

## Title – 250 Years... What Exactly Are We Celebrating?

### PURPOSE

**As we gather this morning during the Fourth of July weekend...**

**And before I get into the message that I've written for this morning...**

**I want to talk about a myth...Let me lay some groundwork first...**

**There are words or phrases that are designed to stop a conversation...**

**Let's say that you were concerned about the Muslim faith...**

And you begin expressing those concerns...

And someone says to you... don't be so Islamophobic...

**And you stop in your tracks... I don't want to be Islamophobic**

**Or let's say you are talking about immigration...**

And someone says to you... don't be a racist...

**And again... you stop in your tracks... I never want to be called a racist...**

**One more...Let's say that you question a narrative that the news is pushing...**

And you begin to express your thoughts... and you hear... oh that's a conspiracy theory

**And you stop questioning because who wants to be called a conspiracy theorist...**

**Do you see what happens in each of those conversations...**

You immediately stop talking and move on...

**What takes place... you never get to the truth...**

**The myth that I want to talk about is... Politics doesn't belong in church**

**Really...? Much of what the bible talks about can be called political...**

**Moses... following the advice of Jethro... his father-in-law**

Select capable men from among the people

**The Apostles...**

Select from among you seven men confirmed to be full of the Spirit and wisdom

**Jesus said... give unto Ceasar what is Ceasar's and to God what is God's**

**However... if you have strong convictions about mixing church and politics**

I can respect that... but we are going to talk about the Fourth of July

Clearly a political...

## **Prayer**

**I'm sure many of us either watched or heard the Fourth of July celebrations  
All last night...**

**Many communities had fireworks displays...**

**You might ask how did fireworks become a part of the celebration of the birth of our  
nation**

**In a letter that John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail he wrote;**

The Fourth Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoch, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more.

**A day of deliverance...?**

**What exactly did he mean...?**

**SERMON TITLE - 250 Years... What Exactly Are We Celebrating?**

**NOTE-**

I want us to spend time this morning to find the answer that question...

The United States of America... Why is it the greatest nation in human history...?

In order to find our answer, we are going to have to step into the Way Back Machine...

Where should we start to find the answer to our question...

Let us start at the very beginning...

**NOTE-**

One of the books that our Founding Fathers quoted from most often...

Was the King James bible

We begin with one of those quoted verses...

**Reading**

**Exodus 3**

8 So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey...

**Doctrinal**

**NOTE-**

This verse was often mentioned by many preachers leading up to July 4<sup>th</sup> 1776

**One in particular was Samuel Langdon who was President of Harvard from 1774-1780**

He framed the British as Pharaoh and the Americans as God's chosen people

Awaiting a miraculous deliverance

**Who were those early Americas...?**

Individuals from all over the world that were looking for a better life...

**NOTE-**

Many of us can trace our ancestors back to Europe

With the technology that is available to us today... It is easier than ever

**Recently I did such a search...**

**NOTE-**

If you choose to begin your own journey... you will find

That one answered question leads to another question

**Question 1**

**When was the first settler with the last name Emeigh registered in America?**

The surname **\*\*Emeigh** is an Americanized form of the German name **\*\*Emich\*\***, often linked to **\*\*Palatine German\*\*** immigrants fleeing hardship in the early 18th century.

**SLIDE- Map of Palatine, Germany**

**Question 2**

**Why did the Palatine German immigrants leave Germany?**

## **This ended up being a lengthy answer...**

The Palatine German immigrants (from the Rhineland-Palatinate region in what is now southwestern Germany) left their homeland in large numbers around 1709–1710 due to a combination of longstanding hardships and an immediate crisis. Historians summarize the main push factors as follows:

**Devastation from repeated wars:** The Palatinate sat in a strategically vulnerable spot along the Rhine River and suffered heavily from French invasions during the Nine Years' War and especially the War of the Spanish Succession. French armies under Louis XIV repeatedly overran the area, burning villages, destroying crops and vineyards, imposing heavy requisitions on locals, and causing widespread economic ruin.

**The catastrophic winter of 1708–1709 (the "Great Frost"):** was one of the coldest winters in European history. Rivers froze solid (including the Rhine), vineyards and fruit trees were killed, and food crops failed across the region. Famine and starvation followed in spring 1709, pushing many desperate families to emigrate just to survive.

Survivors faced oppressive taxes to fund ongoing wars, destroyed livelihoods (especially in wine-growing and farming), and little prospect of recovery. Many were impoverished peasants or small farmers **with no land security for their children**.

**Religious tensions also existed.** Most Palatines were Protestant, while their ruler was Catholic at the time and not particularly sympathetic. This led to petty quarrels, discrimination, and a sense of insecurity, though outright mass persecution was not the main driver (unlike for some other groups like Huguenots). Many saw Protestant Britain as a more welcoming place.

Rumors and promotional materials played a big role in timing the mass exodus: Agents and pamphlets spread stories of free land, fertile soil, and opportunity in British America.

In total, roughly 13,000–15,000+ Palatines flooded into England in 1709, overwhelming local resources. About 3,000 were later sent to New York in 1710 (the group that included ancestors of families like the Emighs/Emighs

## **NOTE-**

What we need to remember is that the migration to America  
Was not primarily about adventure or pure religious freedom  
Though those played supporting roles

What drove the migration was a desperate response to survival threats  
Family stories and genealogical records often highlight the hope for land  
And a stable future in America as the dream... that sustained them through the journey

## **NOTE-**

**My family history is just one of thousands**

## **NOTE-**

100 years before my first ancestor came to the shores of America  
Many signed on to what is referred to as “The First Charter of Virginia”

In May 1607 the first expedition left England and established the colony of Jamestown  
That first expedition consisted of approximately 144 people

It is true that they came for economic reasons  
But there was another fundamental reason

## **The First Charter of Virginia; April 10, 1606**

JAMES, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith... We, greatly commending, and graciously accepting of, their Desires for the Furtherance of so noble a Work, which may, by the Providence of Almighty God, hereafter tend to the Glory of his Divine Majesty, in propagating of Christian Religion to such People, as yet live in Darkness and miserable Ignorance of the true Knowledge and Worship of God

**NOTE-**

Of the 144 who left England in 1607... 40 died during the voyage  
By January of 1608, only 38 settlers remained alive

Yet from those 38 settlers and 1000's more who ventured across the Atlantic Ocean  
Eventually established our original 13 colonies

**NOTE-**

One of those colonies would become Pennsylvania  
When in 1701 the Charter of Privileges was signed

Which would end up becoming the founding document  
For Pennsylvania's state constitution

**NOTE-**

In 1751, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Charter of Privileges  
The Pennsylvania Assembly ordered to have a new bell cast  
To commemorate that anniversary

**Across the bottom of the bell... a bible verse was inscribed**

**Leviticus 25 NKJV**

10...Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.

**NOTE-**

Some 25 years later this bell was rung on July 4<sup>th</sup> 1776  
When news broke of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

**That bell would become to be known as.... The Liberty Bell**

*We are all familiar with the opening words of the Declaration of Independence...*

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness....

***But how familiar are you with the closing words of the Declaration of Independence...***

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states.... And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

**NOTE-**

56 men signed the Declaration of Independence

56 men committed treason to declare freedom from the King of England

56 men pledged everything they had for the gift of freedom

To not only those living at the time... but of all future Americans

**NOTE-**

There was an amazing speech given at the Faith and Freedom Forum

By the outgoing ODNI Director

They talked about one of those signers

And what he was willing to sacrifice for that gift of freedom

**As I read this... keep in mind the sermon title...**

250 Years... Exactly what are we celebrating

## STORY-

This individual said at the end of their speech...

I want to close by sharing another story with you about another of the signers of our declaration, someone named Abraham Clark. He was also a delegate from New Jersey, a lawyer. He was a lawyer and a man of modest means compared to many of his colleagues.

He signed the Declaration of Independence and then went and sent his two sons off to fight in the revolutionary army. The British captured both of his sons and sent them to a prison ship that was anchored in a New York harbor on a vessel called the Jersey. It was very well known as the Hell Ship because it imprisoned 11,000 American captives who would die on that vessel. The conditions were deliberately brutal. Men starved and died of disease and froze to death.

Abraham Clark's sons were treated with a special level of cruelty because the British knew who their father was. One of his boys was put in solitary confinement, no food, no light, left to die in the darkness as a message to his father.

And then the British came to Abraham Clark with an offer. They said, recant. Come out publicly in support of the king and parliament.

Denounce the declaration of independence, and we will send you back your boys. Just stop for a moment and think about how that would feel if you were Abraham Clark, being presented with that proposition.

He knew his sons were dying on that ship, and all he had to do was say, I was wrong. All he had to do was say that signing the Declaration of Independence was a mistake, and that the crown was right, and the idea of America as an independent nation was wrong.

And if Abraham did that, said those words, even if he didn't mean them, they would set his sons free.

Abraham said no... He said no because he understood that there are moments in life... and in history when you must choose between what is easy and what is right. And the choice that you make in that moment defines not just your own life, but potentially the lives of countless generations who will follow. His sons survived the hell ship. And Abraham Clark lived to see the nation that he helped create take its early steps.

## **NOTE-**

Some 50 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence  
Another European came to America

In the early 1800's a Frenchman by the name of Alexis de Tocqueville  
He was a diplomat, political philosopher and historian

He is known for his works... Democracy in America  
As he traveled around American he analyzed the living standards of individuals

In his writings we one quote that is still relevant today...

Nothing is more wonderful than the art of being free, but nothing is harder to learn how to use than freedom... **Alexis de Tocqueville**

**So what do we do with this knowledge that we've reviewed...?**

**How do we hold on to the gift of Freedom that was given to us 250 years ago...?**

## **Application**

**Holding on to Freedom  
Know the Truth**

## **NOTE-**

Many of the commands of God can be used as life lessons

We find one of those examples in the Gospel of John

### **John 8**

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.

**It takes time to find the truth... but if you want to be free... spend the time**

## **EXAMPLE-**

You'll hear politicians make the claim that America is a racist nation  
America was built on stolen land

To which I would say...

There isn't a country on the planet that hasn't been formed on someone else's land

Racist... was the founding of our great nation perfect...? NO

But the Declaration of Independence laid the formula to right those wrongs...

Founded on this principle...

### **Galatians 3**

28There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus

### **The United States Constitution begins with...**

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union...

**In order to form... an ongoing process...**

**Lincoln addressed it...**

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure...**Gettysburg Address November 19, 1863**

**Martin Luther King Jr. addressed it...**

So even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.... **Martin Luther King, Jr. Aug. 28, 1963**

Which brings us to our second

**Holding on to Freedom**  
**Know the Truth**  
**Do Not Be Deceived**

**Matthew 24**

24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

**2 Timothy 3**

13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

**EXAMPLE-**

We all went through the COVID pandemic  
The virus was real and is still impacting people

When this virus first appeared... we were told that it was a natural virus  
That the virus came from a wet market in Wuhan China

And if you questioned that narrative... you were called a conspiracy theorist

Fauci once remarked that...“If you disagree with me, you disagree with science.”

Well guess what... we now know that they knew the COVID virus was a lab leak

**Do not allow yourself to be deceived...**

***Which brings us to our third task at holding on to Freedom...***

## **Holding on to Freedom**

Know the Truth

Do Not Be Deceived

**Proclaim Liberty**

If you know the truth... speak it

Speak it with respect to those who willing to listen

*Isaiah prophesied about Jesus and His mission...*

### **Isaiah 61**

1... Because the Lord has anointed me

To bring good news to the afflicted;

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to captives

And freedom to prisoners

To proclaim liberty and set the captives free...

Lies hold us captive... they hold us captive by what we believe...

**Let me tell you one final story...**

**In case you haven't followed sports...**

**America has been hosting the 2026 World Cup for soccer**

**Listen to this headline...**

## **German World Cup Fan Breaks Down on Live TV After Realizing The ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA He Was Fed Was COMPLETE GARBAGE — Kindness from American Stranger Changes His View of the U.S.**

A German soccer fan who came to America to support his national team during the 2026 World Cup completely broke down on live television after realizing the nonstop anti-American propaganda he was fed back home was total garbage.

Sebastian Kraus got emotional during an interview with NBC 10 Boston after experiencing real American kindness that shattered everything the media had told him.

He admitted he was scared to travel to the United States because of the constant news about shootings, criminals, and claims that the country is not safe.

Then a man named Bob and his family from New England stepped in when Sebastian and his group got stranded. They offered the Germans a ride to their hotel, no questions asked.

That simple act of generosity changed everything.

Perhaps the most remarkable moment came when Sebastian admitted he has fallen in love with this country.

He even cried in the stadium. He was more upset about the prospect of leaving America than Germany being eliminated from the tournament.

As his trip came to an end, he delivered a message that many in today's polarized world could benefit from hearing.... he intends to tell friends and family about the America he actually experienced, rather than the one often portrayed in headlines.

The story serves as a reminder that while many legacy media outlets around the world frequently focus on America's problems, millions of ordinary Americans continue to display the generosity, hospitality, and neighborly spirit that have long defined the nation.

**I received this message from The Rutherford Institute yesterday...**

As America marks 250 years since the Declaration of Independence, we would do well to remember what the Fourth of July was really meant to celebrate.

Not government power.

Not empire.

Not rulers, parties, courts, agencies, armies, or presidents.

The Fourth of July is a celebration of liberty and self-government—the moment ordinary people declared that no ruler should ever become too powerful to challenge.

That principle is as urgent now as it was in 1776.

If history teaches us anything, it is that the power of the people—when awakened—is stronger than any empire.

Happy birthday, America.

**America is the greatest nation in human history...**

**Let us follow those who founded America...**

**And let us pray...**

**For the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence**

**CLOSE**