

America at the Tipping Point - Dr. James Kennedy

by From the Pulpit & Classic Sermons

America is at a tipping point, and its Christian heritage is under attack, threatening the very foundations of liberty and freedom.

Duration: 27:08

Scripture: Genesis 1:27, Psalm 119:105, Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Radio"

Description

In this sermon, D. James Kennedy discusses the state of America and its potential tipping point. He references Abraham Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg during the Civil War, where Lincoln questioned whether a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to equality could endure. Kennedy also mentions MacArthur's speech at West Point, where he reflects on the passing of time and the fleeting nature of life. Throughout the sermon, Kennedy emphasizes the importance of advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ as the ultimate purpose for America.

Transcript

Welcome to From the Pulpit. Each week we bring you a different message from some of history's greatest speakers in the Christian faith and powerful sermons from modern preachers too. This week we have D. James Kennedy with his message, America at the Tipping Point.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln said at Gettysburg that this was a nation which was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men were created equal. He went on to say that they were engaged in a great civil war testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated could long endure. Today, my friends, we're engaged in another war, another struggle, even more fundamental in its character than that.

The question before our nation today is not whether men are created equal, it is whether they are created at all. Whether they are creatures made by God who have certain inalienable rights or whether they are merely an accident of time and matter. Whether indeed this is a nation under God which can have a new birth of freedom.

Our scripture text today said, Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. And the Bible asks, If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do? There is no doubt that this is indeed a nation which was built upon the foundation of God. That the Lord indeed was the God of this nation.

That he was founded upon the principles of God's word, upon the teachings of Christianity, and for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. All of that is under enormous attack and has been for the last few decades. In fact, so effective has been that attack that the historical revisionists have all but removed every vestige of our Christian heritage from our textbooks and school.

Even the very monuments in the nation's capital are being changed and removed that point to the Christian origins of this country. You and I were born in a Christian nation that may not be said for your children or grandchildren. That is a concept which has been so systematically blotted from the collective memory of this country as to sound in the ears of most people in America to be an alien philosophy.

An intrusion of religion into the tranquility of a secular country. I would like to simply review with you first of all today some of the evidence to the fact that this is a Christian nation. Was founded as such and what we ought to do to maintain it and pass it on as such.

All nations that have ever existed have been founded upon some theistic principle. Either some theistic or anti-theistic principle. Whether we think of the Hinduism of India, the Confucianism of China, the Mohammedanism of Saudi Arabia, or the atheism of Albania, Soviet Union.

We think of America, if we know our history, we know that this was a nation founded upon Christ and his word. Those foundations indeed are crumbling in our time. There are those in our country today who are busily tearing apart that foundation who would gnash their teeth at the idea that this is a Christian nation.

And will not be satisfied until they have removed every vestige of our Christian heritage from not only the minds but the monuments of this country. But let's go back to the beginning. To those intrepid pilgrims that set sail from Holland to come to this country after fleeing their native England 12 years before.

Their governor for 30 or more years was of course William Bradford who gives us the only history of that period. And before they set sail from Holland, he described their motives in coming. He said they had, quote, a great hope and inward zeal of laying some good foundation or at least to make some way there unto for the propagating and advancing of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world.

Yea though they should be but even a stepping stone unto others for the performing of so great a work. That is why they came, said their governor. They came for the propagating and advancing of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ.

And after a fearful journey of 66 days without ever being allowed up onto the deck of the Mayflower because of the great gales and storms. They had last sighted the inhospitable shores of a winter New England coast. They harbored there in the bay and before going ashore they met in the captain's cabin and wrote the first contract of government or as they would call a covenant, the first constitution of America.

Its birth certificate as it is called, we call it the Mayflower Compact. It begins with these words, in the name of God, Amen. That's where America began.

And it goes on to say, quote, having undertaken for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia. And so they themselves here officially declare and sign that which their governor had said about them before they left Holland. That they came for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.

That's how America began. But there are those who don't like to hear that. And surely that must have ended with those first pilgrims, but my friends it did not.

When finally the New England settlements at last got together and they formed their first bond in what is known as the New England Confederation. They said in that that we all came to these parts of America for one and the same end and aim. To advance the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One and all they came for that end they declared in the New England Confederation. The documentary evidence is voluminous. It would take hours even to quote it.

It was thoroughly studied by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1892. And they gave us what is known then as the Trinity decision. And in that the Supreme Court of the United States declared, quote, That is where this nation began.

That is the place from which we came. John Quincy Adams, President of the United States, said that the highest glory of the American Revolution was what? It secured our independence from England. It got rid of the stamp tax, tea tax.

What was the highest glory of the American Revolution? It dissolved our bonds with Parliament and the King. No, listen well, said President John Quincy Adams. The highest glory of the American Revolution was this.

It connected in one undesirable bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity. One undesirable bond. Government and Christianity.

Well, they have come with their solvents of unbelief, skepticism, atheism, Marxism, humanism, secularism. And they are doing everything in their power to totally dissolve that indissoluble bond. And we need to give ourselves to that task that that bond not be dissolved.

Or else the principles of Christianity will be replaced by the secular principles of humanism and atheism. And life will lose its significance and its meaning. Life will become cheap as it certainly presently is in this country as humanistic principles are prevailing in more and more spheres of our nation.

Now someone will say, but yes, doesn't the First Amendment say that there should be a wall of separation between church and state? I wonder if we went out in the street and took a survey, how many people would say yes to that question. Yes, the First Amendment says that there should be a wall of separation between the church and state. I wonder how many here might still believe that.

Well, if you do, let me remind you of something. The First Amendment never mentions a wall. It never mentions separation.

It never mentions the church. And it never mentions the state. Other than that, they're pretty close.

The First Amendment says, quote, Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. It was Thomas Jefferson in a private letter to the Danbury Baptist who

used the phrase a wall of separation between church and state. And they are by no means the same thing.

A wall inhibits people equally on both sides. The First Amendment only inhibits the Congress. Congress shall make no law establishing a religion.

Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The First Amendment says absolutely nothing about what Christians or people adhering to any religion or ministers or clergymen or churches may or may not do. Joseph Story, who was the great commentator on the Constitution, who lived through the formation of this government, and as a justice on the Supreme Court, wrote his great work on the commentary on the Constitution in 1828.

And he said that an attempt to level all religions, Christianity and other religions, all to one level and make it a matter of state policy to hold all in utter indifference, would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation. You see, my friends, most people don't realize what this nation was like in the beginning. Even as late as 1776, 150 years after the Pilgrims landed, this was the makeup of America.

98%, 98% Protestant Christians. 1.8% Catholic Christians. .2 tenths of 1% Jews.

That was the makeup of this country as late as 1776. That's why Charles Hodge, who was the greatest theologian America ever produced, who was the glory and jewel and crown of Princeton, said, quote, the proposition that the United States of America is a Christian and Protestant nation is not so much the assertion of a principle as the statement of a fact. But today people seem to think that in some way religion in general and Christianity in particular are in some way inimical to good government and that the purpose of the government is to keep religion away from the governors of our land.

A very different view than held by George Washington who said, quote, true religion offers to government its surest support. In fact, Washington said that without God and the Bible, it would be impossible to govern. George Washington, our wise father, the father of America, said that without God and the Bible, it would be impossible to govern.

And perhaps that is why, having banished the Bible and having attempted to banish God from all spheres of public life, we have found that our Congress cannot even make a budget that is becoming increasingly impossible to govern this nation. In America, it was religion which was the surest support of good government and it was the principles of Christianity which were united in an indissoluble bond in the establishment of this country. Yes, my friends, you and I were born in a Christian nation.

I'm afraid our children or grandchildren will be born in an atheistic one. Just at a time when the atheistic states of communism around the world are crumbling and people are clamoring for the word of God, so much so that they jammed up completely the book fair in Moscow when 50,000 Bibles were given away. They stopped all traffic in every direction, trying desperately to get their hands on one.

Just at a time when the rest of the world is realizing the folly of unbelief and the fatal results in the lives of people, America continues a pace down the foolish pathway toward godlessness and secularism. There were in the beginning and there are today those who believe that this which we have received as our patrimony, a nation of freedom and liberty and only where the Spirit of God is, is there liberty. Those that have been willing to fight and to die for such a country, and if a nation is built on such exalted principles as these, if it was created for such noble purposes as the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ and

the glory of God, then indeed such a nation deserves our sacrifice and our support.

It was felt that way in the beginning. It is felt that way by many today. Patrick Henry was the golden-tongued orator of the revolutionary period.

He was a Christian patriot. He said in his will, I have now disposed all my property to my family. There is one other thing I wish that I could give to them, and that is the Christian religion.

For if they have that, and I should not have left them a shilling, they would be rich indeed. And if they have not that, though I should leave them the world, they are poor. Knowing the foundations of liberty, knowing the bedrock of Scripture and the Christian foundations of this nation, Henry was willing to sacrifice even his life to defend it.

The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone, but to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, there is no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is too late to retire from the contest.

There is no retreat but in submission and slavery. Our chains are forged. You may hear their clanking on the plains of Boston.

The war is inevitable. And let it come. I repeat it, sir.

Let it come. It is vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace.

There is no peace. The war has actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms.

Our brethren are already in the field. Why stand we here idle? What is it the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear and peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, almighty God. I know not what course others may take.

But as for me, give me liberty or give me death. So said the Christian patriot and founder of our nation. Thankfully there are yet those in our time with similar sentiments.

The greatest military genius America ever produced was General Douglas MacArthur. For 50 years, he devoted his life to this country. He was a man of deep and abiding faith and love for country.

The only conqueror in the history of the world who having conquered the nation of the Empire of Japan said that what is needed now are tax collectors to collect the taxes for the conquerors. No, he didn't say that, did he? He said what is needed now are 10,000 missionaries for Japan. They didn't come.

We see now how right he was. Snatched tragically at the pinnacle of his career out of his command brought back in humiliation to this country. He found that he received not jeers but an incredible outpouring of love and appreciation.

He spoke to the Congress of the United States. You probably saw it on TV as I did. But I think that perhaps the most moving and touching of his speeches was his last which he made at his own beloved West Point as they sat there, these soon to be officers in the core of the United States Army.

And MacArthur, now an old man, 50 years of service behind him, said, the shadows are lengthening for me. The twilight is here. My days of old have gone and vanished, tone and tint.

They've gone glimmering through the dreams of things that were. Their memory is one of wondrous beauty watered by tears and coaxed and caressed by the smiles of yesterday. I listen vainly but with thirsty ear for the witching melody of faint bugles blowing revelry, of far drums beating the long roll.

In my dreams I hear the crash of guns, the rattle of musketry, the strange mournful mutter of the battlefield. But in the evening of my memory always I return to West Point. Always there echoes and re-echoes in my ear duty, honor, country.

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