

The United States Is Far from United. Is There Anything Christians Can Do?

Lesson 8

Proverbs 1:7, 3:1-2, 6:23-29, 14:2, 18:12, 22:14, 24:3-4, 27:8, 29:23

July 3, 2022

The Ununited States of America

INTRODUCTION

As we celebrate our nation's birthday, what gift might be given to this country where lessons once learned have been forgotten?

Perhaps the USA would benefit from a version of Paul's gift from 1 Timothy 2:1-2 in which he urges: 1) *petitions* for leaders to recognize their inadequacies, trust in God's wisdom, and follow His will; 2) daily *prayers* to seek divine guidance, to offer praise and adoration of, and confession to, our Creator; 3) *intercession* for protection and respect for Christ-followers within governmental bodies; 4) *thanksgiving* to God for citizens' opportunity to recapture Biblical values and for faith-based organizations that watch for subversive action, hidden agendas, and deception in government. If the forgotten lessons are re-learned, perhaps our lives can be lived as Paul foretold: in peace, quiet, godliness, and holiness.

Memory verse: "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."
—1 Timothy 2:1-2

Pray, and read the passages listed above. What questions or observations do you have about them?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. What is required to attain the “beginning of knowledge?” (Proverbs 1:7)
2. What happens when teaching and commandments are followed? (Proverbs 3:1-2)
3. How does avoiding “the smooth talk of a wayward woman” benefit a man? (Proverbs 6:23-24)
4. What are the divergent results of haughtiness and humility? (Proverbs 18:12)
5. What is needed to proverbially build a house and, afterward, furnish it? (Proverbs 24:3-4)
6. How does pride affect a person? (Proverbs 29:23)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. How is “fear” of the Lord the beginning of knowledge? (Job 28:28; Proverbs 1:7; Isaiah 11:2)

2. Proverbs 3:1-2 cites a promise for keeping God’s commandments, which the Israelites rarely did. As it says in Judges 17:6, “In those days, Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.” What did the Lord tell the Israelites to do and not to do in relation to the practices of those scorned by God? (Leviticus 18:3-5; Deuteronomy 4:1-8)

3. How might a nation be compared with a prostitute? (Proverbs 6:23-29; Jeremiah 3:8-9; Ezekiel 16:25-26)

4. If we identify “house” as “our nation” in the passages below, what steps should be taken to make our nation righteous, and what understanding is needed to maintain it? How do we dismantle walls that cause division? (Proverbs 12:7, 24:3-4; Matthew 5:43-48, 12:25; Galatians 5:14-15, 22-26)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. What might keep you from loving those with whom you disagree (or your “enemies”)? How can you find the humility to “...do good to those who hate you...?” (Luke 6:27; Romans 12:14-21)

2. The Bible tells us how to handle grievances against one another (Luke 6:37; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14). How do you handle grievances?

3. If the United States transformed into a completely Godless nation, do you think that believers should leave it considering what the Bible says about living in a pagan society? (1 Peter 2:11-17)