

'Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his possession.
Psalm 33.12.

1. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.*

- The Lord, who *made the heavens by his word* [Ps 33.6]
- The Lord, who *fills the earth with his unfailing love* [Ps 33.5]
- The Lord, whose *plans stand forever through all generations.* [Ps 33.11]

2. *The people he chose for his possession*

- Chosen through the costly, self-sacrificing love of God in Jesus Christ...fully God becoming fully man...living perfect in our place...die innocently for our forgiveness...rise victoriously to assure us that sin, death, and Satan has been defeated...that we have life in him, now and forever.
- Christ is the fulfillment of the promises made to Adam and Eve in the Garden
- Christ is the blessing promised for all nations through Abraham.
- Christ is the king reigning on David's throne [the cross] forever. [2 Samuel 7]

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- Old Testament Israel was Israel. God placed Israel among pagan nations and called them to be *'a light to the nations and bring his salvation to the ends of the earth'*. [Isaiah 49.6]
- New Testament Israel is the church, wherever he plants it and calls it to be a *'light within the nations, bringing salvation to the ends of the earth.'* [Isaiah 49.6]

We are church, *the people chosen for his own possession*, planted in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metroplex, in Minnesota, in the United States of America. This July 4th we remember our Christian heritage and be reminded how we can best live out our lives as citizens.

1. The thinkers in the history of Western [European] political thought tell us that religion is necessary to a healthy political community.
2. The American Founders formed a secular government and insisted that it required a religious foundation as a moral guide to government and business.
3. George Washington, in his Farewell Address, reminded his countrymen that "religion and morality" are indispensable supports" to "the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity."
4. Alexis de Tocqueville, studying American democracy in the 1830s, observed that political freedom requires an unshakeable moral foundation that only religion can supply.
5. John Richard Neuhaus, one of the most influential American Christian intellectuals in our modern time, in 1984 wrote 'The Naked Public Square.' He argued that American democracy depends on the moral beliefs and the practices of religious believers in order to sustain a 'civil public square,' in which 'free people deliberate the question, How ought we to order our life together.
6. Neuhaus warned that 'the dissolution of moral consensus in the public square can only turn culture and politics into civil war.'

We are blessed and chosen to be a blessing in and to the United States

1. Chosen before the foundation of the world at great cost to the Creator—
 - *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.* [Ephesians 1.3-4]
2. Chosen for good works with a promise.
 - *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.* [John 15.16-17]
3. Chosen for a Christ-like life-style
 - *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with one another and forgive any complaint you may have against someone else. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which is the bond of perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for to this you were called as members of one body. And be thankful.* [Col 3.12-15]
4. Chosen for the public square.
 - *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.* [1 Peter 2.9-10]

We are God's own possession and we are called to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1. To be in the word and prayer, daily asking that God would use us to shape culture toward his will.
2. To perfect a life-style that reflects Christ is the way we think, speak and live.
3. To have at least one accountability partner for encouragement and support.
4. To pray for and meet with that one person needing a personal guide in their daily walk as a follower of Jesus.

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