

A Letter from Dr. Charles Hull Wolfe
President, Plymouth Rock Foundation

Dear Christian Friend,

Recently President Barak Obama, while on a trip abroad and without giving the matter sufficient thought, casually declared that the United States is not a Christian nation. If the President had been a little more analytical, and especially if he'd read the remarkable new book you now hold in your hands, in all probability he would never have made such a statement. For page after page, from the beginning to the end, *The Book that Made America* by the gifted and scholarly Dr. Jerry Newcombe tells us America was born a Christian nation and has been one ever since.

This book begins by exploring America's Christian roots with the Bible as the country's basic textbook, the Bible's law and covenant illustrated in the lives of the Pilgrims and the Mayflower Compact, becoming our guide to individual self-government, structured constitutionalism, and a free market.

If you turn all the way back to this book's Appendix, what do you discover? The United States Supreme Court made it official: *America Is a Christian Nation!*

No matter what books you now own about our Christian history, *I encourage you to get this one!*—for an adult Sunday School or Teen Sunday School, for your pastor, or simply for your own edification. Become a more knowledgeable Christian citizen! After you learn about the significance of the Pilgrims, come visit their home in Plymouth.

—C.H.W.

Praise for The Book that Made America . . .

SAY that America is a Christian nation and you'll be brought up on hate crime charges—or at least thought an ignoramus. But what are the facts of history? *The Book That Made America* demonstrates that there once was a Book even more integral to this nation than Al Gore's *Earth in the Balance*. I recommend Dr. Newcombe's book highly!

Ann Coulter

New York Times #1 Author

The Book That Made America is a most welcome addition to the growing literature that documents the foundational and pivotal role that the Bible played in the founding of our nation and the forming of our government. Dr. Jerry Newcombe combines accurate scholarship and careful analysis with engaging writing. This arsenal of historic wisdom from our Judeo-Christian heritage should be in your library. If you have funds to buy only one book on this topic, this is the one!

Peter A. Lillback, Ph.D.

Prof. of Historical Theology, Pres., Westminster Theological Seminary
Pres., The Providence Forum, Sr. Pastor, Proclamation Presbyterian Church, Bryn Mywr, PA

HISTORICAL revisionism is alive and well in our nation's classrooms and in the media. So what has been the Bible's role in American history? It certainly had a profound impact on the founding of this country as well as in the framing of the government. And where did we go astray as a nation? How can we return to our Biblical roots? Jerry Newcombe answers these and many other questions in *The Book That Made America*. Read this book to learn the history our nation has forgotten.

Kerby Anderson

National Director, Probe Ministries International
Host of "Point of View," USA Radio Network, and author of many books and articles

JERRY NEWCOMBE has created a masterpiece of apologetics that skillfully portrays the power of Scripture in the transformation of the American wilderness into the world's first Christian constitutional republic. His writing is profound and well documented, yet easy to read. This great book will become a timeless educational resource that catapults the centrality of Christ and His Word back to the heart of our civilization where it belongs.

Marshall Foster, D.D.

Founder and Pres., The Mayflower Institute and World History Institute, Speaker, and Coauthor of *The American Covenant: The Untold Story*, Thousand Oaks, CA

*I*N *The Book That Made America*, Jerry Newcombe quickly cuts through the fog of agenda driven rhetoric to give a brilliant and unbiased examination of what made America unique among the nations of the world. Jerry's commanding knowledge of history provides clear and undeniable evidence that the Bible was a key formative influence in America's culture, economy, and form of government.

William J. Federer

Best-selling author and speaker, nationally known radio host on *AmericanMinute.com*
Pres., Amerisearch, Inc., St. Louis, Missouri

*J*ERRY NEWCOMBE has furnished Christian believers with a major weapon for the moral and spiritual civil war we are waging for the soul of America. He carefully provides us in a readable and engaging way with quotable evidence of the Christian roots of our nation. This book should be in the home of every American patriot.

Peter J. Marshall

Evangelist, speaker, and co-author of best-selling books, including
The Light and the Glory, Cape Cod, MA

*J*ERRY NEWCOMBE does an excellent job in documenting and telling the story that almost all Americans used to know: that is, without the Bible there would be no America as we know it. The Bible was the central most important influence in the birth, growth, and development of this nation. The principles in that book produced the most free, prosperous, just, and virtuous nation in history. As we have forgotten this truth, we have gradually lost our liberties. To preserve this great nation, Americans must know the ideas in *The Book That Made America*.

Stephen McDowell

President, Providence Foundation and
Biblical Worldview University, Charlottesville, VA

*W*ITH the skill of a journalist experienced at interviewing others, Jerry Newcombe reveals the one book that built America. He digs deep into the documents, individuals, and spirit of America and lets the evidence speak for itself. Understanding the development of ideas from the Reformation through the planting of America, as well as admitting the faults that had to be repaired, Jerry has done a service for Americans by bringing the Bible back into historical focus at a time when it is most needed.

Paul Jehle, M.Div., Ed.D.

Executive Director, The Plymouth Rock Foundation
Senior Pastor, The New Testament Church and School, Plymouth, MA

The Book that Made America

HOW THE BIBLE
FORMED OUR NATION

Jerry Newcombe, D.Min.



Ventura, California

2009

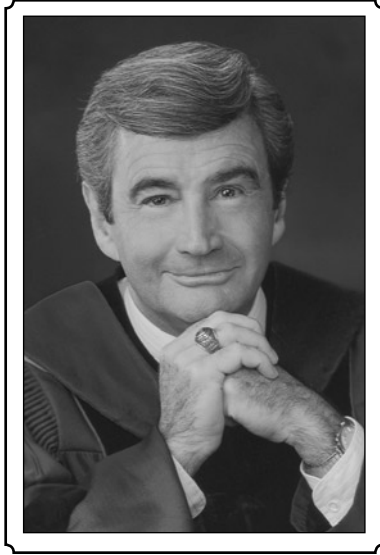


PHOTO BY DAVID EXTERKAMP

DEDICATION

To the Memory of
D. James Kennedy, Ph.D.
(1930–2007)

PHOTO BY DOUG ROHM



Foreword

Jennifer Kennedy Cassidy

As the daughter of the late Dr. D. James Kennedy, I had the privilege of hearing my dad preach for years and years. One of his favorite topics he would return to from time to time was the Christian roots of America. He knew that modern Americans enjoy the fruit of America's Christian foundation—but many want nothing to do with the root of that foundation because it is Christian. My dad was able to cut through what he himself called “the miasmic fog of secularism” and document America's true history, which was very Christian.

Here is what my dad said on the subject of our nation's Christian roots:

The Scripture states, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD: and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.” The Bible asks, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Psalm 11:3). There is no doubt this is, indeed, a nation built upon the foundation of God—that the Lord was the God of this nation; that it 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 has been under enormous attack 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 schools' textbooks. Even the very monuments in the nation's capital that point to the Christian origins of this country are being changed or removed.

My subject: “America: A Christian Nation.” That is a concept that 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 nation.

All nations that have ever existed have been founded upon 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 the former Soviet Union. If we know our history, we know that America 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. They will not be satisfied until they have removed every vestige of our Christian heritage from not only the minds of the people, but also from the monuments of this country.

As my dad knew so well, and proclaimed so often, anybody with an open mind who studies our true history cannot help but conclude that we began as a Christian nation. Because we began as a Christian nation, people of all faiths or no faith are welcome here.

Several of the last books my dad wrote he co-labored with one of the key producers in his television ministry, Dr. Jerry Newcombe—who, by the way, earned his doctorate at Knox Theological Seminary, which was founded by my dad and for which he served as the chancellor until his recent illness and death. This book is adapted from Jerry's doctoral thesis at Knox. He shares my dad's grasp of America's rich Christian heritage. Jerry loves America, but he loves Jesus first.

That's why I am pleased to recommend this book. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. was a man whose judicial philosophy I do not agree with. Nonetheless, he once said that a page of history is worth a volume of logic. Well, Dr. Jerry Newcombe has presented here page after page, documenting our nation's true Christian roots. Jerry cuts through all the political correctness that has infected this great country.

There is a lot at stake including, ultimately, our freedom. America was founded upon the notion of religious freedom for all. That liberty is in jeopardy if the present trends of secularism continue. I pray that God may use this book to help awaken a new generation of Americans to learn our true history and rediscover what it is that made America great in the first place.

About the Author



PHOTO BY GEORGE ROLLER

*J*ERRY NEWCOMBE, D.MIN., of Coral Ridge Ministries is a professional communicator whose research and media productions have been seen by millions. He has helped shape the media output of one of the most influential U.S. Protestant churches in the twentieth century.

Dr. D. James Kennedy, the late founder and head pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and Coral Ridge Ministries, became a national leader as one of the first pastors in our time to apply the Biblical faith to the realm of civil policy in light of Christian America's historical civil stewardship and participation. In this work of national influence, Dr. Kennedy made Jerry Newcombe a trusted friend and collaborator.

As senior producer for Coral Ridge Ministries television Dr. Newcombe has produced or co-produced more than fifty documentaries. He is the host of two weekly radio shows. He has been a witty, humorous, and engaging guest on numerous television and radio talk shows, including Fox News and *Politically Incorrect* with Bill Maher. He is the author or coauthor of

twenty-one books. *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?*, *How Would Jesus Vote?*, *Christ's Passion: The Power and the Promise*, and *The Presence of a Hidden God* are among the fourteen books co-authored with Dr. Kennedy.

With a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Tulane University (1978), Dr. Newcombe is an accomplished historian. His research in the realm of early American history inspired numerous books regarding the faith of the founding fathers, notably *George Washington's Sacred Fire* (co-written with Dr. Peter Lillback) and *One Nation under God: Ten Things Every Christian Should Know about the Founding of America* (co-written with Dr. David C. Gibbs, Jr.).

Dr. Newcombe also holds a Master's degree in communications from Wheaton College (1983) and a Doctor of Ministry from Knox Theological Seminary (2008). Dr. Newcombe wrote his thesis on the importance of "Preserving Our Christian Heritage" and how pastors and their congregations can pass on that heritage.

Dr. Newcombe met his wife Kirsti at Wheaton Graduate School. They were married two years later in her home church (the Lutheran Free Church of Kristiansand, Norway). The service was bilingual; they said, "Ja, I do" on 28 June 1980. They have two children, Annie and Eric. The Newcombes, residing in South Florida, have co-authored two books together: *I'll Do It Tomorrow* and *A Way of Escape*.

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Acknowledgments

THESE are many people that I could thank for this book—perhaps too many to list. But let me try. First of all, I must thank my wife, Kirsti Newcombe, who helped me at every step, carefully reading and rereading (and rereading and rereading) every sentence. Her advice has proved invaluable.

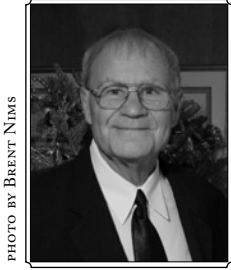
In addition, I thank those who have taught me along the way about the true facts of American history. These include (in alphabetical order):

- ★ David Barton
- ★ John Eidsmoe
- ★ William J. Federer
- ★ Marshall Foster
- ★ Paul Jehle
- ★ D. James Kennedy
- ★ Peter Lillback
- ★ Peter Marshall
- ★ Charles Hull Wolfe

I am also most appreciative of my book agent, Bill Jensen, and publisher, Gerald Nordskog.

Also, I am grateful to the professors at Knox Theological Seminary who read through my thesis, which was the basis for this book: Dr. James Garretson and Michael Morales.

Above all, I am grateful to Jesus Christ for His redemption of my undeserving soul.



Publisher's Word

Gerald Christian Nordskog

*G*EOERGE WASHINGTON, my personal hero, and the beloved Father of our Country, was indeed “first in the hearts of his countrymen.” After the ratification of the Constitution was assured, on June 29, 1788, he penned:

No one can rejoice more than I do at every step the people of this great Country take to preserve the Union, establish good order and government, and to render the Nation happy at home and respectable abroad. No Country upon Earth ever had it more in its power to attain these blessings than United America. Wondrously strange then, and much to be regretted indeed would it be, were we to neglect the means, and depart from the road which Providence has pointed us to, so plainly; I cannot believe it will ever come to pass. The Great Governor of the Universe has led us too long and too far on the road to happiness and glory, to forsake us in the midst of it. By folly and improper conduct, proceeding from a variety of causes, we may now and then get bewildered; but I hope and trust that there is good sense and virtue enough left to recover the right path before we shall be entirely lost.¹

Today, exactly 221 years later, America has long gone down that rocky road of folly and improper conduct, that our general of the colonial army, and first president of our nation hoped and trusted would never happen, and we are leaning toward becoming entirely lost nearing the end of this first decade of the twenty-first century. Do we, as Americans, have the good sense and virtue enough left today to recover the right path? Or are we too divided and secular a nation to recover? We have indeed greatly and sorely departed from the road to which Providence had pointed us so plainly during our colonial and founding era; regrettably it has come to pass. We appeal to the Great Governor of the Universe not to forsake us

in our grievous national sins in this land. Americans all, we must repent and return to our first love, the love of Christ and His Law-Word, and love for one another.

This book will excite and cause us to remember and resurrect our roots, and give us the way back to George Washington's vision for a United America. This was the dream and goals of all of our founding fathers, who based our nation, one nation under God, on the life-giving words and laws of the Holy Bible, that *Book that Made America*. We must recapture our heritage of the Christian character and government of our, the world's first, Christian constitutional republic.

James Madison's famous phrase in *The Federalist Papers*, has echoed down over two centuries of American history:

It is evident that no other form would be reconcilable with the genius of the people of America; with the fundamental principles of the Revolution; or with that honorable determination which animates every votary of freedom: To rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government.²

Verna Hall and Rosalie Slater's 1983 *Year of the Bible* work affirmed, "History shows that mankind's ability to govern itself is in direct proportion to the relationship of the individual to God, to Christ.... The history of the Bible and the history of American liberty are inseparable. The Bible is the source of individual liberty—salvation from sin through Jesus Christ. It is also the basis for external or civil government."³ As Noah Webster wrote:

It is extremely important to our nation, in a political as well as religious view, that all possible authority and influence should be given to the Scriptures; for these furnish the best principles of civil liberty, and the most effectual support of republican government.⁴

Chief Justice Joseph Story in expounding upon the uniqueness of our Constitution and the founding of our nation, concluded his *Commentaries* with this warning—which we need to heed immediately in America today:

The structure has been erected by architects of consummate skill and fidelity; its foundations are solid; its compartments are beautiful, as well as useful; its arrangements are full of wisdom and order; and its defences are impregnable from without. It has been

reared for immortality, if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title. It may, nevertheless, perish in an hour by the folly, or corruption, or negligence of its only keepers, THE PEOPLE. Republics are created by the virtue, public spirit, and intelligence of the citizens. They fall, when the wise are banished from the public councils, because they dare to be honest, and the profligate are rewarded, because they flatter the people, in order to betray them.⁵

Robert C. Winthrop, descendant of the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, one and a half centuries ago, warned the audience of the Massachusetts Bible Society:

All societies of men must be governed in some way or other. The less they may have of stringent State Government, the more they must have of individual self-government. The less they rely on public law or physical force, the more they must rely on private moral restraint. Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled either by a power within them, or by a power without them; either by the Word of God, or by the strong arm of man; either by the Bible or by the bayonet.⁶

Our nation's second president, John Adams, wrote this in a letter to our third president, Thomas Jefferson, on Christmas day, 1813:

I have examined all [religions], as well as my narrow sphere, my straightened means, and my busy life would allow me; and the result is, that the Bible is the best Book in the world. It contains more of my little philosophy than all the libraries I have seen.⁷

Dr. Jerry Newcombe, whom I thank exceedingly for allowing Nordskog Publishing the opportunity of publishing his twenty-first book (as author or co-author), has brought us in *The Book That Made America* a definitive work on the stupendous influence of Holy Scripture in the founding and development of our great nation, the United States of America. We must learn and recapture the godly principles that our founding fathers knew from a deep and abiding knowledge of God's roadmap and His commandments contained in the Bible—now, more than ever. Read the author's book, study it, and then turn to the Bible for study and application in our lives, homes, institutions, and civil government. Will we be ruled, as today, by the strong arm of man, or by the Word of God—by the Bible or by the bayonet? That decision is yours.

I end this Word with a proclamation and a prayer from George Washington's April 30, 1789, First Inaugural Address:

It would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations and whose providential aids can supply every human defect. . . . In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it express your sentiments not less than my own. . . . [W]e ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained.⁸

Notes

SPECIAL PUBLISHER'S NOTE: Numerous citations listed were taken from the monumental book, *The Bible and the Constitution of the United States of America*, Commemorating the Year of the Bible, 1983, Verna M. Hall and Rosalie J. Slater (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, First Edition, December 11, 1983). This book was greatly influential to me and distributed widely in my roles as Los Angeles County Chairman, Year of the Bible Committee, and as Chairman of the Southern California Constitution Education Committee, during our events: The Bible and the Constitution conferences during the bicentennial era. The Year of the Bible was declared in 1983 by Public Law 97-280 on October 4, 1982 by Joint Congressional Resolutions, signed by President Ronald Reagan.* (GCN)

- 1 George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, in *Writings of George Washington*, John C. Fitzpatrick, Ed. (1930), 29:525. As quoted in *The Bible and the Constitution* (see above), 36.
- 2 Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay, *The Federalist, A Commentary on the Constitution of the United States, Being a Collection of Essays in Support of the Constitution Agreed Upon September 17, 1787, by the Federal Convention*, Number 39. (Washington & London, M. Walter Dunne, Publisher, 1901), 256. As quoted in *The Bible and the Constitution* (1983), 3.
- 3 Hall and Slater, *The Bible and the Constitution*, (1983), 3, 4.
- 4 Noah Webster, 1832, as quoted in Verna M. Hall, "Principles of Liberty Drawn from the Bible," *The Christian History of the American Revolution: Consider and Ponder* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Education, 1975), 21.
- 5 Joseph Story. *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, Abridged by the Author, Boston, 1833, 111, sec. 141. As quoted in *The Bible and the Constitution*, 37.
- 6 Robert C. Winthrop, *Addresses and Speeches on Various Occasions*, Boston, 1852. As quoted in Hall, *Christian History of the American Revolution*, 20.
- 7 John Adams, a Letter to Thomas Jefferson, in William J. Federer, *Treasury of Presidential Quotations* (St. Louis: Amerisearch, 2004), 31; and Norman Cousins, ed., *In God We Trust: The Religious Beliefs and Ideas of the American Founding Fathers* (NY: Harper & Brothers, 1958), 255-56.
- 8 George Washington, First Inaugural Address, in *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, William J. Federer, (Coppell, TX: FAME Publishing, Inc. 1994), 651-52.

*See adjoining page for President Ronald Reagan's *Year of the Bible Proclamation* of February 3, 1983.



Year of the Bible, 1983

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Of the many influences that have shaped the United States of America into a distinctive Nation and people, none may be said to be more fundamental and enduring than the Bible.

Deep religious beliefs stemming from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible inspired many of the early settlers of our country, providing them with the strength, character, convictions, and faith necessary to withstand great hardship and danger in this new and rugged land. These shared beliefs helped forge a sense of common purpose among the widely dispersed colonies—a sense of community which laid the foundation for the spirit of nationhood that was to develop in later decades.

The Bible and its teachings helped form the basis for the Founding Fathers' abiding belief in the inalienable rights of the individual, rights which they found implicit in the Bible's teachings of the inherent worth and dignity of each individual. This same sense of man patterned the convictions of those who framed the English system of law inherited by our own Nation, as well as the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

For centuries the Bible's emphasis on compassion and love for our neighbor has inspired the institutional and governmental expressions of benevolent outreach such as private charity, the establishment of schools and hospitals, and the abolition of slavery.

Many of our greatest national leaders—among them Presidents Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, and Wilson—have recognized the influence of the Bible on our country's development. The plainspoken Andrew Jackson referred to the Bible as no less than “the rock on which our Republic rests.”

Today our beloved America and, indeed, the world, is facing a decade of enormous challenge. As a people we may well be tested as we have seldom, if ever, been tested before. We will need resources of spirit even more than resources of technology, education, and armaments. There could be no more fitting moment than now to reflect with gratitude, humility, and urgency upon the wisdom revealed to us in the writing that Abraham Lincoln called “the best gift God has ever given to man. . . . But for it we could not know right from wrong.”

The Congress of the United States, in recognition of the unique contribution of the Bible in shaping the history and character of this Nation, and so many of its citizens, has by Senate Joint Resolution 165 authorized and requested the President to designate the year 1983 as the “Year of the Bible.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in recognition of the contribution of the Bible on our Republic and our people, do hereby proclaim 1983 the Year of the Bible in the United States. I encourage all citizens, each in his or her own way, to re-examine and rediscover its priceless and timeless message.

In Witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

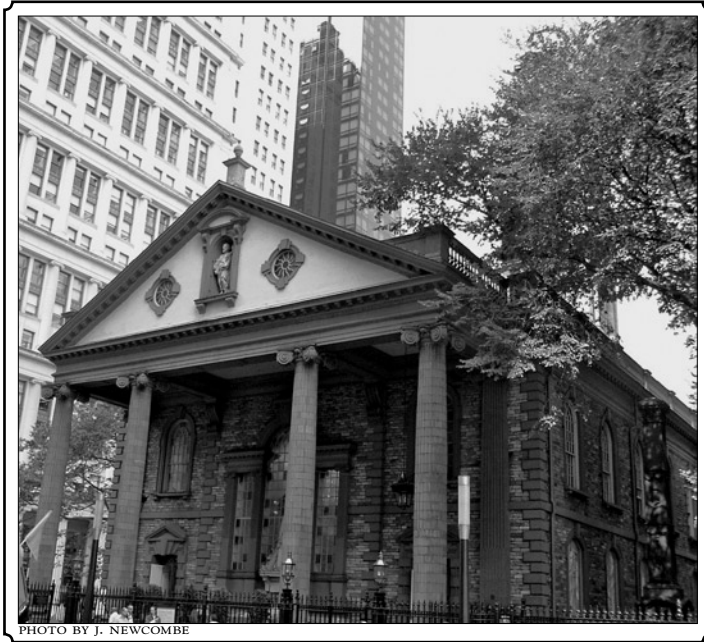
Ronald Reagan

PART ONE

The Book that Made America

THE purpose of these opening chapters is to provide an overview of how the Bible played a unique role in the creation of America. First, we will introduce and survey the subject. Next, we will consider the Bible and government. What principles can we cull from the Word of God that deal with a nation's remembrance of what God has done for them in the past? Finally, we will have a fifty-question quiz that tests one's knowledge of the unique role the Scriptures and the Christian faith played in the founding of America.

We are standing on a threshold. Unless we teach the next generation about our unique heritage, it will be lost in the revisionist mishmash of half-truths and political correctness. Understanding our foundation and our godly roots is the first step to preserving them.



St. Paul's Chapel in New York City.

At this Anglican church on April 30, 1789, just after being sworn in on the Bible, George Washington and other leaders of our new republic participated in a two-hour worship service, consecrating the new nation to God. President Washington worshiped here weekly for two years while the city served as our national capital.

This church miraculously survived the attack on September 11, 2001, and became a focal point for the 9/11 rescue operations. For eight months, hundreds of volunteers worked 12-hour shifts serving meals, making beds, counseling and praying with fire fighters, construction workers, police, and others. "Unwavering Spirit: Hope and Healing at Ground Zero," a new interactive exhibit at the church, honors that ministry and its legacy of love and compassion.

The open sky directly behind the church is where the World Trade Center towers stood.

CHAPTER 1

Our Christian Roots

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.

(Psalm 33:12)

EARLY in his presidency President Barack Obama, during an official overseas trip, declared that the United States is not a Christian nation. To my knowledge, this is the first time in our nation's history that a president has made such a statement. Meanwhile, numerous presidents throughout our history have said the opposite. Most importantly, our founders declared that our rights come from God. That is the essence of the American experience.

The same week President Obama made his declaration, *Newsweek* magazine had a cover story—just in time for Holy Week 2009—on the decline and fall of Christian America. In fact, on the first page of the article itself, they have a large sidebar with large words, “The End of Christian America.” The article quoted one of my modern heroes, Dr. Albert Mohler, Jr., the president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who said, “The so-called Judeo-Christian consensus of the last millennium has given way to a post-modern, post-Western cultural crisis which threatens the very heart of our culture.” Jon Meachem of *Newsweek* adds this comment to Mohler's insight: “There it was, an old term with new urgency: *post-Christian*. That is not to say that the Christian God is dead, but that He is less of a force in American politics and culture than at any other time in recent memory.”⁶ The reason *Newsweek* sees the demise of “Christian America” is the growing numbers of non-religious