

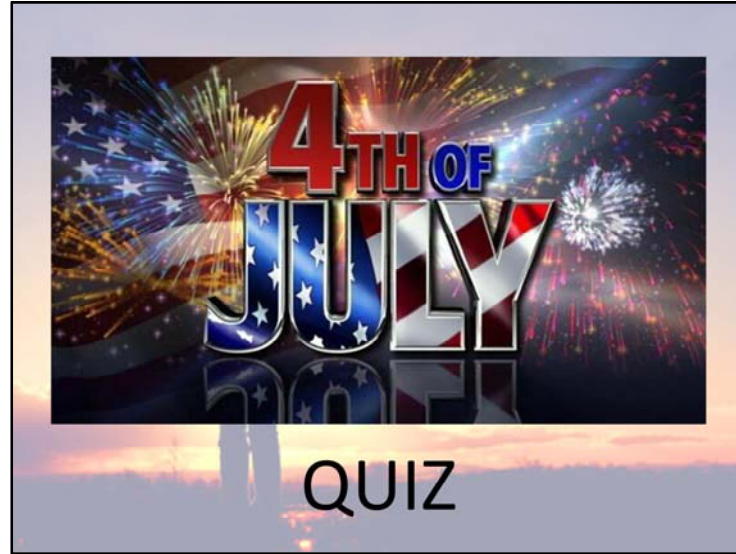


Story about my finger...



A survey: does this look like a baby or an astronaut?

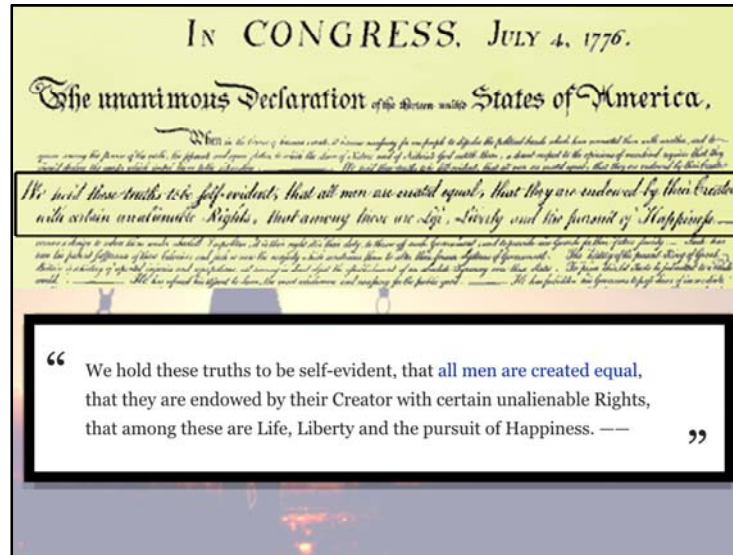
That has nothing to do with our sermon. However...



I do want to start with a fourth of July quiz...



Give me liberty, or give me death. Who said it?



**Look at this famous document. What is highlighted?
Our inalienable rights are: Life, Liberty, and the
pursuit of happiness.**

Here's the quote...

There were two bullies in Europe:

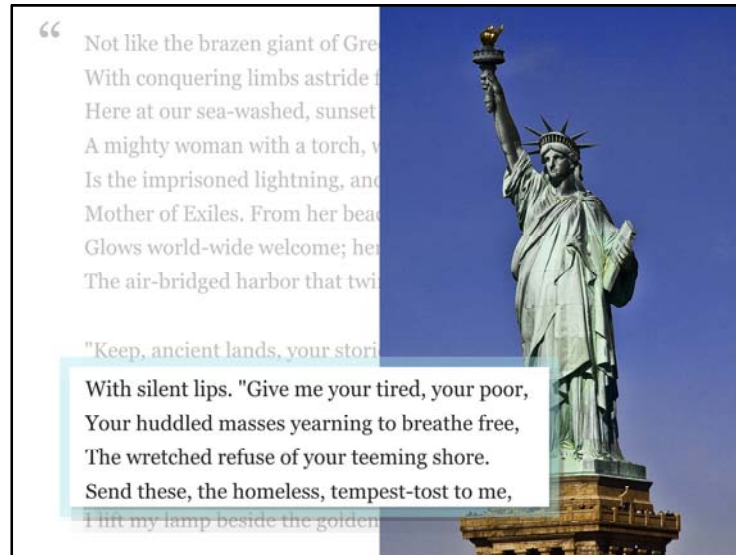
- the throne and
- the church.

“ Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Now, I want to read this poem to you...

Where is this poem?



“ Not like the brazen giant of Greece
With conquering limbs astride for land on land
Here at our sea-washed, sunset-hemmed shores
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glowed world-wide welcome; her mild eyes
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp

With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Yes. The statue of liberty...



I recently learned of an ethnic group that sought refuge and a new life in the United States...

It is the Lutherans.



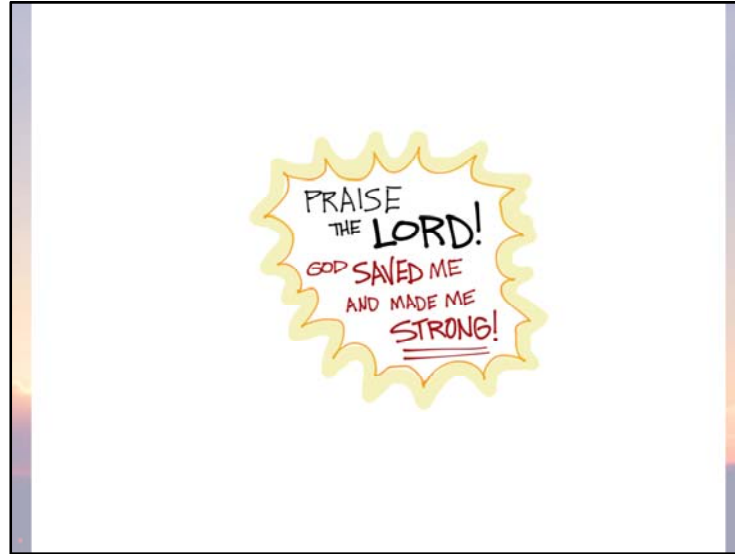
The American Dream: what happened?

Civil War

Shooting and Arson in Charlotte



Today we come to our final Psalm in this series. We've seen that life is a cycle of Orientation, Disorientation, Reorientation.



It starts off like this. We praise God because God has delivered us from something.

This is like the beginning of the American dream.

This is the story of Israel.

Start as slaves

Get saved

Reject God and want a king

Solomon builds the temple and an army

It all falls apart.



Then life happens...

Psalm 146 was written after the exile. The people wanted to get it right this time.

They asked this question...



So, here is the big question for today. Why do we praise God?

Psalm 146

★ Praise for God's Help

- 1 Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
- 2 I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my
life long.

- 3 Do not put your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.
- 4 When their breath departs, they return
to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.



5 Happy are those whose help is the God of
Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD their God,
6 who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;


7 who executes justice **for the oppressed;**
who gives food **to the hungry.**

The LORD sets **the prisoners** free;

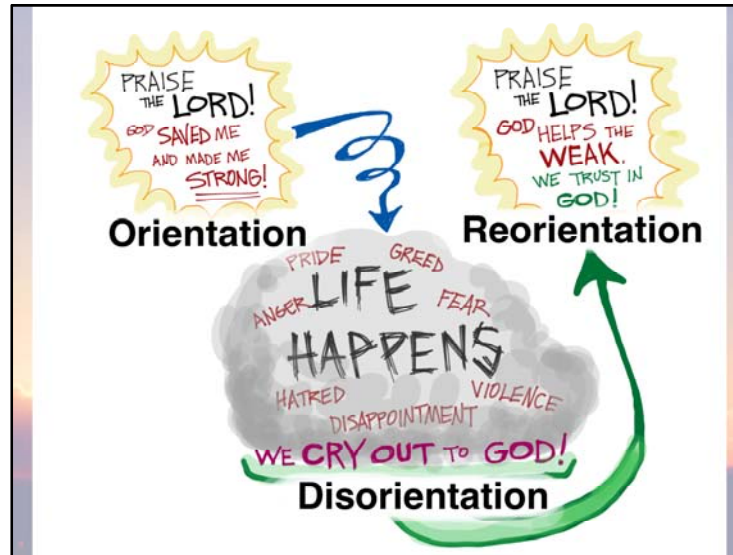
8 the LORD opens the eyes of **the blind.**
The LORD lifts up **those who are bowed down;**

the LORD loves the **righteous.**

9 The LORD watches over **the strangers;**
he upholds the **orphan and the widow,**
but the way of the wicked he brings to
ruin.



¹⁰ The LORD will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the LORD!



This is the cycle of life and how spiritual formation works...