

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS
PART I: CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
ISAIAH 51:1-3

When the righteous in Israel looked for hope in the midst of dark days they were told to look to their origin and to the faith of their founding father and mother. We live in a day as a nation when the faith of our founding fathers is either denied or ignored. The purpose of this series of messages is not to portray the founding fathers as perfect people or necessarily evangelical Christians. The purpose is to present them as people of faith who held a Christian worldview and established this country on the principles of Christianity. Tonight we will examine the faith of Christopher Columbus. He is the man whose discovery led to the exploration and settlement of this great land.

I. THE RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS OF COLUMBUS.

A. His Personal Statement of Faith.

1. His name.

* Christopher means "Christ bearer".

2. His testimony.

"I am a most unworthy sinner, but I have cried out to the Lord for grace and mercy and they have covered me completely. I have found the sweetest consolations since I made it my whole purpose to enjoy his marvelous presence." (Cathrine Millard, *Rewriting Americas History*, p 5).

3. His *Book of Prophecies*.

* An extensive discussion of numerous Biblical prophecies with multiple quotations from the Old and New Testaments. While we would not agree with all of his interpretations, it is obvious that he was a serious student of Scripture and that his worldview was shaped by the Word of God. *

B. His Desire to Explore the World.

1. His great desire for the gospel to be spread to the ends of the earth.

"the fact that the gospel must be preached in so many lands in such a short time – this is what convinces me" (*Book of Prophecies* From Millard, 8).

2. His great accomplishment in the missionary endeavor.

* Fr. John Hardon – Columbus opened the door to the most phenomenal spread of Christianity since the time of St. Paul. *

C. His Attitude When Reaching the Americas

1. Phyllis Schlafly - It was early in the morning on this day in 1492 that Columbus stepped from his command post on the Santa Maria into a tiny boat. A few yards from the shore, he plunged into the shallow water and went ashore on a tiny island of the Bahamian archipelago and wept tears of joy. He lifted his head toward Heaven and cried out in thanksgiving to God in the words of the traditional dawn-watch canticle: "Blessed be the light of day, and the Holy Cross we say; and the Lord of Verity, and the Holy Trinity. Blessed be the light of day, and He who sends the dark away."

2. From Columbus Journal - October 12th, Friday:

"At dawn we saw naked people, and I went ashore in the ship's boat ...I unfurled the royal banner and the captains brought the flags which displayed a large green cross with the letters "F" [Ferdinand] and "Y" [Isabella] at the left and right side of the cross ...To this land I gave the name *San Salvador*, in honor of our Blessed Lord."

3. Pictures from Columbus Door in Capital Rotunda.

* Full Door – Landing of Columbus in New World –Columbus’ First Encounter with the Indians.

D. His Challenge to Accomplishment.

“No one should fear to undertake any task in the name of our Savior, if it is just and the intention is purely for his holy service” (Millard, 8).

E His Testimony in Death.

“Into thy hands O Lord, I commit my spirit.”

II. THE PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF COLUMBUS.

A. Our Vocation and the Great Commission. Matt. 28:18-20.

B. Our Trust in God’s Purposes for Our Lives. Neh. 2:20.

* The God who enabled Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt and Columbus to discover America can enable you to fulfill his purpose in life. *

C. At Death Our Trust Must Be in His Grace. Cp. Luke 23:42.

* I do not believe that Columbus is in heaven today because he discovered America, but because he trusted in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. *