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Sent: 7/5/2015 2:35 PM

Subject: RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION

TEXT: PROVERBS 14:34

Introduction:

1. Yesterday was the 4th of July – “Independence Day.”
2. Many radio and television reporters have interviewed people on the street, and many of them have no idea what the holiday stands for.
3. For example, one person that Mark Dice interviewed thinks America declared independence from China.
4. Dice asked the question, “What year did Jesse Ventura sign the Declaration of Independence?” and no one realized caught on.
5. Thank God, some people do know American history, and they get patriotic on the 4th of July. That is good. I am all for patriotism. We need more patriotism. We should teach our children to love their country.
6. We should teach our children American history, about George Washington, about Paul Revere, about Davy Crockett, about Abraham Lincoln, about Teddy Roosevelt, about General Douglas MacArthur.
7. We should teach our children to respect our flag. I do not believe we should allow radicals to burn our flag.
8. Some idiots tried burning a flag Wednesday in Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn, but some motorcyclists arrived and put them to flight!
9. The flag-burners called themselves, "Disarm the NYPD," but once the counter-protesters ("Hallowed Sons Motorcycle Club") arrived on the scene, the flag-burners ran to the police for help!
10. If a man will not salute our flag, he should leave the country. And if a man burns our flag, he deserves what's coming to him.
 I walked through a county courthouse square
 On a park bench, an old man was sitting there.
 I said, “Your court house is kinda run down,”
 He said, “No, it will do for our little town.”
 I said, “Your old flag pole has leaned a little bit,
 And that’s a ragged old flag you got hanging on it.”
 He said, “Have a seat,” so I sat down,
 He said, “Is this the first time you’ve been to our little town?”
 I said, “I think it is.”

He said, "I don't like to brag, but we're kinda proud of That Ragged Old Flag."

"You see, we got a little hole in that flag there,
When Washington took it across the Delaware.
It got powder burned the night Francis Scott Key
Sat watching it, writing *Oh Say Can You See*.
And it got a bad rip in New Orleans,
With Packingham & Jackson tugging at its seams."

"And it almost fell at the Alamo
Beside the Texas flag, but she waved on though.
She got cut with a sword in Chancellorsville,
And she got cut again at Shiloh Hill.
There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, and Bragg,
And the south wind blew hard on That Ragged Old Flag."
"On Flanders Field in World War I,
She got a big hole from a Bertha Gun.
She turned blood red in World War II.
She hung limp and low by the time it was through.
She was in Korea and Vietnam.
She went where she was sent by her Uncle Sam."

"She waved from our ships upon the briny foam,
And now they've about quit waving her back here at home.
In her own good land she's been abused,
She's been burned, dishonored, denied and refused."

"And the very government for which she stands,
Is scandalized throughout out the land.
And she's getting threadbare and wearing thin,
But she's in good shape for the shape she's in.
Cause she's been through the fire before
And I believe she can take a whole lot more."

"So we raise her up every morning,
Take her down every night.
We don't let her touch the ground,
And we fold her up right.
On second thought I **do** like to brag,
Cause I'm mighty proud of That Ragged Old Flag" – Johnny Cash.

11. I am all for patriotism, but you know the Bible does not say, "Patriotism exalteth a

nation” (cf. Proverbs 14:34).

12. The Bible says, “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:34).

I. GOD BLESSED AMERICA BECAUSE AMERICA WAS A RIGHTEOUS NATION.

1. Let us consider the history of the United States of America. Christopher Columbus was motivated by his Christian faith to sail here – to “the New World.” One example of this can be found in his writings after he discovered this new land. He wrote, “Therefore let the king and queen, the princes and their most fortunate kingdoms, and all other countries of Christendom give thanks to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has bestowed upon us so great a victory and gift.”
2. The Pilgrims clearly stated that they came to the New World to glorify God and to advance the Christian faith. The Mayflower Compact was written and signed on November 11, 1620. It begins with these words: “In the name of God. Amen.”
3. William Bradford was the second signer and primary architect of the Mayflower Compact. He was a leader of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts, and was elected Governor of the Plymouth Colony for 15 two-year terms. William Bradford wrote, “A great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world; yea, though they should be but even as stepping stones unto others for the performing of so great a work.”
4. The education of the settlers and founders of America was uniquely Christian and Bible-based. Education was very important to the founders of this country. One of the laws in Puritan New England was “the Old Deluder Act.” It was called that because it was intended to defeat Satan, whom they referred to as “the Old Deluder,” who had used illiteracy to keep people from reading the Word of God. The New England Primer was used to teach colonial children to read and included excerpts from the Bible as well as the text of many hymns and prayers.
5. Today, Satan, “the Old Deluder,” has deceived the majority of Americans. The recent Supreme Court decision mandating so-called homosexual marriage is the latest example of America's rejection of the Word of God.
6. "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination" (Leviticus 18:22).
7. Harvard College was established to train young men for the ministry. The Laws and Statutes of Harvard College in 1643 said: “Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is *to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life* (John 17:3).”
8. Eventually Harvard was taken over by Unitarians and the school became liberal, so Yale College was established in New Haven, CT. Yale listed two requirements in its 1745 charter: “All scholars shall live religious, godly, and blameless lives according to the rules of God’s Word, diligently reading the Holy Scriptures, the fountain of light and truth; and constantly attend upon all the duties of religion, both in public and secret.”

9. In fact, all of the Ivy League schools were originally Christian schools. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, Brown (the first Baptist college in America), Columbia, Rutgers, the University of Pennsylvania, and Cornell were all founded by Christians.
10. The Great Awakening (revivals under George Whitefield & others) prepared the way for the American Revolution. Historians tell us that the essential difference between the American Revolution and the French Revolution is that many of the leaders of the American Revolution were Christian, whereas the leaders of the French Revolution were anti-Christian.
11. This can be verified by reading the writings of George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and our other founding fathers. In speaking of his native Virginia, Thomas Jefferson observed that, "pulpit oratory ran like a shock of electricity through the whole colony."
12. Our Constitution is based on Christian principles. John Adams, our nation's first vice-president, and second president, said, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."
13. John Witherspoon was a pastor, scholar, author, and president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton University). He signed the Declaration of Independence and helped draft the Articles of Confederation. John Witherspoon may have derived the concept of separation of powers from men like Montesquieu, but more importantly his view on checks and balances came from the Bible (cf. Isa. 33:22).
14. Alexis de Tocqueville was born in 1805 and died in 1859. He was a famous French statesman, historian and social philosopher. He traveled to America in the 1830's to discover the reasons for the incredible success of this new nation.
15. He published his observations in his classic two-volume work, *Democracy in America*. He was especially impressed by America's religious character. Here are some interesting excerpts from Tocqueville's great work:

Upon my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; and the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things.

In France I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom marching in opposite directions (note: France is a RC country). But in America I found they were intimately united and that they reigned in common over the same country.

Religion in America...must be regarded as the foremost of the political institutions of that country; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it. Indeed, it is in this same point of view that the inhabitants of the United States themselves look upon religious belief.

I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion -- for who can search the human heart? But I am certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions. This opinion is not peculiar to a class of citizens or a party, but it belongs to the whole nation and to every rank of society.

In the United States, the sovereign authority is religious...there is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America, and there can be no greater proof of its utility and of its conformity to human nature than that its influence is powerfully felt over the most enlightened and free nation of the earth.

In the United States, the influence of religion is not confined to the manners, but it extends to the intelligence of the people...

Christianity, therefore, reigns without obstacle, by universal consent...

I sought for the key to the greatness and genius of America in her harbors...in her fertile fields and boundless forests; in her rich mines and vast world commerce; in her public school system and institutions of learning. I sought for it in her democratic Congress and in her matchless Constitution.

Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power.

America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.

The safeguard of morality is religion, and morality is the best security of law as well as the surest pledge of freedom.

The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and of liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive the one without the other

Christianity is the companion of liberty in all its conflicts -- the cradle of its infancy, and the divine source of its claims.

16. What would Mr. de Tocqueville think if he were to come back and see America today?

II. AMERICA IS TURNING ITS BACK ON GOD, AND THEREFORE WILL HAVE TO BE JUDGED BY GOD

1. Let us refer once again to the words of Alexis de Tocqueville: “America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”
2. When we study Bible prophecy, it is interesting to note that America is not referred to at all.
3. Bible-readers have studied the Bible carefully and have asked, “What role does America play in prophecy?” A study of the Bible does not reveal any clear references to America. Apparently the present superpower status of the United States could soon start to fade.
4. Today America's allies, like Israel, feel betrayed; and our enemies are laughing at us.

5. The whole world used to look up to America as a shining light of Biblical righteousness, but now they see a backslidden country promoting homosexuality, pornography, and disgusting depravity.
6. As we study Bible prophecy, we notice that our country does not appear to have any significant role in end-time events. This is incredible because America has been very influential in world events in the past 100 years.
7. You will recall that at one time Babylon was the greatest nation in the world. One day, King Nebuchadnezzar was walking in his palace and he said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30).
8. The next verse says, "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee" (Dan. 4:31).
9. God turned proud King Nebuchadnezzar into a wild beast. Daniel 4:33 says, "He was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."
10. But after seven years of crawling around like an animal, King Nebuchadnezzar was restored to his sanity and to his throne. He humbled himself and acknowledged that God is the King of heaven and earth.
11. "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan. 4:37).
12. Later on, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar became the king of Babylon. Daniel 5 tells us King Belshazzar threw a big party, and he invited all of his worldly friends, and they "drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone" (Dan. 5:4).
13. But that night there was writing on the wall. "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another" (Dan. 5:6).
14. The message from God was, "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 5:26-28).
15. That was King Belshazzar's last night on earth. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old" (Dan. 5:30, 31).
16. The reign of the Medes and the Persians didn't last long, and soon Alexander the Great rose to power. Alexander the Great conquered the whole world but died in a drunken stupor at the age of 33.
17. Alexander left no plans for a successor. His only son, Alexander IV, was born after Alexander's death. His generals divided up his kingdom and it soon fell apart.
18. The next big world empire was the Roman Empire. Students of history know that the Roman Empire fell from within. There was an increase in moral decay and decadence (including rampant homosexuality) among the Roman citizens, leading

to the collapse of the empire.

19. America could fall, just like Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. America will be judged by God just like Egypt, Assyria, and all of the other nations referred to in the Bible.
20. Psalm 9:17 says, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”
21. Will America fall like all the other great nations?
22. Many students of the Bible believe America will be brought to her knees after the rapture.
23. Mark Hitchcock wrote a book entitled, *Is America in Bible Prophecy?* In this book he points out that Europe is very secular and anti-Christian and will barely be affected by the rapture. However, the resulting chaos here in America after the rapture will be enormous.
24. Pastor Hitchcock believes (and he is probably right) that in the end times, America will be absorbed into the antichrist’s one-world government. The United States of America will probably lose its sovereignty and become a part of an end-time confederacy of Western nations.
25. By the way, the Bible teaches that marriage between a man and a woman is a beautiful picture of the union of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:31, 32; Revelation 19:7-9).
26. Homosexual marriage is a picture of the union of Antichrist with his perverted bride! We are getting very close to our Lord's return.
27. Our Lord said, "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:29, 30).

III. SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE (Pro. 14:34).

1. God judges sin. God judges countries that condone sin, and countries that promote sin, and countries that enjoy sin.
2. America has gotten so wicked that now it is enforcing sin.
3. I could give many examples of how America is now enforcing sin and punishing those who will not go along with it. Aaron and Melissa Klein are bakers in Oregon who have refused to bake a cake for a same-sex wedding.
4. Because this young couple stood by their Christian convictions and politely refused to bake a cake that would have violated their convictions, they have been driven out of business, their bakery forced to close down, fined outrageous amounts, stripped of their free speech and threatened with prison.
5. Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian has ordered them to pay \$135,000 in emotional damages to the homosexual couple they denied service. “This case is not about a wedding cake or a marriage,” Avakian wrote. “It is about a business’s refusal to serve someone because of their sexual orientation. Under Oregon law, that is illegal.”
6. In the ruling, Avakian placed an effective gag order on the Kleins, ordering them to “cease and desist” from speaking publicly about not wanting to bake

cakes for same-sex weddings based on their Christian beliefs.

7. "This effectively strips us of all our First Amendment rights. According to the state of Oregon we neither have freedom of religion or freedom of speech," said the Kleins on their Facebook page.
8. Churches and Christian schools are next!
9. Revelation 15:1 says, "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God." The concept of "filled up" means to bring to conclusion.
10. God's wrath will soon be poured out over this wicked, sin-loving world.
11. God cannot continue to bless a nation that promotes pornography, adultery, abortion, and homosexuality.
12. In his book *When Nations Die*, Jim Nelson Black lists three aspects of decay: social decay, cultural decay, and moral decay.
13. I don't have to say much about this decay: dirty music, dirty television programs, dirty movies, etc.
14. You may have heard the term "toxic pop culture." Kids spend hours listening to rock music and rap music, playing video games, and watching vulgar, idiotic TV shows.
15. Teenagers wear t-shirts with dirty words. Some girls even wear tight sweat pants with dirty words on the seat of the pants.
16. Ear-rings and tattoos are displayed all over their faces and bodies. It looks very pagan and scary. It is meant to shock decent people.
17. Moral and social restraints are being discarded, leading to greater and greater decadence. Can America survive?
 - The Ten Commandments are being taken down.
 - So-called "homosexual marriage" has now legalized.
 - Christianity and the Bible are not allowed in the public schools, but Islam and the Koran are allowed.
 - Killing a baby is called a "woman's right to choose" or "reproductive freedom."
 - Promiscuity and adultery are commonplace. Children are given birth control devices in the public school.
 - Pornography is everywhere. It is a \$50 billion a year business. Child pornography generates \$3 billion annually.
 - Drunkenness, drug abuse, and gambling are rampant.

CONCLUSION:

1. America is faced with a choice. Will our great nation follow the path to revival and reformation or will we follow the path to judgment and destruction?
2. In Revelation 3, we see a stern warning to a lukewarm church. Our Lord said to the church of Laodicea, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15, 16).

3. One time, evangelist Vance Havner was sitting in a restaurant drinking coffee, and the waitress asked him, "May I warm up your coffee?"
4. Vance Havner said he had a cup that was half-full and tepid, so he told her, "No, pour this out and let's start over. I don't want any Laodicean coffee."
5. In one of his books, Vance Havner wrote, "I don't think she knew what I meant, but you do. God doesn't want your lukewarmness...It's about time for God to work in retribution because as a nation we have made void His law. We face either the return of the Lord, revival, or retribution -- ruin" (*When God Breaks Through: Sermons on Revival*).
6. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."