



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



July 2020

Volume 14, Number 12

In 1839, John Quincy Adams wrote, “The truths of *The Declaration of Independence* are not limited by time or place. They belong to the nature of man in every age and every time. They may be subdued, but they can never be suppressed. They are truths at Constantinople and Peking, at London and Paris, at Charleston and at Philadelphia.”

Academician Charles Edel* explained that, to Adams, the document showed America was just as much an idea and ideology as it was a place. “The original writers of *The Declaration* intended to produce a document to reassure Americans of the justness of their cause, and to appeal to potential supporters abroad.”**

As we celebrate Independence Day, we are called to remember these powerful words. Independence is sustained by the knowledge of three basic principles: Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

But we must first understand what these principles mean.

Life means we have the right to live. Before the phrase “black lives matter” was coined, it meant all people — regardless of their age, ethnic origin, location, language, or religion — possess this right.

Liberty encompasses the freedom to choose how that life should be lived. T. H. Green argued, “If there are such things as rights at all, then there must be a right to life and liberty; or, to put it more properly, to free life.”

The **pursuit of happiness** – In *The Declaration of Independence*, there is an acknowledgement of one’s ability to freely pursue joy and live life in a way that makes us happy, as long as we don’t do anything illegal or violate the protected rights of others.

These principles will always be challenged in our fallen world when they are enjoyed by some, but not by all. As Adams stated, the characteristics of independence belong to the nature of man in every age. They may be subdued, but they can never be suppressed.

When attempts have been made to subdue them, men and women have suffered, bled, been brutally beaten, and died to make certain these principles would remain.

These principles have been challenged in the past when we review the dynamics of slavery and the denial of the opportunity for some to live where they would like to live and to have the same opportunities as others.

They are being challenged today as we feel uncomfortable talking about the unfair pre-judgments and stereotyping based on skin shade rather than the content of a person’s character. (Unfortunately, we all are guilty of pre-judging others.) The work to maintain the principles of true independence rests not just in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all.

We must also be mindful of these potential dangers to future generations. Failure is not an option. If we fail to be mindful, we will repeat the same past and present mistakes.

As fellow Americans, regardless of our people group, nationality, religion, or any other differences, we must unite in preserving the great principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that are forged in our *Declaration of Independence*. This is what it means to be an American. Most importantly, this is what we were created to experience as members of the family of God!

- Dr. L.W. Edwards

*Charles Edel is a senior fellow at the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, and previously served on the U.S. Secretary of State’s policy planning staff. He is co-author of *The Lessons of Tragedy: Statecraft and World Order*.

** Edel, Charles, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/07/03/declaration-independence-is-key-americas-founding-it-matters-rest-world-too/>, *The Washington Post*, July 3, 2019.

The Blessing of Detentions

When I was in high school, detentions required spending 20 minutes after class in a "demerit office." We used to think the 14" x 20" cubicle, isolated by white, wooden dividers, was the juvenile equivalent of solitary confinement in penitentiary.

As the clock ticked, we had to stare ahead at the empty, blue carpeted wall and do nothing but think. It didn't matter if we had basketball practice or enough homework to last until our one hundredth birthdays — when the detention was being served, everything else had to stop.

My classmates and I generally tried to avoid the demerit office, partly because we didn't want the negative stigma that came with it. Everyone in class knew it when you got in trouble — not exactly a gold star on your coolness chart, if you know what I mean. The other reason was because of its inconvenience. There were dozens of things we'd rather be doing with our 20 minutes besides sitting, staring, and thinking. Things like talking to our classmates, sports practice, or homework. Yes, even homework beat out the isolation desk in appeal.

It may have been years ago, but I can still remember my last trip to the demerit office like it was yesterday. My offense was minor, but the long moments of mandatory solitude changed my life. I thought about what I had done wrong and the personal cost of my actions. I realized no one else could bear the blame for my wrongdoing, and I learned to take full responsibility. I also took mental notes to ensure I never committed the actions which landed me in the office of shame in the first place.

While I'll never get the 20 minutes of my life back, the time in detention was well-spent because I learned the importance of personal responsibility.

Think about the racial and political problems which presently divide America. How quick we are to blame police, politicians, the government, thugs and looters, one another (or members of another people group), or even wrongs committed in the past, for where we are today. Could it be the problem isn't our world system, but our hearts?

"Wait a minute — you're not talking about me. I don't have a problem. If things in the world were different, I'd be a better person."

"Put a different person in the White House, and I'd be a happier person."

"Affirm and celebrate my lifestyle choices, and I'll feel safer and more secure."

"Tear down the monuments, civil structures, and symbols which remind me of my descendants' pain and oppression, and then I'll start loving and forgiving others."

"Acknowledge your privileged status, and then I won't label you a racist." >>> [Full Article](#)



Sermon Audio Player

Listen to Dr. Edwards online!



Sermon of the Month

Read Dr. Edwards' Sermon of the Month



Free Downloads

Download our free tracts, and help us reach the world!



Stay in Touch!

Share your questions and comments through email.



Contact Dr. Edwards if you would like to have him as your special guest.

PO Box 3862, Barrington, IL 60011
847-909-8543/biblewayministries@sbcglobal.net