

Repairing America's Three-Legged Stool

In the past four months, a friend has occasionally sent me Bible verses via email, words intended to console me when I was feeling down. Inspired by these gifts, I recently decided to begin reading the Bible for a few minutes every day, hoping for uplift and insight in the midst of our current dark times.

The New Testament is familiar to me – I've read it twice – and so I turned to the Old Testament, which I had never read in full. For a few days, I browsed through various Psalms and then turned on a whim to Isaiah. In the early chapters, the prophet warns the people of Judah, who have rejected God, of the disasters in store for them: wars, slavery, desolation, and death. "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged."

Isaiah's judgments on Judah could just as easily apply to America. American Christianity continues its precipitous [decline](#), while the number of people claiming no religious affiliation rises dramatically.

Americans also once practiced a secular faith, a belief in the ultimate goodness of their country, in the rights that came with being an American, and in "liberty and justice for all." During World War I, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted William Page's "[The American's Creed](#)," which stressed the importance of the Constitution, respect for the flag, and the liberties of Americans. This creed ends "I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies."

In 1952, Dean Alfange won an award from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge for his "[An American's Creed](#):"

I do not choose to be a common man. It is my right to be uncommon—if I can. I seek opportunity—not security. I do not wish to be a kept citizen, humbled and dulled by having the state look after me. I want to take the calculated risk; to dream and to build, to fail and to succeed. I refuse to barter incentive for a dole. I prefer the challenges of life to the guaranteed existence; the thrill of fulfillment to the stale calm of utopia. I will not trade freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any master nor bend to any threat. It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act for myself, enjoy the benefit of my creations, and to face the world boldly and say, this I have done. All this is what it means to be an American.

Both of these creeds embody how a majority of Americans once looked at their country. Given our present condition, we may safely guess that today many Americans view such creeds as quaint and old-fashioned as top hats and petticoats.

With religion and Americanism in such fragile states, only law and order stand between the average citizen and chaos. In some of our large cities, the last few weeks have vividly demonstrated what happens when our first protectors, the police, stand down.

All three legs of the stool that once supported our republic are now cracked and weakened, leaving us faced with the nihilism of political movements like Antifa and the self-confessed [Marxism](#) of Black Lives Matter. We are fast devolving into a country of warring tribes, a war encouraged by radical ideologues whose end game is power.

So, what must we do?

We must repair the stool.

Step 1: We begin those repairs by reestablishing law and order. Law enforcement officers must arrest and charge thugs who destroy property and beat and kill their fellow citizens. The FBI and other agencies should investigate groups like Antifa and Black Lives Matter for promoting terrorism. We must remove from office those feckless governors and mayors who have sat idly by while this destruction has taken place. We must reject the absurdity of the “defund the police” movement and instead support our men and women in blue.

Step 2: We must regain a sense of balance regarding our past. Instead of looking at America and American history as if we have created some sort of oppressive hellhole, it's time we celebrated the greatness of our past and yes, of our present. See this [list](#) of American accomplishments in Gerard Van der Leun's “How Beautiful We Were.” Add your own thoughts to this list and share it with the kids and grandkids. Not tomorrow. Today.

Step 3: Those who are believers should pray for God's grace in this time of crisis and fervently live out their faith. Those who are not believers should also strive to follow a path of personal virtue and morality. All of us can serve as examples to our fellow citizens, particularly to our young people.

Many of us, I suspect, read the headlines these days and become saddened, even depressed, by current events. We feel helpless to change the course of events, stunned by the hatred of so many people, and fearful for the future of our children and grandchildren.

But here's the thing: If we allow this revolution to continue without remonstrance or counter-protest, how will we answer to future generations? How, in fact, do we look at ourselves in the mirror?

Time to push back. Time to regain America.

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