

50.1 Mr. Smith and National Corruption

Filmed in 1939, over eighty years ago, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" is as relevant today as then. It is a tale of the clash between patriotic idealism and political corruption. Jimmy Stewart portrayed the naive youth leader who is appointed to fill a vacancy in the U.S. Senate. His principled plans promptly collide with corruption at home and deception from his Senator hero in Washington, but he tries to continue despite attacks on his character.

I thought it was interesting that the corrupt practices of the political machine opposing Mr. Smith are being practiced today on a larger scale. Let me reiterate that the movie shows corruption in our political system over eighty years ago. If it was terrible then, how bad must it be now?

Mr. Smith takes his stand against the corruption in the U. S. Senate and his home state. His enemies make numerous attempts to stop him from exposing the truth about their dishonesty. These practices are still in effect today. Consider this partial list and see if you can identify anything like it in modern America.

1. Attempted bribery. The political boss offers Mr. Smith a permanent seat in the Senate if he will just go along and compromise his principles.
2. Lies and attempts to discredit Mr. Smith in the Senate and his home state.
3. Censorship. The political boss has power over the press. He is able to block the truth of Mr. Smith's words from getting back to his state. How about "Fact Checkers" and social media censorship?
4. Political ownership. The Governor of the state and the senior U.S. Senator were "owned" by the political machine. They did as they were told.
5. Intimidation. The allies of the political boss shut down Smith's supporters with violence. Remember the BLM and Antifa rioters? . . . I mean peaceful demonstrators.

The current regime is doing a masterful job of all of these avenues to power. If this administration continues unabated we will see the total annihilation of the Constitution and our inalienable rights from God.

I know that we generally have little regard for our Founders, and we think that the Founders weren't as intelligent as we are since they didn't have computers and cell phones. When we read their words, we recognize the depth of knowledge and wisdom they possessed. Let me read six *predictions* or maybe just *observations* attributed to **Samuel Adams**.

1. **It is in the interest of tyrants to reduce the people to ignorance and vice. For they cannot live in any country where virtue and knowledge prevail.**
2. **If ever a time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in Government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent its ruin.**
3. **"For no People will tamely surrender their Liberties, nor can they easily be subdued, where Knowledge is diffusd (sic) and Virtue preservd (sic). On the Contrary, when People are universally ignorant and debauched in their Manners, they will sink under their own Weight, without the Aid of foreign Invaders."**
4. **"If the public are bound to yield obedience to laws to which they cannot give their approbation, they are slaves to those who make such laws and enforce them."**
5. **"Is it not High Time for the People of this Country explicitly to declare, whether they will be Freemen or Slaves? It is an important Question which ought to be decided. It concerns us more than any Thing in this Life. The Salvation of our Souls is interested in the Event: For**

wherever Tyranny is establish'd, (sic) Immorality of every Kind comes in like a Torrent. It is in the Interest of Tyrants to reduce the People to Ignorance and Vice."

6. **"The liberties of our country, the freedoms of our civil Constitution are worth defending at all hazards; it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors. They purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood. It will bring a mark of everlasting infamy on the present generation – enlightened as it is – if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or to be cheated out of them by the artifices of designing men."**

Now, what do you think of such a Founding Father? Was he on target? We are seeing the predictions of Samuel Adams playing out right before our eyes.

The apostle Paul wrote the following in **Philippians 4:8** (NKJV):

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Meditating on virtuous and praiseworthy things is a challenge to us. We see evil abounding and feel the discouragement of the times as we witness the downturn of America. We are seeing the truth of how corrupt our nation has become. What caused our downfall? We have taken our eyes off of the higher ideals and have settled for the less than the best. We have settled for eating pig slop when we could dine at the table with our extravagant Father.

Right after Paul tells us to meditate on virtuous and praiseworthy things he tells us to take action.

Contemplation should lead to action. Notice the next verse, **Philippians 4:9** (NKJV):

⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Philippians saw Paul preach the gospel in the midst of persecution. Those new Christians saw Paul use his Roman citizenship to the advantage of the gospel. Should we not take advantage of the benefits of being Americans to advance the kingdom of God on earth in Liberty? *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* is still valid.

America has been a "city set on a hill." Our nation has been a "light to the world" for freedom and the gospel. We have seen the turn away from God and the bleak results. Shall we follow the advice of Samuel Adams and defend our liberties and freedom?

We are not calling for physical violence as Chicago **Mayor Lori Lightfoot** has done. We are calling for Christians to wake up to the spiritual war in which we are engaged and put on God's armor. Let us use the *"sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"* and let us *"pray without ceasing."* Then, let us act by making our voices heard by voting for candidates of integrity and speaking out against the evil that has permeated the atmosphere of America.

Christians, WE are at fault for what is happening to America. We have been led into silence and apathy by our congregational and political leaders. Pastors, Preachers, and Church Leaders WE are responsible for failing to lead our congregations in the stewardship of God's gift of our Republic and freedom in Christ. Let's make the changes we need.

Let's Keep The Light of the Virtuous and Praiseworthy Burning!