

An American flag is shown in the upper left corner, with the stars and stripes clearly visible. The rest of the background is a dark, solid color.

BLESSED IS THE **NATION** WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD.

—PSALM 33:12

One nation under God
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Blessed is the Nation...

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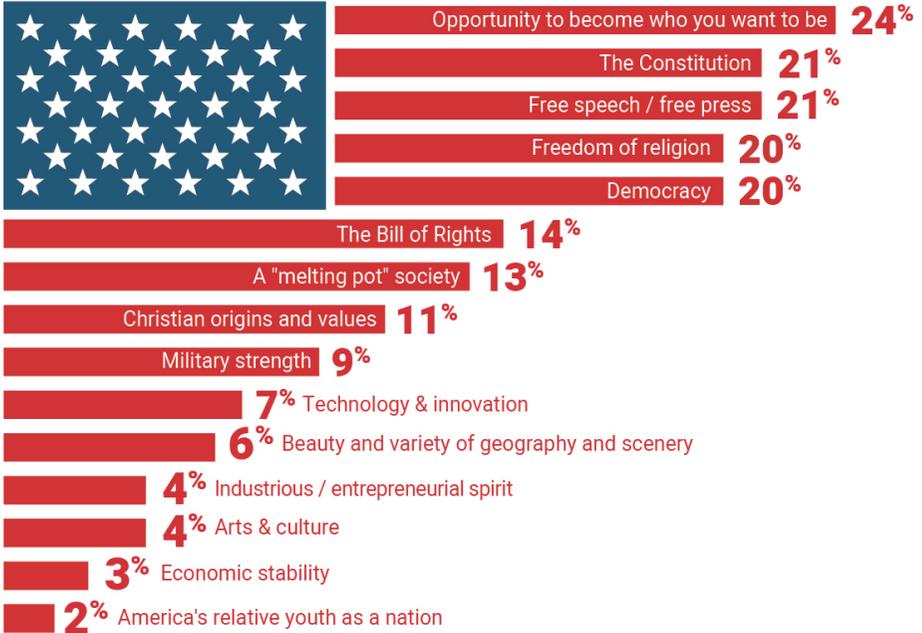
It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great Nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. – **Patrick Henry**

What makes a nation great? What makes a nation blessed? This idea has become the motto of the current president as he has begun his presidency with the theme of “making America great again.” The theme of greatness resonates with the American people but how do people define “what makes this country great.” The Barna Group recently asked this question and received the following response from Americans,

What Makes America Great?

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As an American, what are you proud of in your country?
What, in your opinion, makes America great? (top two choices)



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As you can see, there are many differing ideas on what constitutes the greatness of our country. With so many different opinions, who is right and who is wrong or is this opinion simply meant to be subjective? The good news is that there is a concrete, absolute answer to the question regarding "what makes a country great." The answer does not rest in the strength of its military nor does it rely upon the intellect of its government. The greatness of a nation is not found in the popularity of its people nor in the rise of its technological advancement. The greatness of any nation has always been and will always be found in its humility and praise of the one true God. The Psalmist lays out the standard of greatness for every nation and every people throughout all time as he writes,

Psalm 33:12 – Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...

The founding fathers understood this principle as they sought the Lord to give them wisdom, direction, and strength to establish the foundation of this nation. James Madison observed,

“We have staked the whole future of American civilization not on the power of government, far from it. We have staked the whole of our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government, upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves according to the commandments of God. The future and success of America is not in this Constitution, but in the laws of God upon which this Constitution is founded.”

– James Madison

What makes a nation great? The answer is found in three important truths discovered in the Word of God.

Truth #1 – God Alone Determines the Greatness of a Nation

It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor. – **George Washington**

A nation will never be greater than the Lord intends for it to be. God has a plan for every individual as well as every nation. We witnessed this truth in the life of Abraham and the nation of Israel as the Lord declares,

Genesis 12:2 – And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...

Truth #2 – The Greatness of a Nation is Dependent on Obedience to the Lord

Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. – **Daniel Webster**. . . U. S. Senator; Secretary of State; “Defender of the Constitution”

Every nation strives to be great in power, position, and popularity. The reality is that striving to please men or gain power by your own strength will never gain the lasting position that you are looking for as a nation. This can only be obtained through obedience to the Lord, the one true God. The author of Proverbs chapter fourteen lays the model of success out clearly for any nation as he observes,

Proverbs 14:34 – Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Truth #3 – The Greatness of a Nation is Discovered When the Nation Follows the Lord

We recognize no sovereign but God, and no King but Jesus. – **John Adams and John Hancock**

Finally, we observe the greatness of any nation is always found when the nation chooses to follow the Lord as the one true Deliverer and Savior of the nation. The Psalmist is clear on this point as he declares,

Psalm 33:12 – Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...

Conclusion

How do you define the greatness of a nation? As you reflect on the freedom that we enjoy in this nation this 4th of July then make sure you take a moment to stop and simply “Praise God” and say “Thank You for Freedom.” Let us make the Lord our top priority as a nation once again and experience His blessing!

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Question

How do you define the greatness of a nation?

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