

# American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org  
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart July 2023

## Pride & Patriotism

By Chris Johnson



Our Founding Fathers perfectly predicted the temptations to which the system of government they engineered would be vulnerable.

Various forms of self-indulgence would “break the strongest Cords of our Constitution like a whale through a net,” John Adams said, and continued: “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious People. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

We are no longer a moral and religious people. So, we ought not be surprised when the Constitution is inadequate to govern us.

If we want our Constitution to fit us, we need to fit that description: “a moral and religious people.”

Presbyterian minister

John Witherspoon said this: *“Nothing is more certain than that a general profligacy and corruption of manners make a people ripe for destruction. A good form of government may hold the rotten materials together for some time, but beyond a certain pitch, even the best constitution will be ineffectual, and slavery must ensue. On the other hand, when the manners of a nation are pure, when true religion and internal principles maintain their vigour, the attempts of the most powerful enemies to oppress them are commonly baffled and disappointed. . .*

*[H]e is the best friend to American liberty, who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion, and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality of every kind. Whoever is an avowed enemy to God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his country...*

To these men, to be opposed to the law of God was to be, at best, a weak-

ness to the country and, at worst, a traitor to it.

That’s especially poignant in light of the White House’s decision to position the “Pride flag” in a place of prominence between two American flags last month. Our forefathers would have known exactly what that symbolism meant and felt their concerns to be wholly vindicated.

As Israel made ready to enter the Promised Land, Moses gave them this warning, which echoes in the sentiments of our great founders, and are found in Deuteronomy 8: *“Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when... all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and*

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terrifying wilderness... Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may confirm His covenant that He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

This warning is repeated again on the individual level in Proverbs 1:29-33 as it describes those who reject the call of Lady Wisdom: "Because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD, would have none of my counsel, and despised all my reproof, therefore

they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices. For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them; but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster."

It is repeated throughout the books of the prophets, as Jerusalem is continually chastised for her pride and "haughtiness."

Yes, Israel is condemned for her *pride*. They may not have been so bold as to make a "Pride Flag" consisting of the symbol of God's forbearance and hang it on their leader's home to shout their support for abominations, but they did convince themselves that their blessings came from their own efforts, from following their own devices.

In spite of the warnings of our Founding Fathers, we are guilty of all of this, and much more. As we celebrate our nation and seek to be patriots, let us first of all remember what patriotism meant to the men who passed this legacy of freedom down to us.

As George Washington said, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens."

President Washington's words recall the word of God to His people in the Old Testament. When we sing "God Bless America," God says "blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

The "pillars of human happiness" are being subverted, and we see the "happiness" or prosperity of our land on the decline. These times call for the kind of patriots that Washington and Witherspoon described. Those who "*promot[e] true and undefiled religion, and who se[t] himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality of every kind.*"

May we be such patriots.



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