

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

Independence Day 250. Various Passages.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. July 4, 2026.

Dismiss the Middle School

STUDY GUIDE

As you came in this morning, you should have received a bulletin. Inside, you'll find a simple study guide you can use in a few different ways: to follow along with today's teaching, to reflect on during your personal devotions this week, or to spark conversation in your small group.

More resources are available online. [The link is in your study guide.](#)

Let's get started on today's teaching ...

JULY 4, 1776

Yesterday was July 4 and we all celebrated the founding of our great nation.

The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, and officially signed on August 2, that year, after 13 years of conflict between the colonies and Great Britain.

That action launched the Revolutionary War that resulted in the United States of America. You all know the history better than I do.

Since it is that time of year when we remember the heroism and patriotism of those early citizens, I thought it would be helpful to explore what the Bible tells us about Patriotism.

I've got some questions that I'd like answers for:

- How should Jesus-followers relate to their nation?
- Is it OK to be a Patriot even when countries are far from perfect?
- How can we be good citizens and good Christians?

So, let's dive into the Bible and find some answers ...

GOD AND CAESAR

Jesus said something simple yet profound about Patriotism. The religious and civic leaders in Jerusalem wanted to lure him into saying something that would get him arrested. So they asked him a trick question:

Matthew 22:15-22 (CSB) Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to trap him by what he said. 16 So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are truthful and teach truthfully the way of God. You don’t care what anyone thinks nor do you show partiality. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? ”

18 Perceiving their malicious intent, Jesus said, “Why are you testing me, hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin used for the tax.” They brought him a denarius. 20 “Whose image and inscription is this? ” he asked them.

21 “Caesar’s,” they said to him.

Then he said to them, “Give, then, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

They were talking about a poll tax payable to Rome. It was not popular because it supported Israel’s pagan oppressors - the Roman Empire.

The **Pharisees** didn’t want to give Rome anything. The **Herodians** wanted to cooperate with Rome. So, whatever Jesus answered, it would make someone unhappy.

But Jesus was smarter than them. His answer was brilliant: “Give, then, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

What did Jesus mean by this? We owe separate duties to God and to the government - even a godless government. They are different duties: the government wants taxes, and God wants our hearts - absolute commitment.

So, I take it from Jesus that it's OK to be a loyal citizen and a Patriot so long as it doesn't interfere with our commitment to God.

Let's talk about that. How can we live as Christian Patriots - loving both God and country?

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

Here are three ways the Bible teaches us to be a Christian Patriot.

1. STAY SALTY

The best thing we can do for our nation is to live faithful to Jesus. He said:

Matthew 5:13 (CSB) You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

Salt was a valuable commodity in the ancient world because one of its main uses was preserving meat in an age before fridges. But if it ever lost its saltiness, the meat would rot.

Imagine salting up your prime rib and wrapping it in linen, and storing it for a party that you've planned, only to discover a few weeks later that the salt wasn't salty and your food had gone off.

What was Jesus saying? His disciples were beneficial to the world as long as they followed Jesus and lived by his Kingdom values. Think about it:

- Love is better than hate Hope is better than despair
- Peace is better than conflict Kindness is better than bitterness
- Truth is better than lies

Faithful followers bring all of these into their neighborhoods.

The best thing we can do as Christian Patriots is to stay salty. Follow Jesus faithfully.

2. WORK FOR THE WELFARE

Some Christian thinkers believe we should withdraw from the culture and create our own communities with our own businesses, schools, and local governments.

There may be good reasons to do that. But is it what God wants us to do in all cases? Maybe not.

When the people of Judah were deported to Babylon, they were planted in pagan, polytheistic, immoral communities. They had no choice but to live with their new neighbors.

Surprisingly, God told them to make the most of it. He planted them there:

Jeremiah 29:4-7 (CSB) This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the exiles I deported from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 “Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Find wives for yourselves, and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and give your daughters to men in marriage so that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there; do not decrease. 7 Pursue the well-being of the city I have deported you to. Pray to the LORD on its behalf, for when it thrives, you will thrive.”

God told them they were going to be there for a while, so they should live their lives, get married, have families, and “PURSUE THE WELFARE OF THE CITY” (verse 7). When the city thrives, everyone thrives.

God has planted us here for the good of the Blue Water area. How can we work for it’s welfare and, by extension, the welfare of our nation?

- Pray for our towns, businesses, schools, hospitals, and governments.

- Cultivate great families.
- Be good neighbors.
- Volunteer for projects and organizations that do good.
- Serve in public office. Vote for the best candidates and policies.
- Be good and godly employers or employees with positive reputations.
- Share the gospel. Invite people to church. Help your church grow strong. Healthy churches are a big benefit to the city.

Let's work for everyone's welfare, for the common good. When the church has a great reputation, it opens doors for gospel advance.

Finally ...

3. PRAY FOR THOSE IN POWER

Prayer for the nation is the priority for Christian Patriots, before even political activism or volunteering in community projects.

When the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about bringing order to the chaos in the Ephesian church, he said that prayer is **“first of all.”** Prayer was the priority, the main thing, item one on the church’s agenda:

1 Timothy 2:1-6 (CSB) First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2 for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

Then, he gives three reasons why we pray:

3 This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.

We pray for everyone as well as for those in power because:

- It pleases God because ...
- It leaves the church in peace so that
- We are free to share Jesus Christ, who is the only Savior

True Christian Patriots pray. Prayer is job one.

YES, BE A CHRISTIAN PATRIOT!

The Christian Patriot's heart's desire is to see a national spiritual awakening. We want our nation to turn to Jesus Christ as God and Savior.

What can we do to make it happen?

- Stay salty, faithfully following Jesus for the sake of the nation.
- Work for the welfare of our community, seeking its good in all sorts of ways.
- Pray intentionally for those in power as well as everyone else in the community so that the gospel can advance to the glory of God. Our greatest contribution to America is the gospel.

And maybe God will see fit to pour out his grace on our nation to bring about the greatest spiritual awakening in the history of the world.

And the United States will be a light shining on a hill for the whole world to know that Jesus is Lord of all.

So, yes, let's all be Christian patriots.

Amen.

PERSPECTIVES ON PATRIOTISM

Written with AI assistance.

What does it mean for a Christian to love their country? The question feels urgent in a cultural moment when patriotism has become polarizing, viewed as either uncritical love of a country that has obvious flaws, or a form of idolatry, putting country above God. The Bible calls us to something more nuanced.

Paul wrote that every governing authority is "instituted by God" (Romans 13:1), and Peter urged believers to "honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17) — not with worship, but with respect befitting one who holds God-given authority. This is love of country in its proper order. Before that, Peter commands something more fundamental: "Fear God." The hierarchy is intentional. God first. Country, rightly loved, second.

True Christian patriotism is not the same as many forms of nationalism. Nationalism says, "My country, above all." Christian patriotism says, "My country, under God." The prophet Jeremiah told exiles in Babylon — a pagan, hostile empire — to "seek the welfare of the city" and pray for it, because their own flourishing was bound up with its flourishing (Jeremiah 29:7). We are to serve, build, and bless the nation where God has placed us, not retreat from it.

But our deepest loyalty runs elsewhere. Paul reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). We are, in a sense, ambassadors of another kingdom, representing its values such as justice, mercy, truth, and love in the one we temporarily inhabit. Healthy Christian patriotism is not waving a flag for God; it is letting God's values reshape the nation we love.

Give thanks for the freedoms God has granted in this land. Pray earnestly for its leaders, its renewal, and its people. Serve your community. Speak truth. Vote with a biblically formed conscience. And remember: a Christian's greatest gift to America is the gospel.