

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE™

EXTRAS

Living for God's Glory

- Joe Wright Prayer Text
- “One Nation Under God”

study guide

Living for God's Glory

Joe Wright Prayer Text

Below is the “Prayer of Repentance” that SHOOK the nation when Joe Wright prayed it before the Kansas State House on January 23, 1996. It was subsequently featured by Paul Harvey on his national radio program and continues to resonate with many around the country.

“Heavenly Father,

We come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and seek Your directions and guidance.

We know Your Word says, “Woe to those who call evil good”, but that’s exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values.

We confess that:

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it moral pluralism;

We have worshipped other gods and called it multi-culturalism;

We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle;

We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery;

We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation;

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare;

We have killed our unborn and called it choice;

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable;

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building esteem;

We have abused power and called it political savvy;

We have coveted our neighbors’ possessions and called it ambition;

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression;

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, O God, and know our hearts today; try us and see if there be some wicked way in us; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas, and who have been ordained by You, to govern this great state.

Grant them Your wisdom to rule and may their decisions direct us to the center of Your will.

I ask it in the name of your son, the Living Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Pastor Joe Wright—Senior Pastor at Central Christian Of Wichita, Kansas, 1987-2006

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Living for God's Glory

"One Nation Under God"

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ONE NATION UNDER GOD?

By Bill Skelton

In less than two months America will elect a new President and Vice President. It's a sobering thought to me as I reflect on just how far we have come in regard to our unwillingness to involve God in the governance of our nation.

It has been said that "if we forget that we are 'one nation under God', we will cease to be a nation." On June 26, 2002, our nation was rocked as the 9th District Court of Appeals ruled the Pledge of Allegiance as unconstitutional! The whole pledge was not judged as such, mind you, but just two words: "under God"!

Polls showed, overwhelmingly, that Americans believed "under God" should remain in the Pledge. Surprisingly, not only was the church shocked, but Congress and the White House were as well! Congress moved into gear, with the Senate voting 99-0 and the House voting 401-5 to affirm that our Pledge must continue to contain those two words.

George Bush reminded us all that Presidents before him had echoed those sentiments. Abraham Lincoln referred to America as "this nation under God" in his Gettysburg Address, Dwight Eisenhower added "one nation under God" to the Pledge in 1954, and in 1980 Ronald Reagan understood the significance to those words when he said, *"If we forget that we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under!"* **Until recently, those words have been understood to be part of the fabric of our country.**

Perhaps the reason those words are under such attack is because of the uncanny parallel between the nation of Israel's relationship with God, as chronicled in God's Word, and the United States' relationship with God since its founding. Indeed, both nations have: enjoyed a firm foundation built upon reliance to Jehovah; seen their positions changed, even though their foundations remained firm; seen a change in standards; ultimately seen their conditions changed. Scripture tells us that, eventually, Israel will return to her first love. **However, God's Word does not tell us what will happen to America.** It is clear that we are at a crossroads in our history, but Scripture does give us a roadmap that will lead us back to reliance on the same Jehovah God upon which our founders relied.

Israel's foundation was laid when God delivered them from Egypt and told them in Leviticus 26:12: *"I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people."* God's role and relationship with Israel was clear: to be one nation under God. Now let's look at America's founding. After reviewing more than 15,000 items written by the 55 men who crafted the Constitution, Professors Donald Lutz and Charles Hynaman saw that *"the Bible contributed 34% of all quotations used by our founding fathers"*. It was also discovered that when the founding fathers referred to other sources, those other sources were quotes from God's Word 60% of the time. It is clear that the chief source of guidance for our founders was the Bible. **It is clear that God's Word was poured into the foundation of America.** We were built upon the principal that we are to be one nation under God. This does not restrict other beliefs within our nation, every American has the right to believe as he or she chooses, but our nation would crumble if God was removed from its foundation (Ps.11:3).

Though, currently, our foundation is firm, it is frightening to know that our position is rapidly changing.

Instead of being satisfied and secure as "one nation under God," we seem to want to go our own way and become "one nation **OVER** God". Again, we can draw a comparison with Israel. Psalm 81:11 says: *"But My people would not heed My voice; and Israel would have none of Me."* Israel, too, refused to submit to God's leadership and chose to be **OVER** God instead of under His authority. This led to great sorrow for the nation of Israel. When they rejected God's loving authority they found themselves subjected to the authority of the cruel rulers of surrounding nations. **Tragically, America has been on the same road to disaster for more than 50 years.** Using relativism, humanism, and tolerance we are systematically taking God out of our government. We seem to be determined to change our position from under His loving authority to making Man the ultimate authority! **As with Israel, God is the authority whether we acknowledge Him or not—we didn't vote Him into that position and we cannot vote Him out!**

(over)

Living for God's Glory

"One Nation Under God" (cont.)

As we become our own authority and our positions change, standards for living ultimately follow. Solomon expressed God's wisdom when he said in Proverbs 29:18: "*Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law.*" When a nation uses God's Word as the standard then its people are blessed, but when God's Word is cast off so is all restraint. **The resulting standard is that there is no standard.** Father Morton Blackwell stated: "*Any nation that does not establish and maintain a fixed moral standard of right and wrong will not survive!*" Constitutional historian David Barton gives examples of the resulting chaotic schizophrenia. The courts have ruled that it is constitutional for chaplains to pray (*Marsh v. Chambers*, 1983), but unconstitutional for students to read those prayers in public schools (*State Board of Education v. Board of Education of Netcong*, 1970). It is constitutional to display the Ten Commandments on public property (*Anderson v. Salt Lake City Corp.*, 1973), but unconstitutional either to allow students to see them (*Stone v. Graham*, 1980), or to display them (*Harvey v. Cobb County*, 1993).

What happens when we consciously ignore God? He lets us have our own way, just like He did His people so long ago. Psalm 81:12 states: "*So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart to walk in their own counsel.*" In the first chapter of the New Testament book of Romans, it is written: "*God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness...who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but have pleasure in them that do them.*" **If a nation lets go of God, God will let go of that nation.** In 1962, biblical standards were replaced with relativism in our court systems. As a result, birth rates for unwed mothers tripled, violent crime skyrocketed, STDs in children ages 10-14 quadrupled, and SAT scores dropped 78 points. Sadly, things that were not even spoken of in polite company a very few years ago are now being trumpeted on prime time TV as "entertainment". Our nation is traveling downhill at breakneck speeds with no brakes, no guardrails, and no hope! We have let go of God and, tragically, I believe God has let go of us.

It's hopeless you say? While I agree there is little to no hope on this road to destruction, I would remind you that we serve the God of hope! **Our hope lies in the hope of Christ!** Psalm 81:13 says: "Oh, that My people would listen to Me, that Israel would walk in My ways! I would soon subdue their enemies, and turn My hand against their adversaries." Fellow broadcasters, our convictions must change. If we, as a nation, changed once, we can surely change again. We removed Him from our foundation, but we can put Him back again! If removing Him changed us for the worse, then returning to Him will change us for the better. The promise is simple. God says that if we return, listen, and follow Him that He will bless us.

I know I'm preaching to the choir by writing these things to Christian broadcasters. But friends, the true subject of the articles I have written and will continue to write is, I trust, a clarion call to all of us! We have the means and responsibility to serve as the "watchman on the wall!" We can and must remind our fellow citizens of our Godly foundation—of how we have changed our position on that foundation and abandoned the standards that keep us steady. **We have a responsibility to warn our nation and its leaders** that the condition or our foundation is shaky and in desperate need of repair. God tells us in Ezekiel that He will hold us responsible if we don't warn sinful man of his dire condition.

God desires to use NRB for His purposes and we must unite and speak with one voice. Only by the proclamation of truth, the prayers of God's people, and true repentance will we again become "one nation under God".

Bill Skelton is President/CEO of Love Worth Finding and Chairman of the NRB Board.

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