

## GOD'S MAGNIFICENT IDEA

### Part II

#### Matthew 16:13-19

Introduction: The profound exclusiveness of the church is unprecedented. Without question, the church, God's magnificent idea, is the most heterogeneous organism in the world. The capacious heart of God and His transcendent love for the world brought to us the most invaluable gift of salvation. The church has a plethora of opportunities to step up to the plate and stand for righteousness that will chart our country's future for many years to come. Moral issues like abortion on demand, same sex marriage, "*one nation under God*" in the Pledge of Allegiance; prayer in the school, and the 10 Commandments in public places, are crucial issues facing us today. We must unashamedly declare once again that America is a Christian nation. Like in the book of Esther ... "who knows but that we have come to the kingdom for such an hour as this." God has positioned us in this eventful hour to use our influence to affect the future of the planet. The Bible promises that "*blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.*" We should always take advantage of opportunities to advance Biblical morals.

#### I. God's magnificent idea

##### A. Having God's favor. *Psalms 34:15.*

1. God has blessed America materially, spiritually, and politically like no other nation in history. The psalmist David said, "*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...*" *Psalms 33:12.* As we pray for God's continued blessings on America for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are reminded of the promise He made to Abraham and the nation of Israel in *Genesis 12:2.* I believe this blessing applies to all nations through the Gospel of Christ.
2. More than two decades ago, Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn warned Congress, "*Very soon, only too soon, your country will require not just exceptional men, but great men. Find them in your souls; find them in your hearts. Find them in the depths of your country.*" What our ailing nation needs now is great men and women who will rise to the challenge of the day, who will give us hope based on real truth, not on empty promises, but men and women with godly character, integrity, and principles to lead us back to the blessings of God. Now is the time to live in the spirit of our revolutionary founders who gave everything they had for the cause of Christ's liberty. Patrick Henry said, "*They tell us we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary ... sir we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which God has placed in our power...*"
3. We can also be inspired by a great phrase spawned during the civil rights movement: "*If not us, who? If not now, when?*" With a revival of righteousness and a renewed commitment from Christ's followers in America, we can complete our mission. We will succeed when we return to America's original purpose, "*One nation under God.*"
4. The Puritans, who arrived on our shores after the Pilgrims, also made a covenant with God. Leader John Winthrop wrote these stirring words: "*We shall be as a city on a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.*"
5. The city on the hill is a powerful image, given by Jesus in *Matthew 5:14.* This represents the duty each believer has to shine the light of Christ before all men.
6. The future of America will be determined by whether we stand on the principles of the Bible. The writers of the Chronicles, probably Isaiah and Ezra, spell out the conditions God sets for a nation to prosper. *2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14, 19-22.*

Conclusion: As we face these critical days, we should pray for God's wisdom. Noah Webster said, "*Let it be impressed on your mind that God commands you to choose for rulers just men who will rule with the fear of God. The preservation of a ... government depends on the faithful discharge of this duty; if citizens neglect their duty and place unprincipled men in office, the government will soon be corrupted.*" Billy Graham said, "*If America is to survive, we must elect more God-centered men and women to public office; individuals who will seek divine guidance in the affairs of state.*"