

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
In Congress in Philadelphia, July 4, 1776

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness – That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, . . .

. . . . We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES
Ratified between September 1787 & July 1788

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS
Given in Philadelphia – Monday, March 4, 1793

Fellow citizens, I am again called upon by the voice of my country to execute the functions of its Chief Magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of United America.

Previous to the execution of any official act of the President, the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the Government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraiding of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS
Delivered by President Abraham Lincoln
at the Gettysburg National Cemetery – November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

Nine Resolutions in Trilogy

That Every Loyal American Should Seriously Consider

by Dr. Rodney H. Brady

I. Three documents I need to read and re-read at least once a year:

1. The Declaration of Independence
2. The Constitution of the United States and its amendments
3. President Washington's Second Inaugural Address

II. Three books I need to read and ponder at least once a year:

1. The Holy Scriptures
2. The biography of some great American hero
3. A history covering some phase of man's struggle for freedom and self-governance

III. Three things I need to do at least once a year:

1. Spend an hour on my knees thanking God for my heritage in this land of the free
2. Raise or post a flag in front of my home to remind me and my neighbors of our commitment to America.
3. Exercise my right to vote on every election day, whether that election involves local, state, or national candidates and issues

IV. Three letters I should write at least once a year:

1. A letter to one of my elected representatives thanking him/her for his/her willingness to serve in public office, and expressing my views on some issue facing our community or nation
2. A letter to the editor of a newspaper emphasizing my support for America and one of her vital institutions, and expressing my thoughts what is right and good about America

3. A letter to my posterity or future generations again expressing my thoughts about what is right and good about America, and warning them about the delicacy of the balance between maintaining an orderly society and maintaining freedom of choice for the individual

V. Three places I should visit at least once a year:

1. A shrine or place of great historic significance to the development of our country
2. The grave site of a war veteran who gave his all in defense of freedom, where I can consider in my mind why he was willing to give his life for the cause of freedom
3. The top of a mountain from which I can see and contemplate the expanse and strength of this beautiful land in which we live

VI. Three expressions of thought I need to memorize and repeat in my mind often:

1. The first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States.
2. President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address
3. All of the verses to five of America's most patriotic songs, hymns, or anthems

VII. Three resolutions I should make, keep, and renew each year:

1. That I will never downgrade or speak ill of my country
2. That I will constantly look for opportunities to improve and enhance the strength of America

3. That I will encourage those around me to speak and act positively about America

VIII. Three philosophies that I should understand and be so conversant with that I can defend each one in the face of verbal attack:

1. The system of free enterprise and consumerism that has made this country the strongest economic power in the history of the world
2. The principles of check and balances that are built into our Constitution
3. The principle of representative democracy that enables every citizen to help determine the direction and future of his country

IX. Three freedoms that I should be willing to defend with my life, if necessary:

1. The freedom of speech and of the press, which enables people of many persuasions to be heard and to read without fear of reprisals
2. The freedom to earn, acquire, hold, and use private property for the benefit of myself and my family
3. The freedom to select my own profession, lifestyle, and religion, so long as these do not infringe upon the rights and freedoms of other people