

### 67.3 A Symbol of Resistance and Resilience

I want to tell you a little secret. I get emotional whenever I can place myself in particular historical situations. Let me give some examples:

- On one of my trips to Israel, we went to the site where scholars believe that soldiers mocked and beat Jesus before they flogged and crucified Him. I chilled and teared up on the spot.
- I went on a tour of Gettysburg with my friend, Dan Fisher, and walked “Pickett’s Charge.” I felt sick facing the Union “high ground” where their artillery stood, knowing that a gunner could hit anything he could see.
- I got weak-kneed at the Alamo when I found the brass “line in the sand” designating the spot where William Travis gave the men in his charge the choice of staying to fight and die or leaving.

One of my ongoing emotional times is not a place but a song. I have never been to Ft. McHenry in Baltimore, but that is the site of a significant victory for Americans during the War of 1812 and the location of **Francis Scott Key’s** poem that became the “*Star Spangled Banner*.” Every time I hear or sing our National Anthem, the story behind the song moves me.

After the British burned our Capitol, they moved on to Baltimore. Along the way, the British captured **Dr. William Beanes**. His town feared the British would hang him, so they sent the twenty-five-year-old lawyer, **Francis Scott Key**, with Colonel **John Skinner** under a flag of truce to the British flagship to attempt a prisoner exchange.

The British were civil to the pair but did not want them to leave and reveal their plans to the Americans, so they sent Key and Skinner to the HMS Surprise, where they witnessed the British fleet’s bombardment of the Ft. McHenry on the evening of September 13, 1814. If the British could overwhelm the fort and force their surrender, they could capture Baltimore.<sup>1</sup>

The flag that flew over Ft. McHenry was unique in our history, with fifteen stars and stripes. The banner added a star and stripe for Vermont and Kentucky. Congress later decided to have our national standard with thirteen red and white stripes, representing the original states, and then add a star for every state. We had eighteen states by the time of the War of 1812 but had not updated the flag.

The British targeted our “star-spangled banner” throughout that momentous night. Every time the bombardment knocked the flag down, our men found a way to prop it up. Man after man sacrificed his life that night, not merely for the sake of the banner but for the country and Liberty.

The following “dawn’s early light,” Key and his companions saw the US flag waving in the breeze. Key penned a poem, “*The Defence [sic] of Ft. McHenry*.” We know it as the “*Star Spangled Banner*,” which became our *National Anthem* on March 3, 1931. I am sure you know the first verse of the song, but let me read the words of the last stanza and hear Scott’s view of the hand of God as you listen.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand  
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!  
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land  
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,

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<sup>1</sup> Federer, William J. *American Minute*. St. Louis, Amerisearch, Inc., 2012, p. 263.

And this be our motto - "In God is our trust,"  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave. [sic]

Key further acknowledged the importance of God to the Christian Patriot when he wrote:<sup>2</sup>

*"The Patriot who feels himself in the service of God, who acknowledges Him in all his ways, has the promise of almighty direction, and will find His word in his great darkness, "a lantern to his feet and a lamp to his paths." He will, therefore, seek to establish for his country in the eyes of the world, such character as shall make her not unworthy of the name of a Christian nation."*

Key's statement reminds me of Paul's admonition in **Ephesians 4:1** (NKJV):

**I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,**

The men of Ft. McHenry resisted the tyranny of Great Britain by laying down their lives for their country. They could have raised the white flag or let "*Old Glory*" fall at any time during the night, but they did not. Instead, they chose to commit all they had to the cause of Liberty. They flew the American flag all through that night to symbolize their resistance and resilience, and in a way, America rose from the ashes that night.

Americans knew then that our nation was more than a free country; it was a place for Christ to dwell in and among His people. Our Founders established America as a "Christian nation." The general population understood that the moniker could only come from their commitment to Christ. The average American knew they had a calling from God higher than borders on a map, and it was also a calling to the kingdom of God.

How are you holding up in your resistance to tyranny? Are you committed and resilient? Our flag is a reminder of the determination of our ancestors on our behalf. They would not roll over to oppression but fought to retain the beautiful gift of Liberty. We have the same challenge today for the sake of our posterity.

Real American Patriots refuse to take down the flag, literally or symbolically. That flag represents sacrifice and freedom, not merely a piece of cloth flapping in the breeze. It is our history in full color. George Washington set the example when he said that he would rather die on his feet than serve on his knees. Remember, the only one we serve on our knees is the LORD.

Because you listen to this podcast, I believe you are an American who resists tyranny in the name of God, not for selfish reasons, but to honor the Giver of all blessings. Liberty is a gift from God, and He means for it to be shared. Therefore, cherish, defend, and pass it on in His name. If God is for us, America will rise again!

Keep The Light of *Resistance and Resilience* Burning!

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<sup>2</sup> Cummings, Brad, and Lance Wubbels, editors. *The Founders' Bible*. Newbury Park, CA, Shiloh Road Publishers, 2012, p. 1844.