

that foundational truth and they held it in their hearts.

President George Washington, on the very same day that Congress finished drafting the first amendment, declared, "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 to humbly implore His protection and favor." William Penn, one of our great champions of liberty and founder of what would become Pennsylvania said, "Those people who will not be governed by God will be ruled by tyrants." And President Andrew Jackson said, "The Bible is the bedrock on which our Republic rests."

Mr. Speaker, today the secular left often seeks to destroy any vestige of this Nation's religious heritage in history. They seek not to prevent the establishment of religion, but rather, to relentlessly destroy the free exercise thereof. Indeed, they are determined to rewrite America's history, devoid of any mention or trace of the very ideal that gave birth to this Nation in the first place. If left unchecked, they will not stop until they have pulled down the very last Christian cross or Star of David out in Arlington National Cemetery. But, Mr. Speaker, they will not succeed. Because, you see, there is something in the heart of every human being that knows that beyond this world, beyond the stars, and beyond life itself is an Almighty God that holds each one of us in His hands. Our Founding Fathers knew that truth, Mr. Speaker. They knew that America herself was proof that indeed there is an angel that still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm. I pray for the sake of America and all that made her great tonight that this generation does not forget this great, immutable, self-evident truth that for more than two centuries has been the bedrock foundation of the greatest Republic in the history of mankind.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, thank you for our time. I know that our time is expired. We have a few other gentlemen that I hope will be recognized later by the House. But, Mr. Speaker, thank you for your patience.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, just a little over 5 years ago, on June 5, 2003, I stepped on the floor of this House to take the oath of office to be only the fourth Member of Congress from the 19th Congressional District, the 236th Texan, to ever serve in the United States Congress.

But what I really want to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is the hour before I stepped on the floor of this House and took that oath. I met in the Speaker's office. And while we were standing around waiting for the floor to open, the House to open up its daily prayer and Pledge, one of the Speaker's staff members came over to my wife and I and said, "Congressman, would you like a few minutes alone, some quiet time before you're sworn in? We said, well, that would be great. I brought my own personal Bible with me. And so that lady led me around to a room that I don't know that a lot of people know that is in this Capitol, and that's our chapel, that's just around from the Speaker's lobby. And I didn't know exactly where she was taking us, but she opened the door, and to my wife's surprise, and myself, we saw that we were in a chapel in our Nation's Capitol. She closed that door behind us, and we walked over and knelt at the front of that chapel. And we just sat down as a couple and we began to pray because we realized what an awesome responsibility that the people in the 19th Congressional District of Texas had given us. And so we knelt there, and we began to pray. And we just said, Lord, we are about to embark on a journey that you have brought us here. We ask for Your guidance, we ask for Your direction, we ask for Your wisdom, and Father, all of those things that we're going to need to know in order to serve the American people.

And as we prayed there as a couple, it was a very special moment. And as I was sitting there and we were praying, I began to think about 232 years ago this July 4th, we thought about those men that got up and had this Declaration of Independence that started this great country called America. And I always recall the way they ended that declaration because they said, "We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." You see, Mr. Speaker, they signed their death warrant for Dana and I to be able to sit there and kneel in the Nation's Capitol and exercise our right to pray to our Lord and Savior.

And I thought about the men and women over the 232 years that have served this Nation, that have given their lives and their service to protect the right for us to do that. I think about just a few hundred feet from where we are tonight, Mr. Speaker, I think about the church services that used to be held right in our Nation's Capitol and what a privilege and honor that must have been to come over to

the Nation's Capitol and not only to see the center of freedom and democracy known around the world, but to worship your Lord and Savior.

And so, Father, tonight—Mr. Speaker, tonight—and really I guess that we're talking to our Heavenly Father tonight, and we're talking to you, too, Mr. Speaker—we've been talking about an important part of America, an important part of the foundation and the values of these men that started this great Nation, the foundation of the men and women that have kept this great freedom and democracy alive over these years and how important that is, and what a shame it is going to be if we don't protect that for future generations. Unfortunately, we've seen some Federal judges try to take away what these gentlemen pledged their lives to do. I hope we never let that happen.

And so just 2 weeks ago I reflected back on that very special day that right here in our Capitol there was an opportunity to get down on our knees and pray. But what's more important is that weekly this Congressional Prayer Caucus, these men and women from both sides of the aisle, believe in America and believe in the founding principles.

More importantly they understand that Who is the ultimate leader of this universe.

And so Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time to talk tonight about a very important part of America, and that is the ability to praise our Lord and Savior.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN REQUESTS PRAYER IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good colleague from Arkansas for assisting and allowing me to speak tonight.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 3 or 4 days, a partisan tone will be exhibited in these Chambers, harsh rhetoric will be exchanged on both sides, some of it intentional, some of it in the heat of the moment, some of it out of simple frustration with not being able to convince ourselves of issues that are going on, but nevertheless, partisanship that is communicated back to America and America's despair that we will ever get past this partisanship.

Is there some way for us to listen to you and you listen to me and let us thoughtfully consider our positions and then make those compromises that