

2024-03-26 - William Henry Harrison

Prayer

Bible - Matthew 24:23-27

Quiz

1. Who was the third president of the U.S.A. under our present constitution? Jefferson
2. Did the third president's wealth consist primarily of a large commercial business, or large holdings of farmland? farmland
3. What country and state was the third president from? Virginia
4. Was the third president the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, or the Articles of Confederation, or the Constitution? Declaration of Independence
5. Was the third president our president in the 17th century or 18th or 19th? 19th

Recitation

Excerpt to Memorize - no new one today

President - William Henry Harrison (1773 - 1841)
ninth president

father Benjamin had been in the Continental Congress and signed Declaration of Independence
1773 born in Virginia (last born in a colony)
youngest of seven children - homeschooled
Presbyterian college age 14
began to study medicine in University of Pennsylvania, but lacked money to finish
1791 entered the army
1795 married Anna Tuthill, 22; father refused permission; they eloped; she lived to 88
they had ten children
1798 resigned army and entered politics
member of congress then territorial governor
War of 1812 general in the army
1814 after the war resigned army, moved to Ohio
1817 founding member of Episcopal congregation 1817
state office, then US senate 1824
1840 elected president
1841 cold, wet weather; no overcoat or hat; longest speech, two hours
1824 March 24 wet from weather again
1841 died 31 days after inauguration

Text - Excerpts from Inaugural Addresses

Identifiable Bible References

Matthew 24²⁴ “false Christs”
“the Savior”

Expressed Belief Compatible with Deism?

no, because of quotation from scripture, reference to Christ as “Savior,” and “profound reverence for the Christian religion”

William Henry Harrison - Inaugural Address - Excerpts

March 4, 1841

. . . I too well understand the dangerous temptations to which I shall be exposed from the magnitude of the power which it has been the pleasure of the people to commit to my hands not to place my chief confidence upon the aid of that Almighty Power which has hitherto protected me...

...if we would compare the sovereignty acknowledged to exist in the mass of our people with the power claimed by other sovereignties, even by those which have been considered most purely democratic, we shall find a most essential difference. All others lay claim to power limited only by their own will. The majority of our citizens, on the contrary, possess a sovereignty with an amount of power precisely equal to that which has been granted to them by the parties to the national compact, and nothing beyond. We admit of no government by divine right, believing that so far as power is concerned the Beneficent Creator has made no distinction amongst men; that all are upon an equality, and that the only legitimate right to govern is an express grant of power from the governed. The Constitution of the United States is the instrument containing this grant of power to the several departments composing the Government. On an examination of that instrument it will be found to contain declarations of power granted and of power withheld. The latter is also susceptible of division into power which the majority had the right to grant, but which they do not think proper to intrust to their agents, and that which they could not have granted, not being possessed by themselves. In other words, there are certain rights possessed by each individual American citizen which in his compact with the others he has never surrendered. Some of them, indeed, he is unable to surrender, being, in the language of our system, unalienable. . .

. . . our sovereignty . . . can interfere with no one's faith, prescribe forms of worship for no one's observance, inflict no punishment but after well-ascertained guilt, the result of investigation under rules prescribed by the Constitution itself. These precious privileges...the acknowledged property of all, the American citizen derives from no charter granted by his fellow-man. He claims them because he is himself a man, fashioned by the same Almighty hand as the rest of his species and entitled to a full share of the blessings with which He has endowed them.

. . . The influence of the Executive in controlling the freedom of the elective franchise through the medium of the public officers can be effectually checked by renewing the prohibition published by Mr. Jefferson forbidding their interference in elections further than giving their own votes, and their own independence secured by an assurance of perfect immunity in exercising this sacred privilege of freemen under the dictates of their own unbiased judgments. Never with my consent shall an officer of the people, compensated for his services out of their pockets, become the pliant instrument of Executive will.

There is no part of the means placed in the hands of the Executive which might be used with greater effect for unhallowed purposes than the control of the public press. The maxim which our ancestors derived from the mother country that "the freedom of the press is the great bulwark of civil and religious liberty" is one of the most precious legacies which they have left us. We have learned, too, from our own as well as the experience of other countries, that golden shackles, by whomsoever or by whatever pretense imposed, are as fatal to it as the iron bonds of despotism. The presses in the necessary employment of the Government should never be used "to clear the guilty or to varnish

crime." A decent and manly examination of the acts of the Government should be not only tolerated, but encouraged.

...Our Confederacy, fellow-citizens, can only be preserved by . . . same forbearance. Our citizens must be content with the exercise of the powers with which the Constitution clothes them. The attempt of those of one State to control the domestic institutions of another can only result in feelings of distrust and jealousy, the certain harbingers of disunion, violence, and civil war, and the ultimate destruction of our free institutions. . .

It should be our constant and earnest endeavor mutually to cultivate a spirit of concord and harmony among the various parts of our Confederacy. Experience has abundantly taught us that the agitation by citizens of one part of the Union of a subject not confided to the General Government, but exclusively under the guardianship of the local authorities, is productive of no other consequences than bitterness, alienation, discord, and injury to the very cause which is intended to be advanced. Of all the great interests which appertain to our country, that of union--cordial, confiding, fraternal union--is by far the most important, since it is the only true and sure guaranty of all others.

. . . The tendencies of all such governments in their decline is to monarchy, and the antagonist principle to liberty there is the spirit of faction--a spirit which assumes the character and in times of great excitement imposes itself upon the people as the genuine spirit of freedom, and, like the false Christs whose coming was foretold by the Savior, seeks to, and were it possible would, impose upon the true and most faithful disciples of liberty.

. . . I can conceive of no more sublime spectacle, none more likely to propitiate an impartial and common Creator, than a rigid adherence to the principles of justice on the part of a powerful nation in its transactions with a weaker and uncivilized people whom circumstances have placed at its disposal.

. . . I deem the present occasion sufficiently important and solemn to justify me in expressing to my fellow-citizens a profound reverence for the Christian religion and a thorough conviction that sound morals, religious liberty, and a just sense of religious responsibility are essentially connected with all true and lasting happiness; and to that good Being who has blessed us by the gifts of civil and religious freedom, who watched over and prospered the labors of our fathers and has hitherto preserved to us institutions far exceeding in excellence those of any other people, let us unite in fervently commending every interest of our beloved country in all future time.