



WOC guest speaker, Tim Barton, has spent countless hours researching the truth of America's founding and exposing the lies being taught about our history. He is the president of WALLBUILDERS, an organization dedicated to teaching America's forgotten history, energizing people to become involved with their communities, and emphasizing our nation's Christian foundations. A lively and engaging speaker, Barton expertly tells the story of America's past, connects it to our present, and outlines steps for the future, emphasizing two scriptures: **"Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain"** — Psalm 127:1; and **"When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?"** — Psalm 11:3. These scriptures clearly present the principle that, if God is not a part of what we're doing, it's not going to work very well—whether in relationships, family, businesses, or nations. Since many have lost the knowledge of how involved God was in the creation of our nation, Tim takes us on a journey to rediscover our foundations and recognize what was so well known in early America: We don't want to go forward if God is not a part of what we're doing.

I. REDISCOVERING AMERICA'S NATIONAL SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

The University of Chicago Law School determined the longest lasting constitution in the history of the world was 17 years, **compared to the United States' 238 years!** What made the difference, and where did our founders find the ideas that founded our nation?

- America's founding fathers created 15,000 writings with 3,154 quotes from many sources, but the most cited source was the Bible: **34% of all the founding fathers' writing were direct quotes from the Bible.** When you do anything God's way, it works out differently.
- Steven Colwell, 19th century educator, author, and political leader, wrote a book outlining ideas of the founding fathers, saying, *"It was in the spirit of true Christianity that the hospitality and blessings of the United States were offered. ... The Christian men of that day intended that the nation should continue to be a Christian nation. They did not place Christianity beneath, nor over their political institutions. Rather, it was to be the atmosphere which they breathed to administer them."*
- A painting of the Constitutional Convention now hangs next to the House of Representatives. In the bottom right corner is a Bible opened to Matthew 5, the Sermon on the Mount—seemingly a point of reference for the Convention.

When confronted with opposition to Christianity and God's Word in the public square, it is helpful to know our nation was founded on biblical principles and provision was continually made for God's Word to inform our culture. How has your understanding of American history influenced your perspective on current events or social issues?

II. 1647-20th CENTURY: AMERICA'S FOUNDATIONAL DEPENDANCE ON GOD & THE BIBLE

- **1647** First Educational Law: "The Old Deluder Satan Act" (Satan's Deceptions). This led to the first public school in America for the purpose of children being able to read the Bible for themselves.
- **1690** First English textbook published: "The New England Primer" (through the 1900's) Used Picture Alphabets
 - 1st Alphabet—A: Adam's Fall; B: The Bible; C: Christ; D: Deluge (The Flood); etc.
 - 2nd Alphabet—A: A Wise Son; B: Better is a little with the fear of the Lord ...; C: Come on to Christ ..., etc.
- **1777** Printer, Robert Aiken, petitioned Congress to begin printing Bible in America, and in 1782 the "Aiken Bible" was distributed for use in public schools. The front two pages of the Bible contained permission to print and verification of translation, **along with a note from Congress endorsing the use of this Bible in schools.**
- **1789** George Washington becomes President and ratified the 1785 Northwest Ordinance, which provided guidelines for establishing new territories. In Article III, we read: *"Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."*
- **1790** Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence and ratifier of the Constitution—also known as the "Father of Public Schools"—wrote: ***"The only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty; and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments.... We waste so much time and money in punishing crimes, and take so little pains to prevent them. ... we neglect the only means of establishing and perpetuating our republican forms of government, that is, the universal education of our youth in the principles of Christianity, by means of the Bible; for this divine book, above all others favors that equality among mankind, that respect for just laws."***

How can we, as Christians, influence and engage with educational institutions in a positive way?

- **1805** Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States and Director of the Schoolboards and their curriculum. His recommendation: The Bible and Hymn Book.
- **1816** New Jersey Schools Report to their Superintendent: "All the scholars of the first and second classes commit to memory portions of the New Testament or psalms, a lesson of the catechism, several hymns and the text of the preceding Sabbath (the text preached from the pulpits on Sunday)." Students and teachers also were required to memorize the Gospel of John, the first 30 Psalms, and Psalm 119!
- **1849** President Zachary Taylor said, *"The Bible is the best of books. I wish it were in the hands of everyone. It is indispensable to the safety and permanence of our institutions, especially should the Bible be placed in the hands of the young. It is the best school book in the world. I would, that all of our people were brought up under the influence of that Holy Book."*
- **1876** President Ulysses Grant's Centennial Card to every student in the United States: *"Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of your liberties. Write its precepts in your heart and practice them in your lives to the influence of this book. We are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization. And to this we must look as our guide in the future. Righteousness exalted the nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."*
- **1940's-1970's** The Dallas, Texas High Schools required Bible study courses for graduation, which included memorizing Scripture with follow-up questions.

How does this timeline of our nation's dependence upon God help you navigate contemporary issues and challenges?

III. WE HAVE FORGOTTEN & GREATLY REMOVED GOD FROM OUR LIVES, BUT WE CAN CHANGE!

- **When We Forget to Pray:** On June 28, 1787, Benjamin Franklin said during the delegates' impasse in Independence Hall: *"In this situation of this Assembly groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings? 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, and 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. To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. **And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance. 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."***

Share a time when remembering to pray and inviting God into your circumstances changed the outcome.

- **When we remove God's Word:** American history reveals our nation was birthed, not by perfect people, but by people who knew God's Word. The problem in our culture today is we have far too few Christians who know God's Word, which gives us guidance to solve every problem we have. We are at one of the most incredibly unique blessed moments in American history where God is doing incredible things. We are on the precipice of being able to restore some of these foundational things like we've never been able to in any of our lifetimes, a unique opportunity to rebuild our nation like never before. But it's going to take people rolling up their sleeves and saying, "I want to be a part of the solution." It takes people to know the Word of God and who are willing to engage in culture with the truth and principles of God's Word, then help teach the rising generation those same principles.

How has the Bible personally influenced your values, perspectives, and/or actions?

PRAYER: Father, thank You that we live in a place where Your Word has been honored for generations by men and women who have had the courage to teach children the truth about an Almighty God. We ask You to forgive us—we've been distracted and imagined we could make ourselves successful apart from You. Lord, we don't blame others but ask for Your forgiveness for our arrogance and independence. We turn our faces to You. We are a land in need of healing in our schools, our communities, and in our churches. Give us a hunger for the Your Word once again. May we turn and yield to You so You might look upon our nation once again and pour out Your Spirit upon us. In Jesus' name, amen.