

# In The Fathers' Corner

by Keith Davis

Our country was founded by God fearing, religious and spiritual believers. We know this because their writings reflect their devotion and praise to the Creator and His Word as revealed in the Bible. They knew God was instrumental in the formation of the United States of America. (The very structure of our government mirrors Isaiah 33:22, “For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king,” as we have the Judicial, Legislative and Executive branches)

In each issue of the “People’s Pen”, we'll look at just a few of the many writings that exemplify the Founding Fathers’ beliefs.

## **Founding Fathers' Words:**

*“I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth - that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?”*

Benjamin Franklin, July 28, 1787

On that day, Franklin addressed the Constitutional Convention to ask that each session start with a prayer:

*“I therefore beg leave to move - that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the Clergy of this City be requested to officiate in that Service”*

While the motion at the Convention did not carry that day, it is interesting that Franklin, 81 years old at the time, pointed out:

*“In the beginning of the Contest with G. Britain, when we were sensible of danger we had daily prayer in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, & they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending providence in our favor.”*

How powerful is that last sentence! Not only was prayer earnestly done each day, but it was clear to them that many incredulous things happened which could only be explained by God’s intervention.

*“That there is one God who made all things.*

*“That he governs the World by his Providence.*

*“That he ought to be worshipped by Adoration, Prayer and Thanksgiving.*

*“But that the most acceptable Service of God is doing Good to Man.*

*“That the Soul is immortal.*

*“And that God will certainly reward Virtue and punish Vice either here or hereafter.”*

From Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography, Part 10

### **Historic footnotes:**

Thomas Jefferson is frequently held up by the secular world as anything from an atheist to an agnostic to a deist. He was a Unitarian, (before non-Christian and non-theistic churches and individuals were allowed to be part of their fellowship), not believing in the Holy Trinity, but was nevertheless probably more spiritual than many of today’s mainstream churchgoers.

While he wrote in his January 1, 1802 letter to the Danbury (CT) Baptist association that there should be a “wall of separation between church and state,” he attended church services in the House of Representatives throughout his administration. His opinion was later interpreted by a court to remove the mention of God from public affairs. Yet, how could he have meant that and at the same time attended church at the House of Representatives? The argument is strong that he was referring to the government forming a state religion, as was the case in many countries at that time.

*“Our just attentions are first drawn to those pleasing circumstances which mark the goodness of that Being from whose favor they flow and the large measure of thankfulness we owe for His bounty”*

Thomas Jefferson in his second annual message to Congress, December 15, 1802