

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS
CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE IN OUR FREEDOM

I. The Declaration of Independence.

A. The Sense of Entitlement. “Nature’s God has entitled them”

* The founding fathers believed that God had appointed them a place among the nations of this world. See Acts 17:26.

B. The Rights of Man.

1. All are created equal. Gen. 1.

2. Our God-given rights.

a. Life- Liberty – Pursuit of Happiness. These rights are based on the dignity of man who is created in the image of God. *

b. Fair treatment to all, especially the weak, finds its roots here not in the doctrine of the survival of the fittest.

C. The Role of Government.

* Government is to secure these God-given rights creating an environment of safety and opportunity. Rom. 13:1-6. *

D. The Need of God. “Firm Reliance on Divine Providence” Ps. 127:1.

E. The Men Who Signed the Declaration.

1. A common practice among the founding fathers was to read the Bible each year.

David Barton.

2. 24 of the 56 signors of the Declaration of Independence had theological degrees. D. Barton.

3. John Hancock was a Harvard graduate and dedicated Christian.

* “Let us humbly commit our cause to the great Lord of the Universe, who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity . . . let us joyfully leave the our concerns in the hands of Him who raiseth up and putteth down the empires and kingdoms of this world as he pleaseth. “* Benjamin Morris p. 146.

4. Rev. John Witherspoon – Founding president of Princeton University and the educator of many of our founding fathers including James Madison.

II. Participation in the Revolutionary War.

A. Fredrick Muhlenberg.

* He was a Lutheran minister of Pennsylvania that fought in the revolution and rallied others to the cause. He had been driven from his church and had the church desecrated by the British soldiers. He was elected as the first Speaker of the House of the US House of Representatives. After a bill was defeated requiring certain laws to be translated into German Muhlenberg stated, “the faster the Germans become Americans the better.” Today his picture is displayed in the house chamber.

B. Peter Muhlenberg.

* This brother of Fredrick was also a Lutheran minister who was later ordained into the Anglican ministry. At the beginning of the war he preached from Ecclesiastes 3 and declared that the time to fight had arrived as he opened his clerical robe to reveal his military uniform. He encouraged others to join him and 300 men followed him into war. He rose to the rank of Major General and was later elected to the House of Representatives. A statue of him wearing the military uniform and clerical robe is in the US Capitol. *

III. An Example for Future Generations.

A. To Be Salt and Light. Matt. 5:13.

B. To Participate in Just Causes.

1. Heroes of faith became involved in the politics of their day. Heb. 11:22-24.
2. Defending life and liberty are just causes.

Edmund Burke made the famous statement, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing." Let's not be guilty of allowing evil to triumph because of our fear and apathy.