up a birthday card and read that but it's the truth. But as discouraging as that sounds, there is good news. The good news is that God is still saving individuals. He's still saving individuals. He's still saving

whosoever will come to him in repentance and faith and trust him and him alone to be their Savior.

Do you know him today? That's the question. I'm not asking you do you know about him. Benjamin Franklin, in reading about him, has become one of the saddest figures to me in our history. Benjamin Franklin knew about the Lord. Benjamin Franklin knew about the Bible. He knew, for example from Daniel 4, that God governs in the affairs of men. He said that in his speech, where did he get it? He got it from the Bible. He knew from Matthew 10 that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the notice of God himself. He knew from Psalm 127:1, "Except the Lord build a house, they labor in vain that build it." He knew about it and he believed the Genesis account of the Tower of Babel. He knew about the account of the children of Israel in Egypt. Dr. Franklin went to church and he didn't go out into the fields of Philadelphia and hear some liberal, half-baked preacher...most powerful preachers that this nation has ever known, George Whitefield. And Benjamin Franklin was either told by this man who he was intimately acquainted, he was either told...who heard George Whitefield pray for Benjamin Franklin or else and this is what I suspect, is that Benjamin Franklin heard in person George Whitefield pray for his conversion. He said they were intimately acquainted. What do you think they talked about inside of their intimate acquaintance? I believe George Whitefield talked to him about the Lord and about his need to be saved and about his need to go from death to life. What was Franklin's response? George Whitefield never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were answered. It sounds a little bit like Agrippa, doesn't it? It sounds a little bit like what Agrippa told Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Would to God that Benjamin Franklin had been almost and altogether persuaded.

This morning, you need to be almost and altogether persuaded that you're a sinner. You're a sinner in need of a Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ is that Savior. He's the only one who can save you. This morning, right where you are, you need to open your heart, your heart that has been straitly shut up against the truth. None in, none out. And humble yourself and repent of your sin and the wall of unbelief and rebellion that you have built and been living behind...and the King of Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, will come in and he'll give you his life. As we celebrate the birth of this nation, you can celebrate the new birth of your soul.

Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you this morning for your word. We thank you for the way that it was honored by the founders of this nation. We understand, Father, that all of these men weren't saved but we also understand that they had a reverential fear of you. They had a reverential trust. They had a reverential respect for your word, for the wisdom of it, for the power of it. We thank you for allowing us to live in a land like this.

And Father, we pray that if there are any here this morning who are in this category that Benjamin Franklin was in, they come to church and they've heard your word, they know it, they know the Bible, they know all of the things that are there, they know about God

ruling in the affairs of men and how a sparrow can't fall to the ground without his notice and how except the Lord build a house they labor in vain that build it and they know about the Tower of Babel and the children of Israel in Egypt. They know all of these things. They have this knowledge but they've never laid down their rebellion and surrendered their heart to you. We pray that you would speak to them this morning and right where they are right now. Help them to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.