

America Needs a Declaration of Dependence

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Isaiah lived in a time of tension that bore many striking similarities to these days in which we live. Catastrophic events and cataclysmic judgments were taking place in rapid succession and on a global scale. The international scene presented a crisis on many fronts. There was upheaval in the social order. Lawlessness abounded on every hand.

A new nation had arisen in the north and it was moving to world domination. That nation was Assyria. It was the most brutal nation that ever put an army in the battlefield — so much so that, according to history, when it was known that the Assyrian army was advancing upon a town, the entire population would commit suicide rather than fall into the hands of the brutal Assyrians. Nations were falling before their advance like overripe fruit. Already the northern kingdom of Israel had been taken captive, and the southern kingdom of Judah was in a precarious position. Outside the city of Jerusalem, this tremendous army of 185,000 Assyrians was camped and demanding its surrender.

In that dire, desperate, and difficult day, King Hezekiah entered the temple, and he turned to God in prayer. God responded by sending to him His prophet Isaiah with the amazing statement that the army of Assyria would never set foot in the streets of Jerusalem; they would not cross the threshold of any of its numerous gates; and not an arrow would be shot into Jerusalem by any member of that 185,000-man army! Now you can well understand how some trigger-happy Assyrian soldier might shoot an arrow by chance over the wall. But he did not, because God had said not one arrow would be shot into the city. God in His mercy was sparing the nation of Judah.

Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and four-score and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were dead. (Isaiah 37:36)

However, God did not absolve the people of Judah from their responsibility to Him. They were guilty before Him. God warned them that He was preparing another nation down by the banks of the Euphrates River, Babylon by name:

And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said, moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days. (Isaiah 39:7, 8)

When Babylon was ready, they marched into Jerusalem, stripped the temple and all the city of its wealth, burned the city of Jerusalem, and took God's people into captivity — all this because Judah had persisted in sin and refused to repent.

God had recorded in the Book of Isaiah (over a century before the captivity took place) that He was giving Judah another chance. He's now calling them into court, and He calls the whole world to witness. He holds His people before the bar of justice, and in essence He says, "I want to give you an opportunity to answer the charge. I want you to hear My verdict. I want you to be able to throw yourself on the mercy of this court."

Come To Court

Now in our day God still invites the world to come into the courtroom to see if He was just in all that He did. It would be well for our generation, which has such a warped viewpoint of God, to go into court and see Him on His throne of judgment. And may I say that when we do this we will learn two things that this generation needs to know. First, that He is a God of judgment. And the second thing is that God is also merciful, that anyone who comes into His court and is declared guilty can throw himself on the mercy of the court and absolutely be forgiven.

Now that's contrary to contemporary thinking. The present-day thinking of the world has removed God from His throne of judgment and has divested Him of His authority as the moral ruler of this universe. He's been bowed to the edge of the world and pushed over as excess baggage, with the assumption that we do not need Him today at all.

I've been very much interested in seeing what the atheists are doing. There is a magazine called *The Humanist* put out by an atheistic outfit. The editorial writer is a rather brilliant fellow. Some of the other articles are rather pusillanimous, in that they very frankly state that we today do not need God at all. He is not needed in the universe.

Also there is a book titled *Atheism in Our Time*. It is written by Ignace Lepp, who was for twenty-seven years an atheist and a very cogent thinker. He divides atheism up into categories: neurotic atheism — that's what we have here in Los Angeles — and Marxist atheism, which at that time was known as spiritual atheism. But he says that the new atheism does not bother to debate with Christianity. It self-confidently proclaims the death of God and man's freedom from supernatural authority. It seeks to build a radically natural civilization without reference to any kind of transcendence.

Now that is the type of thinking that walks our campuses and places of business, and it goes down the streets of our cities today. Atheism is growing by leaps and bounds.

Now, therefore, I'm not being irreverent when I say that the teaching of the 1960s has given us a warped conception of God. It paints Him as nothing more than a toothless old man with long whiskers, sitting on the edge of a fleecy cloud with a rainbow around His shoulders, overwhelmed with mushy love slopping over on every side, and He does not have enough backbone to swat a fly or crush a grape. May I say to you, that may be modern man's notion of God, but it's not the God of the Bible.

Who is God?

The God of the Bible is the Almighty God. He is still the moral ruler of His universe. He is still upon the throne of justice — He has not abdicated — and He punishes sin. This universe is operating for Him and not for man at all. He today is the One who is to be pleased, and everything must be for His glory or it must ultimately be exterminated and put out of His universe.

Back in the song of Moses (Exodus 15), which the people of Israel sang after they crossed the Red Sea, there is an expression that keeps recurring in my mind — “Jehovah is a man of war.” Yes, He is! And He will not compromise with sin. He will not accept the white flag of surrender. He is moving forward in undeviating, unhesitating, and uncompromising fury against it. There would be hope today for man if he, with Isaiah, could see “the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up” (Isaiah 6:1). The picture that man has today of God is blasphemous. He is the moral ruler of this universe.

Now I want you to notice the setting of the stage for God's message to His people:

The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.
(Isaiah 1:1)

God had raised up Isaiah to speak to four of the kings who reigned in succession over the southern kingdom of Judah. They were men who for the most part were not good kings. Actually they were cheap politicians attempting to make a rapprochement with the powers around them and trying to play politics instead of turning to God.

Now I'm sure first of all that we're not going to make the mistake of thinking that God is talking about someplace else other than Judah and Jerusalem. It's always well to hold this in proper perspective and give the correct interpretation. It has an application for today to be sure, although He is not talking directly to anyone in the western hemisphere. He is talking directly to His own people of Judah and Jerusalem.

Now He does call the entire world to come in. He says:

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. (Isaiah 1:2)

Calling heaven and earth to witness is an expression that occurs back in the Book of Deuteronomy about five hundred years before. When God was ready to put these people into the land of Israel, having taken them out of Egypt, He said in essence: "This land is their land. I give it to them, to be sure, but they are actually homesteading because it really belongs to Me. Their occupancy in that land and the blessing they receive in that land will depend upon their obedience unto Me." So after Moses had put down all the conditions, God said:

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
(Deuteronomy 32:1)

When God put them into the land He called heaven and earth to witness the fact that their occupancy depended on the conditions He had laid down.

Five hundred years passed, and God says again, "Come into court, heavens and earth. I want you to see if I'm being just and righteous in what I am doing." He calls the created intelligences — and they are without number — into court to witness what He's going to do next. He's getting ready to put His people out of the land because of their disobedience.

After almost three thousand years, God invites *us* to make a close inspection and to see that even by our modern standards He was right and just.

The Accusation

Now God's accusation runs like this: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me." We are living in a day, of course, when discipline of children has certainly gone out of style. A parent was asked in southern California the other day, "Do you strike your children?" He replied, "Only in self-defense." Today we find that parental discipline is out.

Now will you notice what God has to say concerning a son's rebellion in a family. We're all

familiar with the story of the prodigal son. But did you know that it contradicts the Mosaic Law? The crowd who heard Christ tell of the prodigal son were dumbfounded when He said that the father told the servant to kill the fatted calf instead of killing the wayward son. God is not only just, He is also merciful. But the rebellion of a son is a serious thing. Scripture has a great deal to say about it. Notice the gravity of it as stated in the Mosaic Law:

If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them, then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place. And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This, our son, is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die. So shalt thou put evil away from among you, and all Israel shall hear, and fear. (Deuteronomy 21:18-21)

Now that was the law concerning the prodigal son. That was the law that God gave to His people to put down rebellion in the family. And frankly, it might be well to read this today when we have such rebellion among the children.

So in the parable about the prodigal son — who was a rebellious son — when he returned home the father would have been justified in having him stoned. But instead of having him stoned to death, he put his arms around him, received him joyfully, gave him a banquet, and put a royal robe upon him! How could he do that? He could receive his son because the One who was telling that parable was here on earth to be put to death in place of the son. And He is the only One who can tell the story that way, my beloved, because rebellion should be put down. That was God's law.

A Little Humor

So then in Isaiah's day God wanted all to hear His case against His chosen people: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me" (Isaiah 1:2). Now I'll paraphrase God's review of their history: "Five hundred years ago I put them in the land and blessed them, I have sent prophets to them, I've sent judges to them, I've granted them their request and given them a king, and they have been prosperous beyond their wildest dreams. Yet in spite of all this, they have rebelled against Me."

Now God indulges here in a bit of humor:

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass, his master's crib, but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider. (Isaiah 1:3)

I do not know whether you find humor in the Bible. I have the feeling that there are some saints today who never find any humor in the Word of God. Personally, I think God has a real sense of humor. Have you ever gone to a zoo? When I go there and look at the animals God has made, I find that He has a sense of humor or He would not have made some of them. If you still doubt what I am saying, if you ever come to Los Angeles, go downtown and watch the people go by — you will see what I mean. (Then if you still doubt what I'm saying, go take a look in your

bathroom mirror!)

God does have a sense of humor, and there is humor in the Bible. I think it's interesting to note in many cases when God is really lowering the boom on His people, that's when He introduces a little humor. You find it here: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass, his master's crib, but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider."

Notice the two animals He picked, the ox and the ass. Neither the ox nor that little long-eared animal has built up a reputation for having a high IQ. In fact, "as dumb as an ox" is an expression we use even today. Yet God says the ox knows his owner. Even a stupid ox knows his owner! And God says the ass knows his master's crib. But you have never seen one of them wearing a Phi Beta Kappa key. Nor have you ever met one with a Ph.D. degree! (Well, I must confess that I have met one or two — but not many. They don't go in for that sort of thing.) But the little ass, he knows his master's crib — that's the place he gets his oats.

While I was a pastor in Cleburne, Texas, there was a vacant lot across from the church and the manse where I lived. I was there for about a year before I was married. And a very poor man from the other side of the railroad tracks used to bring over one of these little long-eared donkeys. He tethered him on a big, long rope in that lot because the grass grew so well there. And the little donkey would eat it down, keep it mowed. The boys and girls in the neighborhood learned to go over and ride the little donkey. And he didn't seem to mind it, he'd just keep eating. One day I thought I'd try it, so I went over and got on his back. And that's when one of the deacons of my church came by and said, "Hello, Preacher! I can't tell — are you on top or the bottom?" But that little donkey paid no attention to any of us. He'd just keep on eating. But late in the afternoon the owner would come for him. When he came tottering along, the little donkey would prick up his ears and start toward him. I always thought of this passage of Scripture. "The ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib, but My people," God said, "they don't know."

Is it smart today to be an atheist? I'd like for you to know what God is saying to the atheist. He says the atheist is more stupid than an ox or an ass. Why? Because the animals have sense enough to know who takes care of them.

America is being brainwashed today with atheism. The God of the Bible is being left out of everything. The TV and the press will pay scant attention to the sins of the rich and famous, but you let one preacher get into trouble and he'll make the front page. Yet the thousands who are attempting to preach the gospel and stand for God today — they're not news to an atheistic society.

Yet God still says that the ox knows his owner, the ass knows his master's crib, but My people — they do not know. They are stupid! Oh, my friend, they're stupid not to recognize God. May I say, this is a commentary on our sophisticated and suave generation that thinks it no longer needs God, that it can rule Him out. Or as Julian Huxley, the biologist, said, "God has nothing left to do. Operationally, God is beginning to resemble not a ruler but the last fading smile of a cosmic Cheshire cat." And most people today are living as if God does not exist.

I heard the story of the little boy, raised in a Christian family, who was going by himself on his first visit away from home. Although it was only next door for the evening meal, he was enjoying the experience thoroughly. When it came time for all of them to sit down at the table, the little fellow, who was accustomed to hearing grace at the table, bowed his head and shut his eyes. But the home to which he had been invited was not Christian, and they immediately began to pass the food. The little fellow, not having any inhibitions, raised the question: "Don't you

folks thank God for your food?” The host was a bit embarrassed but confessed that they did not. The little fellow was thoughtful for a moment and then blurted out, “You’re just like my dog — he just starts in.”

Now God says of His people in a backslidden condition:

Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. (Isaiah 1:4)

Backslidden, sinful nation, laden with *iniquity*. That expression sends us down the corridors of the centuries, and we hear the Man of Galilee saying to this people, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Now we know that He meant laden with *iniquity*. His invitation goes out today to those with burdens, and those bowed down with sin, to bring that burden and load to Him and find rest. In this expression, we can hear God still calling America.

Steps Downward

I want you to notice a philosophy of history that we find in God’s Word. The three steps that precede the downfall of any nation are first of all, religious apostasy; second, there is moral awfulness; and third, political anarchy. These are the three steps downward that all the great nations of the past, lying this moment in rubble and ashes, have taken. Rome, for instance, is the classic example.

The historian Gibbon gives five reasons for the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The first step down is the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society. Second, higher and higher taxes, the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace. Third, the mad craze for pleasure, sports becoming every year more exciting, more brutal, more immoral. Fourth, the building of great armaments when the great enemy is within — the decay of individual responsibility. And fifth, the decay of religion, fading into mere form, losing touch with life, losing power to guide the people. These were the downward steps that Rome took, Greece took, and which all the great nations of the past have taken.

If God should call America into court today and specify His charges against us, where would He begin?

Political Anarchy

Would He begin with political anarchy? Certainly He could, for the press tells of the open scandal that exists today in high places. In spite of all the smoke, it is obvious to the average citizen that there is some fire.

Today in America we have, as I’m sure you recognize, political anarchy. We are in grave danger as a nation. They are trying to doctor that up, trying to patch up the dike by putting in a little plastic here and a little there, and it’s all political expediency.

We think if we get a certain party in and a certain party out, or if we get a certain candidate in, we’ve solved the problems of the nation. I do not discuss politics and I’m not doing it now.

But, my friend, just changing parties is not what America needs — any more than you can cure cancer by putting on another suit of clothes.

God *could* put His finger down on political anarchy, which is at work in our beloved nation today, but I do not believe that is where He would begin.

Moral Awfulness

Would He begin with moral awfulness? It is obvious that there is a moral breakdown in America that is unprecedented in our history, or the history of any other nation.

In one year, Americans have spent 65 billion dollars on alcoholic beverages. Sixty percent of the young people under age 25 have tried some form of illegal drug. Eight billion dollars a year are spent on pornography. Homosexuals have banded together to form one of the most powerful, intimidating forces in politics. One and a half million babies are aborted every year in this country.

Surely God could bring a charge of moral awfulness against our nation, but I do not believe that He would begin there.

Now when the Lord Jesus came to Jerusalem, He could have spoken to them about the political situation. John the Baptist as a prophet rebuked Herod, the king, but did you notice that the Lord Jesus did not attempt to straighten out Herod? Other than referring to him as “that fox,” He had no word for Herod whatsoever. Have you ever noticed that He did not attempt to correct the *moral* condition of the city of Jerusalem? It was corrupt. Why, they even brought to Him a woman taken in adultery and He forgave her.

Religious Apostasy

But I’ll tell you where our Lord did put His finger down. It was on religious apostasy. He nearly took the hide off the Pharisees, and they were the fundamentalists of their day. They represented the best in religion. But because their hearts were far from God, they delivered Him to be crucified.

Also, in Isaiah’s day, God put His finger down on religious apostasy. In a scathing way He denounced His people:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD; I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. (Isaiah 1:11)

These people had a God-given religion. They had a God-appointed ritual in a God-constructed temple, but they were wrong in that which represented the very best in their religion. They were bringing sacrifices and going through the ritual according to the letter of the Law, but their hearts were in rebellion against God, and their lives were lived in sin. God says, “I don’t want your sacrifices anymore, I don’t want you to bring these vain oblations to Me. I don’t want these things, for the very simple reason that your heart is far from Me.”

Oh, my friend, it’s easy to go to church, even be active in the services there, and still have your heart far from God. Where is your heart? Does God have it? Let me paraphrase what God says, “There’s no use coming to church, there’s no use going through the ritual. It’s all a sham

and a show — unless your heart is right with Me.” What about *your* heart?

Is there spiritual apostasy in this land of ours? Every informed Christian is aware that liberalism and humanism have taken over most of the great denominations of America today.

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the mouthpieces of liberalism, was quoted as saying that liberal Protestantism has been inclined to sacrifice every characteristic Christian insight if it only could thereby prove itself intellectually respectable, but that liberalism finds itself unable to cope with the tragic experiences of our day.

The church in America makes no impression on society whatsoever. In Dr. Bernard Bell’s book *Crowd Culture*, he states that the 87 million Americans who are associated with some religious body have no real religious impact on American life. He said, “Most Americans regard the church as a form of a respectable minor art, charming if it happens to appeal to you; its only moral function is to bless whatever the multitude at the moment regards as the American way of life.”

Some years back a number of preachers joined in with protest marchers in Chicago. Commenting on that, David Lawrence, a columnist, wrote, “Many clergymen seem to have lost the halo of God’s light and to have plunged into the darkness of life itself. What a tragic loss to the community in which this happens.”

There was a time when the preacher was called the “parson,” which meant the “person” of the town. That was true in America at the beginning, but now doctors lead the list: doctors, bankers, scientists, military leaders, educators, corporate heads, psychiatrists, U.S. Supreme Court Justices, local retailers, and then the clergy — and after them, Congressmen. That’s where the clergy is today, but they belong at the bottom of the list because the church is no longer declaring forth the Word of God. Someone has said, “The pulpit today has become a sounding board only to declare what people want to hear instead of being a voice in the wilderness speaking for God.”

That is the picture of America, and it’s not any better in most fundamental churches today, and I think I know them real well.

How Did It Happen?

Pandora’s box of troubles was opened for America back at the turn of the century when professing Christians deserted the midweek service and then, after the first World War, deserted the Sunday night service. And before long there was no difference between the leading deacon’s language and that of the local bartender.

Dr. Walter F. Tunks of the University of Akron said, “In the last six thousand years, there have been twenty-one civilizations, and every one of them has gone on the rocks precisely at the point where they let God go.”

It was indeed interesting to find in the staid *Wall Street Journal*, when the Depression first began, a brief editorial that went something like this: “What America needs more than railway extension, western irrigation, a low tariff, a bigger cotton crop, and a larger wheat crop is a revival of religion. The kind that father and mother used to have. A religion that counted it good business to take time for family worship each morning right in the middle of wheat harvest. A religion that prompted them to quit work a half hour earlier on Wednesday so that the whole family could get ready to go to prayer meeting.” America’s problem is the same today; it is a spiritual problem.

Listen to God as He continues His charge against Judah:

Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot bear; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. (Isaiah 1:13)

They were guilty of rebellion against Him. They were bringing the sacrifices, but they needed to remember Samuel's words to Saul, "...To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Samuel 15:22).

I am wondering, if the Lord Jesus came to our churches today, would He commend us? Would He compliment us for our faithfulness to Him? Would He tell us how much He appreciates our taking time out to attend the services and how grateful He is for all we are giving to Him? I think not! The One who has "feet like fine bronze," whose "eyes were like a flame of fire," and from whose mouth there goes a "sharp two-edged sword" would not commend us. I think He would tell us that all of our outward form, all of our lovely testimonies and loud profession were making Him sick. Would He not tell us that we needed to repent and come in humility to Him? Surely there is a warning to the churches of America. Our difficulty today is basically spiritual, and until the professing church repents and has revival, there is no hope for America.

A Strange Sentence

Let us return to the vision of Isaiah. In the courtroom the defendant is now in the box and has been found guilty. All of the charges proffered have been proven; the verdict of the jury is in, and we are ready to hear the sentence of the Judge.

It is a strange sentence. In fact, we stand amazed and aghast at this Judge. Listen to Him,

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. (Isaiah 1:18)

He is saying to the people of Judah, "Settle your case out of court. Do not force Me to render sentence — 'Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him...'" (Matthew 5:25).

God says that He has a secret formula, a divine alchemy, a potent prescription, a powerful potion, a heavenly elixir that will take out sin. It is not a secret formula like the atomic bomb, but it is more potent! It's the blood of Jesus Christ that He shed on the cross for you and me. You will find it in Isaiah 53 as the One more marred, who suffered more, who died differently, who was wounded for our transgressions. And because He paid the penalty, the Judge is able now to extend mercy to us. Is not God calling America to settle its case out of court?

There are those today who say that since we're the greatest nation in the world, we cannot be brought down, that we today have the most sophisticated weapons. May I say to you, it might be well for us to remember that in the past, during World War II, they said that the Maginot line of defense in France was quite impregnable. It was not. They said that one of the generals would defeat the invaders of Poland when the Nazis went in. He did not. They said that

tanks could not possibly cross the Dutch canals or the Greek mountains — but tanks did. They said that Singapore could not be taken. It was. They said the Philippines could be defended. They could not be. They said that airplanes would never sink a battleship, but they did. They said that Germany would run short of oil in 1940, but their oil held out. They said that Germany and Russia would never go to war. They did. They said that Japan would be defeated in six months. She wasn't. They said the Dutch East Indies would beat off all attacks. They didn't. And on and on, my beloved. And today if America thinks we can hide back of our sophisticated weaponry and be safe — may I say, it's a foolish position.

Independence or Dependence

I close with the stories of two men.

Aaron Burr was a grandson of the great Jonathan Edwards who came to Princeton to conduct meetings while Aaron Burr was a student. There was a great spiritual movement in the school. One night when Jonathan Edwards preached on the subject, "The Mastery of Jesus," Aaron Burr was deeply stirred, and he went to the room of one of his professors to talk to him about making a decision for Jesus. The professor urged him not to make any decision because of an emotional appeal, but to wait until after the meetings were over. Aaron Burr postponed making a decision, and he went on to murder a great American and to betray his country. When he was an old man, a young man came to him and said, "Mr. Burr, I want you to meet a Friend of mine."

Aaron Burr said, "Who is he?"

The young man replied, "He is Jesus Christ, the Savior of my soul."

A cold sweat broke out on the forehead of Aaron Burr, and he replied, "Sixty years ago I told God that if He would let me alone, I would let Him alone, and He has kept His word!"

Another American, John Hancock, was the first man to sign the Declaration of Independence because he had listened to John Witherspoon, the only preacher who signed the Declaration of Independence. John Witherspoon had spoken on the words of Jesus, when He said, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..." (John 10:9). On the way home, John Hancock mused over this. He said to himself, "I have always admired Witherspoon. I thought he was a logical, intelligent man. But tonight he didn't make sense to me. How can Jesus Christ be a door? How can I enter in?"

He walked on until he came to his lovely home and then at the door began to fumble for his key — a big key in that day. He found it, put it in the lock and turned it. As he did, he pushed the door open and stepped into the hallway. And there sat his family, and he said, "Oh, I see." They all began to laugh and they said, "Of course, you see. You were in the darkness and you stepped into the light."

"Oh," he said, "I see something else. I see that Jesus is the door and that faith is the key. And just as I put the key in the door and came into this house physically, at that moment, I put the key of faith in the door, and Jesus Christ has brought me into the light."

America today needs to come to that door, a door that will be opened wide if only the key of faith is put in there. America needs not a Declaration of Independence — we have that — we need a Declaration of *Dependence* upon God and upon Christ in this crisis hour in which we live. That is the way out for America, and that is the way out for you and for me.