



GLC Weekly
(12 October 2022)

Prayer Proclamation, President Lincoln (1863)
GOD Blessing, Protecting & Correcting Individuals & Nations:
Lessons 11

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Reflecting on a time when the United States had a righteous and noble leader, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was the 16th President. He guided the nation through the Civil War with great wisdom and humility. “With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right” (Second Inaugural speech), he endeavored to hold the nation together and end the evil of slavery. During the Civil War (1861-1865), President Lincoln called the nation to “a day of humiliation, prayer, and fasting,” three times with proclamations dated: 12 August 1861, 30 March 1863, and 7 July 1864. Each came at the request of the Congress.

The text below is his 1863 proclamation. Just 27 months later, the Civil War ended. Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation on 1 January 1863, to free the slaves, but that was not sufficient. I believe these voluntary days of “national prayer and humiliation,” and the ongoing prayers of God’s people, may have been the most decisive factor in ending both slavery and the War. The same, even without presidential leadership, is necessary to end abortion in our day.

“Whereas the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation; and

“Whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord;

“And, insomuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were

produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

“It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

“Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

“All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

“In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. (SEAL)

“Done at the city of Washington, this 30th day of March, A. D. 1863, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

“By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN” ([A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents](#), Volume V).

Questions: Do you believe GOD wants us to end abortion in our time, just as Lincoln believed GOD wanted slavery to end in his time? Do you believe GOD would answer our prayers as He did theirs if we follow their example, and then restore and bless us as He did for them?

Pray that we as God’s people would personally and corporately humble ourselves, fast, and pray for our (your) nation to come back into right relationship with God and His purposes to be restored and fulfilled. Keep praying that the Holy Spirit will “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8). Let us believe He has good plans for our future.

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For the sacred gift of every human life and remembrance of children unborn,

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