

THE ^{A REAL}
BATTLE
FOR THE
SOUL
OF
AMERICA

TIMELESS TRUTH FOR TIMELY CONVERSATIONS

ADRIAN ROGERS



**The Real Battle for the Soul of America:
Timeless Truth for Timely Conversations**

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messages by Adrian Rogers:

Does Character Count? #2048

Will God Impeach America? #2149

Christian Citizenship #2080

A Prayer for America #2311

INTRODUCTION

Every two years, Americans go to the polls to vote for members of Congress—the Senate and House of Representatives.

Every four years, Presidents and Governors are elected to office.

Elections are a part of our American lives.

As we frequently hear, elections have consequences. And more and more people are now describing the consequences of our election season as a battle for the soul of America.

Is such a battle taking place? Are elections the only way Christians are to be involved in government? Is America any different from other nations, past or present? Does God really oversee the rise and fall of nations?

The Real Battle for the Soul of America contains timeless, foundational principles about human government, all rooted in biblical truth. Real truth never changes, and the truth about government is that it is God who ordains it, leaders who are responsible for it, and citizens who are accountable to it. This truth applies to any nation in any generation, but as a constitutional republic, there are things that do set America apart from other nations.

In this book, pastor, teacher, and author Adrian Rogers helps us understand that God does provide guidance and instructions for our nation, even as we seek to be a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” In these brief messages we are reminded that the privilege of being called Americans comes with significant responsibilities—to God, to each other, and to the world. And in the same way neglect for our human souls can bring destruction and defeat into our personal lives, neglect for our national soul can also mean death for our nation.

There is indeed a battle to be fought for America’s soul, but that battle does not belong to any political party or policy position. God’s truth stands alone. It does not take sides. The real battle for the soul of America resides in its citizens, not its government. Our choice as citizens is to take the side of truth or go our own way. Our responsibility as followers of Christ is to stand with truth—regardless of pundits, politicians, personalities, or parties.

DOES CHARACTER COUNT?

*Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.*

ALEXANDER POPE

Do you appreciate the liberties you have as an American? Then, you must also appreciate the character that purchased that liberty. Character and liberty are inextricably interwoven—you cannot have one without the other.

Another word for character is *responsibility*. A person with character can accept and carry out responsibility. Let me illustrate.

A little baby whose character is not yet developed can be given no responsibilities and so he has no liberty. He doesn't have to clean the house or carry out the garbage. He doesn't get to choose whether he'll have strained beets or pureed peas for lunch. He has no responsibilities or liberties.

But as his character develops, he is given more and more responsibilities. And one day, Dad hands him the keys to the car

and says, “I believe that this young adult has developed enough responsibility, enough character to be given this liberty.”

Now, let’s suppose another young man grows up without a godly influence, begins to act irresponsibly, and breaks the laws of the land. What should happen to him? He should go to prison. Why? Because he acted without character—without responsible morals. And now his liberties are taken away. He also has no responsibilities. He doesn’t have to turn out the lights, but he also can’t unlock the door.

Now what is true of individuals is true of a nation. America was founded upon the moral character of godly men and women who came to this country for religious freedom. Their character purchased our freedom and we have a responsibility to see that this freedom is upheld as a sacred trust.

THE CHARACTER THAT GOD REQUIRES OF EVERY LEADER

It has been said that national leaders are like airplane pilots. We don’t care about a pilot’s morals as long as he can fly the airplane. His character doesn’t matter as long as he can get us from point A to point B. We want a safe take-off, a safe trip, and a safe landing. What the pilot does in his personal life behind closed doors is none of our concern.

Now, this argument about a leader’s character might hold water if we did not need the blessing of God on this country. If we are going to say, “God, we don’t need You to bless our leaders or our people,” then this argument may be valid.

Let me give you another analogy.

Suppose you were going to have open-heart surgery. Would you want the surgeon to come from the restroom and into the operating room without even washing his hands? Would you want him to hold your heart in his hands if they were not even sanitary?

I want the hands of those who hold the heart of this nation to be clean. Clean hands and a pure heart are necessary for godly leadership and godly leadership is a prerequisite to blessing.

The fact is that America desperately needs the blessing of God! We are ruined without it. The Bible says in Proverbs 29:2, **“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.”**

I want to give you six principles from the Word of God about the kind of leadership a nation needs and more importantly, that God requires before His blessing can rest on a nation.

■ A LEADER MUST BE RIGHTEOUS

Hide this verse away in your heart. The Bible says, **“It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness”** (Proverbs 16:12).

This is God speaking. We don't have a king in this country, but God is talking about leadership whether it's a king or a president. You see, leadership is stewardship. The Bible calls the political leader **“a minister of God”** (Romans 13:4). He is acting for God, and therefore he should be godly.

An unrighteous person is unfit for leadership, whether it be in the church, the home, in business, or in government. The worst kind of leadership is hypocritical leadership that carries a big black Bible but does not live a righteous and a holy life.

Back in the 1960s, young people were strumming their guitars and singing songs promoting God, country, patriotism, and other themes. One line they sang seems to be especially relevant. It says: “You can’t live crooked and think straight, whether you are a chauffeur or a Chief of State.”

■ A LEADER MUST BE WISE

The Bible says, “**I wisdom dwell with prudence...By me [wisdom] kings reign and, princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth**” (Proverbs 8:12, 15-16).

Here is an example of how little our nation understands true leadership. We say we want our leaders to be skilled. But

It is far better for a leader to be wise than to be intelligent or gifted.



God says, “I want My leaders to be wise.” It is far better for a leader to be wise than to be intelligent or gifted.

That’s the reason a nation cannot be governed by taking popularity polls. Beware of the polls! A person who takes a poll to find out what the people want, then pampers their wants and promises things he may or may not deliver, is an opportunistic politician, not a godly leader.

Former President Harry Truman once made a wise observation about the difference between leadership and poll-taking. He said, “I wonder how far Moses would’ve gone if he had taken a poll in Egypt.”

What would Jesus Christ have preached if He had taken a poll in Israel to find out what the people wanted to hear? Where

would the Protestant Reformation have gone if Martin Luther had taken a poll?

It isn't the pull of momentary public opinion that counts. What counts is wise leadership from men who know right from wrong and follow the right. God requires that His leaders be men of fortitude and honesty. Leaders like this will shape epochs in the history of the world.

A high school freshman won first place in a science fair in Idaho. His project involved taking a poll and urging people to sign a petition demanding the elimination of a substance known as dihydrogen monoxide.

This young man listed seven reasons why this substance ought to be banned. I want to give them to you because they make a telling point:

1. *It can cause excessive sweating and vomiting.*
2. *It is a major component in acid rain.*
3. *It can cause severe burns in its gaseous state.*
4. *Accidental inhalation can kill.*
5. *It contributes to erosion.*
6. *It inhibits the effectiveness of automobile brakes.*
7. *It has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.*

This student gave these reasons to fifty people and asked them to join his call for a ban on dihydrogen monoxide. Forty-three of the fifty people signed the petition to join in the ban. One person refused to sign because he knew the student was talking about *water*. Nothing but water!

Do you see the danger of governing a nation by opinion? By slanting the questions in a particular way, this student was able

to trick eighty-six percent of the people he polled into giving a foolish response. I say it again: Beware of the polls!

God says, "I need men to lead who have wisdom." Wise leadership is better than a strong economy.

In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favor is as a cloud of the latter rain. How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver! (Proverbs 16:15-16)

The idea that the economy is all that really matters is foolish! God values wisdom and understanding far more than gold or silver.

The president of a South American country was once asked by an economist, "What's the difference between North America and South America? Why has North America been so blessed, while South America has experienced such poverty?"

Both of these regions have great natural resources, fertile fields, and great landmasses. Why have they developed in such different ways? This South American president said in response, "It is because the people who came to your shores came seeking God. The people who came to our shores came seeking gold."

When will our people learn that wisdom is far more important than a record close on the Dow Jones? Our Pilgrim fathers did not come to these shores so that the stock market might blossom. We have become one nation under greed!

■ A LEADER MUST BE ABSOLUTELY HONEST

Proverbs 17:7 tells us, “**Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.**” According to Proverbs 20:28, “**Mercy and truth preserve the king..**”

Liars and leaders are not the same. If a man is a liar, he has a character flaw that goes all the way to the core of his being. People are not liars because they tell lies. They tell lies because they are liars.

A man is never more like the devil than when he lies, for Jesus said in John 8:44 that Satan is a liar and the father of lies. A man is never more like the Lord Jesus than when he tells the truth, because Jesus Himself is the Truth (John 14:6).

■ A LEADER MUST CHOOSE WISE LEADERS

The Scripture says, “**Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer**” (Proverbs 25:4). Dross is the scum and the filth that is in the ore. It must be purged out before a person is fit for leadership.

Then the writer goes on to say, “**Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness**” (verse 5). In other words, don’t let wicked people influence the ruler.

A leader is known by the helpers he chooses. Any leader who chooses consultants and political operatives with the morals of an alley cat is not fit to lead.

Proverbs 29:12 says, “**If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.**” A leader must be a man who chooses wise consultants and helpers.

Now if you think I’m being political, you have a big problem. *I am teaching the Word of God.* I’m not talking about a Democrat,

Republican, Independent, or anybody else. I'm talking about what God Almighty says He requires of leadership.

■ **A LEADER MUST BE SEXUALLY MORAL**

The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows? Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. (Proverbs 31:1-3)

Here was the mother of a king warning him not to fall into the destructive web of immorality. It will destroy even a king. If

If we as a nation laugh off the sexual sins of our leaders, should we be surprised if our children treat immorality lightly?



a leader has no personal moral standards, how can they set a moral standard for a nation?

How can they be the person about whom parents can say to their children, "You can look up to them, they are our leader. Be like them."

If we as a nation laugh off the sexual sins of our leaders, should we be surprised if our children treat immorality lightly?

A leader's moral character is so important because if a leader cannot keep their most sacred promise of all, the promise made to their spouse before Almighty God, how can they be trusted to keep any other promise? A leader must be, therefore, a person of sexual morality.