

America 250 Tour Teaching – Day 1: Presidential Memorials

Theme: A Nation Founded Under God: Liberty, Humility, and Righteous Leadership

Key Scripture: Psalm 33:12 – "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD."

Washington Monument

Standing 555 feet tall, the Washington Monument was the tallest structure in the world at the time of its completion. Its simple obelisk design symbolizes strength, honor, and timeless leadership. The difference in color between the lower and upper stones shows where construction stopped and later resumed.

It officially opened to the public on October 9, 1888, and remains one of America's most recognizable landmarks. The monument not only celebrates George Washington's leadership but also stands as a symbol of national unity, integrity, and faith in God's guidance for the nation he helped found.

Notable Inscriptions

At the Capstone (top of the monument):

The Latin phrase "Laus Deo," which means "Praise be to God." This sacred inscription faces east toward the rising sun, symbolizing that America's greatness begins with faith in God.

Inside Stones from States and Nations:

Many stones bear biblical references and patriotic messages.

Examples include:

Maryland: "Maryland — the Monumental State."

New York: "Excelsior."

West Point Cadets: "Duty, Honor, Country."

Dedication Stone (inside entrance):

Commemorates George Washington as "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Theme: Humility in Leadership

Key Scriptures: Micah 6:8, Proverbs 3:5–6, James 4:10, Matthew 20:26

Teaching Points

- George Washington consistently acknowledged God's providence.
- The monument points upward, reminding us that leadership should point people to God.
- Great leaders walk humbly, fear God, and serve others.

George Washington's Prayer for the Nation

"Almighty God, We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Prayer

- Pray for the President, Congress, Supreme Court, governors, and local leaders.
- Pray that America seeks God's wisdom.

Lincoln Memorial

Theme: A House Divided Cannot Stand

Born: *February 12, 1809, in a log cabin in Kentucky.*

Early Life: *Grew up poor with little schooling but taught himself through reading and hard work.*

Career: *Worked as a farmhand, store clerk, lawyer, and served in the Illinois legislature before becoming the 16th U.S. President in 1861.*

Civil War Leadership: *Guided the nation through the Civil War, preserving the Union during its darkest time.*

Emancipation Proclamation: *In 1863, he declared freedom for enslaved people in the Confederate states, a step toward ending slavery.*

Faith in God: *Though his faith deepened over time, Lincoln often turned to prayer and Scripture for strength. He believed America's survival depended on God's mercy and once said, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."*

Gettysburg Address: *Spoke of a "nation under God," reminding Americans of liberty and equality for all.*

Assassination: *Tragically killed by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, just after the war ended.*

Lincoln Speaks

"My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."

"Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail."

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven... but we have forgotten God. It behooves us then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

"I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Key Scriptures: Matthew 12:25, Mark 3:25, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Proverbs 14:34

Teaching Points

- Lincoln quoted Jesus: 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.'
- National healing requires repentance, humility, forgiveness, and righteousness.
- America's strength depends upon God, not merely military or economic power.

Prayer

- Pray for unity.
- Pray for reconciliation.
- Pray for righteous leaders.

Jefferson Memorial

Theme: Our Rights Come from God—not Government

Thomas Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743, in Shadwell, Virginia. One of America's most brilliant Founding Fathers, he was a writer, statesman, inventor, and philosopher devoted to liberty and democracy.

Jefferson was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, penning the immortal words that "all men are created equal" and have the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

As president, he achieved the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, which doubled the size of the nation, and sent Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition to explore the new territory.

Though he struggled personally with the issue of slavery, Jefferson's words and vision profoundly shaped America's ideals of freedom and self-government. He died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson's Prayer

Words carved on the walls of the Jefferson Memorial:

"Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage, we humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will."

-Thomas Jefferson

Key Scriptures: Genesis 1:26–27, Deuteronomy 30:19, Galatians 5:1

Teaching Points

- Thomas Jefferson affirmed that our rights come from our Creator, not government.
- Freedom begins by recognizing God's authority.
- Governments protect God-given rights; they do not create them.
- Jesus said, 'If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8:36).

Prayer

- Thank God for liberty.
- Pray America returns to acknowledging God as the source of freedom.
- Pray for national revival.

Closing Declaration

Father, we thank You for America's history and the freedoms You have entrusted to this nation. We repent where we have departed from Your ways. Raise up righteous leaders who fear You, strengthen Your Church to be salt and light, and let America once again be a nation that honors the Lord. May justice, mercy, truth, and humility guide this land for generations to come. In Jesus' name, Amen.