



the Liberty LETTERS

1 — *Can Liberty Last Forever?*

DEAR LIBERTY LEADER —

I wonder, how many years does liberty have left? It is a sobering question, one that we would rather not contemplate. We like to pretend that everything will be alright, that everything will continue as normal. But that is to live in denial and ignorance. *Liberty can't last forever.*

We would like to believe that liberty will always exist, but that is a false hope. For liberty to last, we must know and promote the origin, meaning, and supports of liberty. Frankly, most of us have forgotten these things. But if we forget the cause of liberty, then we will inevitably forfeit the effects. So then, are these liberty's last days?

The American Founders knew the origin, meaning, and supports of liberty. Establishing a nation on those principles produced the greatest degree of individual liberty the world has ever seen. You and I

must rediscover and reaffirm those principles today, or the liberty that we cherish will soon vanish.

Christian author and apologist Dr. Os Guinness has spoken on this subject for decades. “The Founders,” he says, “did everything they could to win our freedom and to order our freedom (in the Constitution). They even put things in place to sustain our freedom,” hoping that posterity — that’s us — would make it last. “Sustaining freedom,” Guinness continues, “should be on everyone’s mind today, but it’s not. Instead, it’s not on anyone’s mind.” Why not, I wonder?

Americans enjoy their liberty, but they certainly take it for granted. Most of us don’t know our history as well as we should. We aren’t familiar with the oppression of the past. We don’t understand what our forefathers have sacrificed for us to enjoy what we have today. While

today’s political leaders speak of freedom, very rarely do any of them comment on where it comes from, much less how to keep it.

The principles of liberty are not taught in most of our schools, churches, or homes, and in their place postmodern generations have substituted secular elements. Unfortunately, it’s a combination that makes liberty unsustainable.

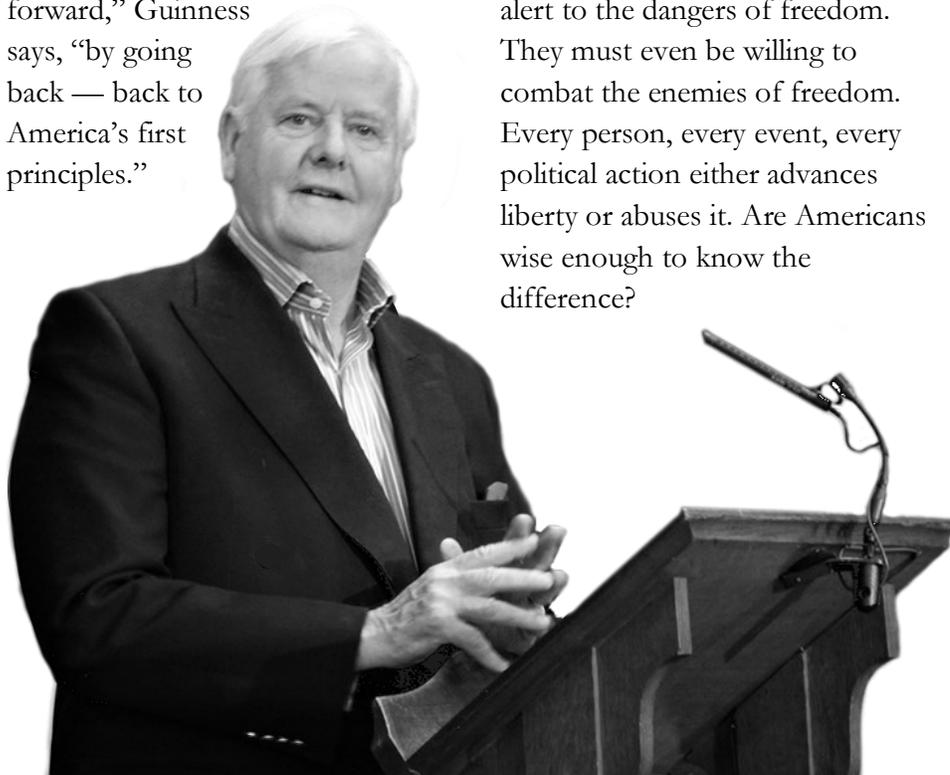
If Americans continue the path we have chosen, ignoring the past and abusing what liberty we have, then liberty will vanish soon and suddenly. The great experiment of the United States will be like those of ancient Greece and Rome, just a bygone memory of antiquity.

But why? What is the primary danger to our liberty? Guinness identified it. “The greatest *enemy* of freedom,” he says, “is *freedom.*” In our fallen world, liberty is always in danger. Ill-designing men will ever

work to undermine liberty and oppress others. Simply put, in our liberty, we are free to unravel liberty.

Though it is the natural tendency for free men and women to let down their guard and allow the enemies of liberty to gain ground, Dr. Guinness is hopeful. “We are still here,” he says, “which means that we still have some small degree of liberty with which we can restore what the locusts have eaten.”

He continues, “All of our current woes are fixable. All that has decayed can be restored, if we are willing to do what needs to be done. Guinness points out that while Israel lost its way for a time, it did return. While the Church lost its way for a while, it did return in the Reformation. Though America has lost its way, it can be restored. But how? “We do it like Israel and the Church did before us, *by going back to the things we did at first*. We move forward,” Guinness says, “by going back — back to America’s first principles.”



Going back to America’s first principles — that’s easier said than done. Freedom was not cheap to purchase in the first place. Freedom will not be cheap to restore or sustain. Freedom is not free. Freedom is costly. Liberty required a sacrifice of blood, sweat, and tears to secure, and liberty will require eternal *vigilance* to endure.

For the blessings of liberty to be perpetuated, they must be preserved; and the best way to preserve them is to be enlightened of them, their principles and protections. The saying goes, “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.” To be vigilant is to pay attention to that which is precious, as well as to watch tirelessly those who would rob it.

Freedom is under fire. With liberty comes responsibility, the responsibility to protect it. Those who are free must constantly be alert to the dangers of freedom. They must even be willing to combat the enemies of freedom. Every person, every event, every political action either advances liberty or abuses it. Are Americans wise enough to know the difference?

We owe it to our predecessors to preserve their gift of liberty. We owe it to our posterity not only to pass on the gift but to teach them how to keep it. Let us be enlightened. Let us be jealous of our liberty and suspicious of all who threaten it. Let us return to the things we did at first, or else we will lose the lamp of liberty forever.

Before you can effectively confront the enemies of liberty, you must first grasp the bedrock truths on which our liberty was grounded. Our country desperately needs a generation of Liberty Leaders, like you, who will not only embrace those values but who will also apply them to everyday life.

In these perilous days, we need to be like the men of the tribe of Issachar, “who understood the times and who knew what the nation should do” (*1 Chronicles 12:32*). As we grasp the principles of liberty, then we will understand the price of liberty and what is necessary to perpetuate it. Our nation’s future depends on it.

Your Friend in the Cause,

Aaron



The Liberty Letters are written by Aaron Ferguson, a student and teacher of America’s history and government and the author of *The Liberty Pyramid: The Founders’ Framework*. If you would like to learn more about liberty and how to preserve it, or if you would like to purchase *The Liberty Pyramid*, visit www.BiAY.org.

Guinness, Os. “Can Freedom Last Forever?” YouTube, February 23, 2012.