



## Easy as Pie

By Bob McEwen

When you do things God's way, you prosper.

Proverbs 14:34 says...

*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people.*

So, when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people mourn. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

The same applies to your personal life, your home and your marriage. When we do things God's way, there is prosperity and blessing. But there's a competing interest at play, because we often want to do things our way as opposed to doing things God's way.

On July 4, 1776, 56 Americans signed a piece of paper that said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident." From that day forward, they began to try to do things God's way. And it's been under constant attack and there's constant competition. But America has endured, and we can see that God has prospered this nation like no other.

Today, a little over 4% of the world's population call themselves Americans. And yet that 4% every year writes more books, more plays, more symphonies, more copyrights, more inventions than the other 96% combined. There's a ship docking in Hong Kong at this very moment using GPS, a system conceived, invented and maintained by America. A Mercedes dealer in Buenos Aires is ordering parts from Stuttgart, Germany over the Internet that was conceived, invented and maintained by Americans. All around the world there are skyscrapers because an American, by the name of Elisha Otis, invented the elevator. There are people sitting comfortably indoors while it's 120 degrees outside. Why? Because an American by the name of Willis Carrier invented the air conditioner.

Americans invented the airplane, and the light bulb, and the telegraph and the telephone and the list goes on and on. Why? Are Americans smarter than anybody else? Do they work harder than anybody else? Interestingly enough, more Americans have received Nobel prizes than the rest of the world combined. But half of those Americans who earned Nobel prizes were not born in America. Now what happened? Did they come to America and get smart? No, they came to America and got free, because our founders resolved to do things God's way.

No matter where you are in the world, you only vote on two things. Integrity or economics. I like to say politics is easy as **PIE**. Politics = Integrity + Economics.

What is integrity? Integrity has two parts. It begins with morality, which is simply not doing what's wrong. So in order to be moral, you can lay in bed all day and be moral. But it's more than that. Integrity also means doing what is right. It's active. And that's why it's really important to know the definition of doing what is right. There's only two definitions of what is right. One is what God says is right. The other is what I say is right.

So when our founders got together, they agreed with the idea that God says what is right. In order to run a government, you need to do three things. Number one, you must



have a standard for right and wrong. And that's either you or God. So the first thing you want is to fear God.

Secondly, we need to be lovers of truth. Truth is important because what we hear a lot these days is people talking about "your truth" and "my truth." That doesn't exist. There is either truth or there's not.

Truth is truth. Everything else is just opinion.

Truth does a couple of things. First, truth reveals error. If I say I'm 6'8" but then someone comes in and measures my height, if I'm wrong it will be revealed. Truth will reveal the error. Therefore, error hates truth because truth reveals error.

But it's even more than that. Truth also overcomes error. Think of a lawyer who's prosecuting a man for stealing from an ATM. The defense attorney says he can't be guilty, because he was having dinner with his sister that night, at that time. They can even produce receipts as evidence. But then the prosecutor shows security camera footage of the defendant driving his pickup up to the ATM. You can see him put a chain around the ATM. You see his face as he leans over the camera. He leaves his fingerprints on the machine as he lifts it up. The truth will overcome the error such that the only way the defense attorney can succeed is to prevent the presentation of truth.

That's why you can go on virtually any college campus and say the most bizarre things in the world and nobody cares. But if you speak biblical truth, the enemy will send someone to shout you down and shut you down. Why? Because truth exposes error and error cannot tolerate truth. So they have to shut it down.

Our founders understood the two sources of truth. So they nailed it in the birth certificate—the Declaration of Independence. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," which is a gracious Jeffersonian way of saying any idiot ought to understand this. Understand what? That all men are created equal and are endowed by a five to four decision of the Supreme Court? No, that all men are *endowed by their Creator* with certain inalienable rights.

We are created and are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. Among those are life, because in America the purpose of the government is to secure these rights. The purpose of the United States government is to protect innocent life.

Now notice the sequence. Life then liberty. See, liberty is of little value if you're dead. So you have to have life first, then liberty and then the rest. This means that you have a right to ask anyone who's running for office, running for school board, running for sheriff, how they stand on life. Because it says in our birth certificate, the purpose of government is to protect innocent life. Any politician who will take innocent life will not hesitate to take your liberty.

So this is a spiritual bond that's so strong that founders said we want those whose basis for their standard of right or wrong to be those that fear God. Fear is the old English term for respect or honor. You fear the king or honor the king. So first of all, you have somebody whose standard is God. The only alternative to that is for the standard to come from yourself. And the rule of thumb is that you do not want to marry a person who thinks they're God. So you want somebody who respects God. You also don't want to go into business with a person who thinks they're God.



Moses' father-in-law Jethro advised him to choose people who feared God to help govern the Israelites. Exodus 18:21 says...

*But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.*

So, you don't want to have anybody who runs government who thinks they're God.

Back to the three things you need in government. First, those that fear God. Number two, lovers of truth. Then finally is this: those who hate covetousness, wanting to take what somebody else has. Here's where we get to the other part of politics—economics.

Does a person create wealth, or do they steal wealth? That's the question. And money is one of the simplest ways to look at wealth.

Money is a representation of a contribution that I've made to someone else. The greater the contribution, the greater the reward. That's the reason why many people go to college—to increase their contribution to others. If you go out and sit on a park bench all day, you'll have nothing to show for it. But if you invest, if you plant corn, if you harvest it, if you educate yourself, if you increase your capacity to bless other people, the greater the contribution is, the greater the reward. That's free enterprise. We're rewarded in proportion to what we do for others.

This is why politics, freedom and wealth are inextricably intertwined. Why are some countries rich and why are some countries poor? Why on one side of the Rio Grande do you have abundance, and on the other side you have utter poverty? It's important for us to understand the reason. Because the people that we choose, the decisions that we make will determine whether or not our country survives or prospers.

Let me illustrate this. Suppose you have a \$100 bill and you go into Target and the most expensive thing in the store is \$99. You have \$100 so that means you're completely free to choose anything in the store. Now suppose someone comes along and takes 25 percent of it away from you, leaving you with 75 percent. What happens? There are some things you can no longer choose. Thomas Jefferson said, "Freedom is having choices. The more choices you have, the more freedom you have." So the more money I take away from you, the fewer choices you have. I've simultaneously limited your freedom and your standard of living.

So if a person comes along and takes 50 percent and leaves you with just half, what happens? You have even fewer choices. Again, less freedom and a lower standard of living. Let us suppose someone comes along and takes 75 percent. What happens? You get the idea. Now, suppose someone comes along and takes it all. What do we call a person who works all day long and keeps absolutely nothing? That person is called a slave.

Now there are two people that can come and take money away from you. One is called a criminal. He has a gun and can take money away from you. The other is the government. They also have a gun and can take money away from you. But the impact is the same. Imagine you get money from the ATM, walk across the parking lot and a man comes up, puts a gun in your ribs and says, "I want 50 percent of everything you've got." You go home, sit at home with your wife and children. You say, "This is how much money



we have left for food, clothing, and shelter. This will determine the kind of standard of living we can have, the kind of car we can drive, the vacations we can take."

Or you make it all the way to your pickup, you open up the paycheck and you see that half the money's already gone. The government's already been there, the impact is the same. So what's the principle?

The principle is this: You show me what percentage of the gross domestic product—all the goods and services produced in a country or a city or a state—is controlled by government. What you'll find is that the greater the freedom, the greater the wealth. The bigger the government, the greater the poverty and it works this way every time.

Under free enterprise people dream up ways to do something good for someone. Remember the 4 percent of the world population that I mentioned and all that we create? That's why we do it. Because under free enterprise people figure out ways so that they can then be rewarded. What's the alternative? Socialism.

Socialism is where you come and just take it. You always hear socialists talk about redistributing wealth. Not creating wealth, redistributing. That's another term for theft. But in their definition, when they take money out of your pocket and put it in theirs, they've redistributed it. That's what they do when they redistribute wealth and the degree to which they do that is the degree to which they create poverty.

This is why countries or cities or states that make socialism their core economic policy are in poverty. Because if you're going to buy something for yourself, you care about two things. You care about the price because you're paying for it, and you care about the quality. What is the reward? What's it going to do for you?

No one can make that decision as well as you can. You might pay \$7 for a cup of coffee at 6:00 in the morning that you wouldn't pay 35 cents for at 2:30 in the afternoon. When it's your money being spent, you get the maximum benefit of the price and the quality. Now suppose you don't control one of those two things. Imagine you're going to buy something for someone else. Do you care about the price? Yes. Because you're paying for it. But maybe you're a little more flexible on the quality. We've all bought things for other people we never would've bought for ourselves. We've all received things as gifts we never would've purchased with our own money.

Now let's suppose it's the other way around. What if you're going to consume it. Do you care about the quality? Definitely. But the price isn't as important since you're not going to pay for it.

Here's one final example. Let's suppose that where you work, everybody who comes to work late has to put \$5 in the kitty. At the end of the month the boss has somebody take all the money and raffle it off and somebody wins and they buy something with it. On the last day of the month, your boss tells you to see how much money's in the kitty and buy something so it can be raffled off. You go out to lunch, and you forget all about it. You come back and realize, "Oh my goodness, I forgot I was supposed to buy something." But you don't have time. You count the money, it's \$150. You look around and there across the street in the store window is a six-foot tall stuffed frog. You go over and you check the price and it says \$149. This is great.



So you buy the frog, you take it over, put it in the closet. At the end of the day the boss invites everybody down, lectures to them about being late. Everybody draws a number to see who wins. Sally, the new secretary, wins. What does she win? A six-foot-tall frog. Everybody laughs and claps. That is called a third-party purchase. What does it mean? It means you're spending money that's not yours, therefore you don't care about the price. If it had been \$100, you'd have spent that. If it had cost \$300, you would've spent that. Since it's not your money you don't care about the price. And since you're purchasing something you will not personally consume, you don't care about the quality either.

All government purchases—and this has nothing to do with party affiliation—are third party purchases made with money that's not theirs to purchase things they will not personally consume. Therefore, will it be wasted in the highway department? Absolutely. Will it be wasted in the defense? You can count on it. That's why we believe that in America, in order to keep things free, government should do as Abraham Lincoln said, only those things which a man cannot do better for himself.

Because every time we take a dollar from an individual to save and invest and use to the maximum benefit of themselves and their family and run it through a third party system called government, we are in the process of making the nation poorer. You can take a beautiful city like Detroit that was the richest city in the history of mankind when I was young. It's now the poorest city north of the Rio Grande. You can make any rich place poor. At the same time that Detroit was the richest city in the world, South Korea was third from the bottom of all the nations. But they got freedom after the Korean War and now they're the 10<sup>th</sup> richest nation. You can make any rich place poor or any poor place rich, by degree of socialism or freedom and the greater the freedom, the greater the wealth.

This nation is a nation that has been looked up to because it was based upon that principle. The degree to which other nations followed is the degree to which they prospered. After World War II, for the first time in history, America became the richest nation and the most powerful nation on earth. And they didn't seek it. Throughout all of world history, the Peloponnesians, the Romans, the Spanish, the British... became the premier nations.

America didn't because American people respected the righteousness of its cause. To this very day, if a tsunami hits the largest Muslim nation on earth, to whom do they immediately turn for aid? Americans come to their assistance. When a ship is attacked on the high seas, this happened over 300 times last year. When the tanker got caught in the Strait of Hormuz, to whom could they appeal? Only the 327,000 Americans who wear the uniform of the United States Navy.

The United States is a standard for righteousness in the world. If you take all the money that goes toward global evangelism from the entire planet, from the 96 percent that isn't American, and you increase it five and a half times, that's still not as much as this 4 percent gives for global evangelism. This is the lighthouse for the gospel and that's why we are engaged in a spiritual war.

Mark 3:27 says...

*"no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house."*

There's only one strong man in the world. It's the United States of America and the reason they want to do away with the freedom that made America the prosperous nation



that it is, is because it stands for righteousness and is a lighthouse for the gospel. As Christians in America, we have a choice. Will our generation continue and expand it, or will we drop the ball, and then there will be no place for other people to go? Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

### **Take Your Study Further**

*For biblical passages about fearing God: See Deuteronomy 6:24, Psalm 115:13, Proverbs 1:7, Proverbs 22:4, Malachi 3:16*

*For verses about loving truth: See Proverbs 12:22, 1 Corinthians 13:6, Ephesians 6:14, 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 1:22*

*For a biblical understanding about work and earning money: See Genesis 3:19, Ecclesiastes 9:10, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Ephesians 4:28*

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