

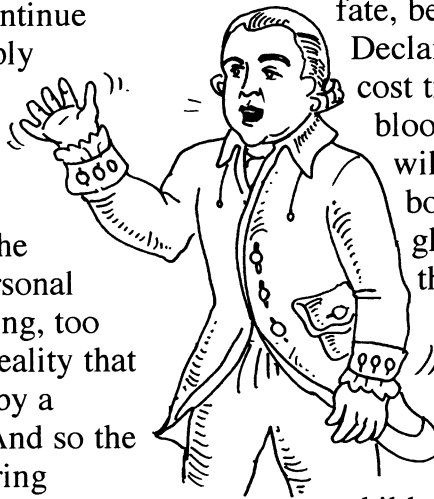


## A Warning with Encouragement

The principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence were formulated and implemented by a people that had the spirit of Christ in their lives, and therefore, cherished freedom and were willing to die for it. Without that “spirit”, the people often forego freedom in the pursuit of personal, selfish desires. As the people continue along this path, it inevitably leads to a break down in law. The government responds with more and more laws, each one reducing the liberties of the people for a vaporous personal security. Then one morning, too late, they awaken to the reality that they have been enslaved by a tyrannical government. And so the cycle begins again, requiring bloodshed to restore the unalienable rights of man.

Let us remember before it is too late, the great words of John Adams as he said, “Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote. It is true, indeed, that in the beginning we aimed not at independence. But there’s a Divinity that shapes our ends. . . . Why, then, should we defer the Declaration? . . . You and I, indeed, may rue it. We may not live to see the time when this Declaration shall be made good. We may die; die Colonists, die slaves, die, it may

be, ignominiously and on the scaffold. Be it so. Be it so. If it be the pleasure of Heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready . . . But while I do live, let me have a country, or at least the hope of a country, and that a free country. By whatever may be our fate, be assured . . . that this Declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, and it may cost blood, but it will stand and it will richly compensate for both. Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future as the sun in heaven. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honor it. They will celebrate it with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. . . Before God, I believe the hour is come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off as I began, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the Declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessings of God it shall be my dying sentiment. Independence now, and Independence forever.”





## Suggestions for Study

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- The principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence were formulated and implemented by a people that had \_\_\_\_\_ in their lives. Is this important?
- When do we think people should be willing to forego freedom in the pursuit of personal and selfish desires?
- What must we do to keep this precious gift of freedom?
- Do we feel as John Adams felt when he stated, 'It is my living sentiment, and by the blessings of God it shall be my dying sentiment. Independence now, and Independence forever? Let's talk about it.'