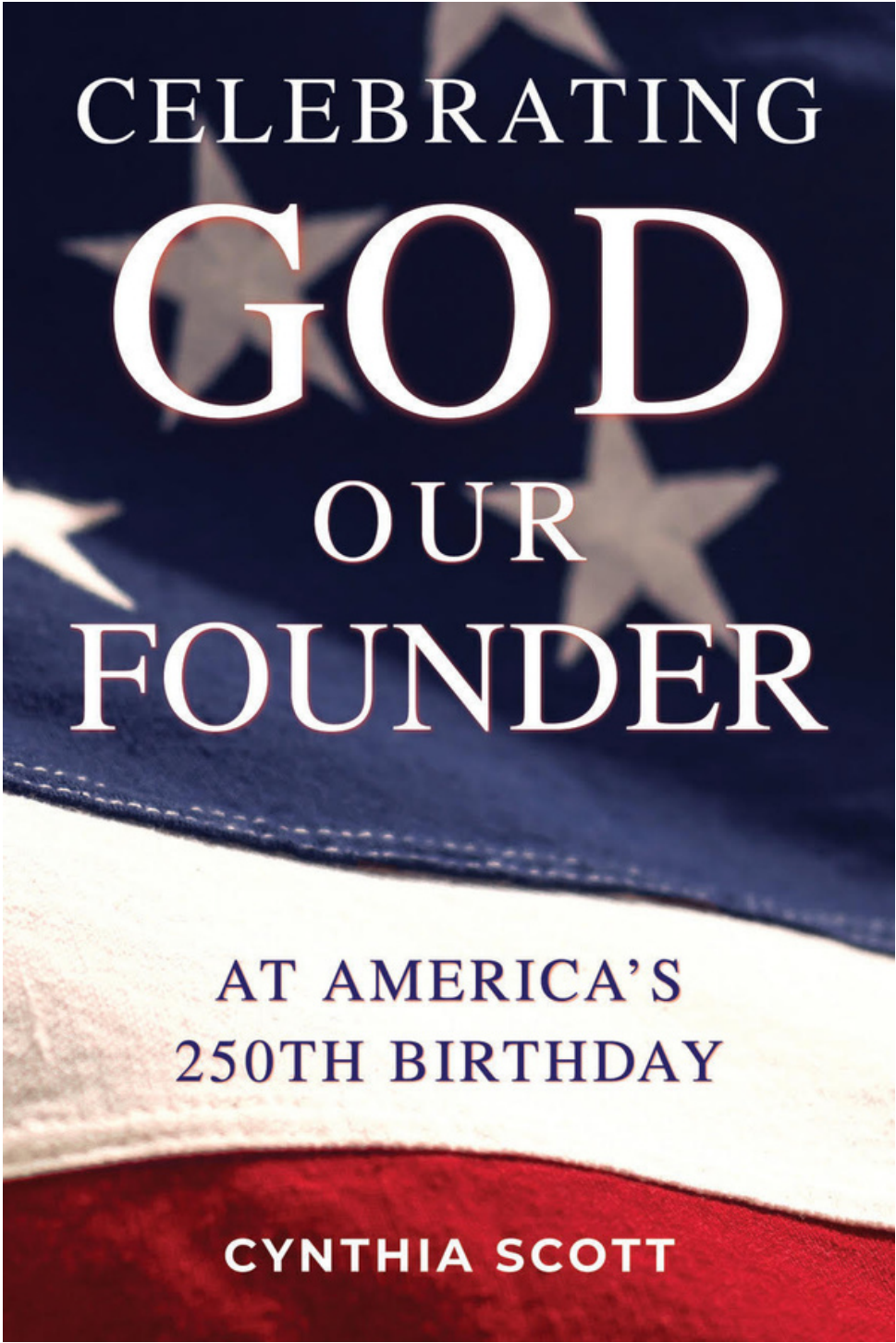


The background of the book cover is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag. The top portion shows the blue field with white stars, while the bottom portion shows the red and white stripes. The text is overlaid on this background.

CELEBRATING GOD OUR FOUNDER

AT AMERICA'S
250TH BIRTHDAY

CYNTHIA SCOTT

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
AND DISCUSSION**

Chapter 1: A People Separated to God – The Pilgrims

1. The Pilgrims were willing to separate from everything they knew and held dear in order to follow God. How willing are you to separate from the thinking, motives and purposes of the ungodly? Has there been a time when you had to step back from something or someone because it/they hindered your relationship with God? Is there anything keeping you from worshipping and obeying God whole heartedly right now?
2. The Pilgrims were blown off their original course and off their original plan which required them to make significant adjustments to their lives. Where do you sense you are on God's plan for your life? How willing are you to make a course correction should God present you with one? Take some time to consider your life; where might God be calling you to make adjustments?
3. The Mayflower Compact was the commitment and contract to join together in self – governance as a civil body politic. It was a covenant with God and each other. A Covenant is a binding agreement. Self– governance begins, however, with the individual. How do you govern yourself? As a Christian you are in covenant with God through Christ. Is there any part of your life where you are not living up to that covenant?

Pray. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you and show you if there is anything in your life that does not align with His Word. Is there anything from which He would have you separate? Is there anything hindering your relationship with our Savior?

Chapter 2: Building a Firm Foundation – The Puritans

1. The Puritans feared the Lord – they were in awe of Him and revered Him. They were devoted to God and to His Word. What in your life illustrates that you fear the Lord and tremble in His Presence? How could you make adjustments in your life to truly live in the fear of the Lord?
2. Beginning in 1630 over 20,000 Puritans came to the new world and with that move came much uncertainty. When have you been prompted by the Lord to step out into uncharted waters? How did you know that it was the Lord speaking to you? Where do you go to seek wisdom in making such critical and life changing decisions?
3. John Winthrop, the First Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony wrote A Model of Christian Charity. What do the Scriptures say about how we should treat each other? Handle conflict? Is there a circumstance in your life for which you need Godly wisdom right now? How do you approach the Scriptures to find the wisdom you desire?
4. Pastors were central to establishing a Biblical Worldview in the early colonies. How do you see the world – what shapes your worldview? How does world view shape thinking and action in your life and in the world around you? Are there any areas in your thinking where you need to adjust your worldview to bring it into greater alignment with the Scriptures?
5. Thomas Hooker's Fundamental Orders of Connecticut adopted in 1639 established consent of the governed as the basis for governmental authority. Choosing our leaders is a long established and precious American right. It is not the normal practice for citizens throughout history. How do you exercise this great privilege of choosing our leaders?

Pray. The Bible tells us that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

Proverbs 9:10a Ask the Lord to tell you if you truly fear and revere Him. If not, why not?

Chapter 3: The Christian Foundation of Education in America

1. Education in America was founded on the Christian faith and a Biblical Worldview. How does education in America today compare to what we see of education in the early colonies? Reflect on your own education and what you learned of God and how He was involved in founding our nation.
2. 106 of the first 108 colleges founded on the Christian Faith. What do you notice about colleges and universities now with regard to the Christian faith? What can be done?
3. Education began in the home for the purpose of teaching children the Scriptures. If you have children or grandchildren, how committed are you to teaching them the Scriptures? What have you done to promote their knowledge of the Word at home? What is one thing that you could do to help them grow closer to God through the Word. Create a plan and do it!
4. Education was designed to build character as well as expand knowledge. Why do we need to build character into the education of our children? Where is this being done or not done in our society and how can you contribute to building character in your life and the lives of those around you?
5. Biblical Education provided the thinking which undergirded the quest for freedom. How did knowing the Scriptures and particularly what they say about freedom influence the quest for freedom in America?

Pray. Ask the Lord to impress upon you where you may have been instructed erroneously and where you need to relearn things according to a Biblical Worldview.

Chapter 4: United Christians, United Colonies – The First Great Awakening

1. America's spiritual condition declined such that in the first decades of the 1700s pastors were calling for people to return to God. Do you notice that any people you know have departed from God? What about your own heart?
2. God raised up preachers like Jonathan Edwards who called for a return to God? Who have you heard or read that is calling you back to God? Who have you urged to grow closer to God? How does being in the Scriptures daily help? What is the role of the Holy Spirit as you read the Scriptures?
3. George Whitefield tirelessly preached God's love for the individual and the new birth – and huge crowds gathered to hear him. What, if anything, grabbed your heart as you read about the impact of the preaching of George Whitefield in the colonies?
4. God ignited the faith of the colonists during The First Great Awakening. Who do you know who is experiencing a fresh touch from God – whose faith is growing or on fire? What about you? How do you sense God calling you into a deeper relationship with Himself?
5. Many thousands of sermons were preached by Whitefield and others during the First Great Awakening. Who are the pastors that you listen to and what have they preached on lately? How are those messages impacting your life?
6. Christians were significantly divided on the basis of denomination in the early colonies. God united the Christians and then the colonies were united. Where do you currently see unity in the body of Christ? What does God promise when His people are united in His Spirit?

Pray. Ask the Lord to touch your heart with fresh fire for Himself. Wait on Him, stay in the Scriptures and cry out to Him. He hears you.

Chapter 5: God: The Author and Giver of Liberty – The Declaration of Independence

1. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” From whom do our freedoms come? How are the self-evident truths referred to in our Declaration of Independence linked to the Scriptures?
2. Beliefs were forged in the hearts and minds of the colonists by God over 150 years of powerful preaching and representative self-government. How did the worldview of the colonists contribute the thinking of our founders who wrote the Declaration of Independence? How does their worldview impact us today?
3. Oppressive taxation and treatment by the British fomented a strong desire for freedom in the early colonists. What are the pressures that our nation currently faces? How should we as Christians respond?
4. The founders declared freedom at much personal risk and cost. Most earnestly sought God and knew that He was essential to the procuring of freedom. The Scriptures say “Guard what was committed to your trust” 1 Timothy 6:20. While this refers to the faith, the principle can be applied to whatever God commits to our trust. What is God saying to you about our nation? What are you willing to risk and do to preserve our freedoms entrusted to us by God?
5. So dependent were the founders upon God that Chaplains were appointed to open Congress and 20,000 Bibles were imported during the Revolution. How dependent are you on the Word of God? How are you instructed by His Word? How do you seek Him? What have You heard from Him lately?

Pray. The Lord wants you to be free in Christ. In what areas of your life do you need freedom? Ask the Lord to set you free. Ask Him also how you are to guard the freedom that He has given you.

Chapter 6: God Brings the Victory – The War for Independence

1. The ‘shot heard round the world’ was fired on April 19th 1775 in Lexington – the very same day that the Governor of Connecticut called his state to prayer. God knows the future and therefore prompts His people to pray. How do you respond when someone or something comes to mind? When was the last time that you stopped to pray for someone else not knowing what was going on in their lives?
2. Americans were seeking independence from Britain but not from God. What about you? What do your actions say about whether you function as independent from God or dependent upon Him? Be honest with yourself.
3. God called George Washington, His man for the hour, as the head of the Continental Army and First President of the United States. Washington accepted the call. What do you sense God calling you to do at this moment in history? What is your response to His call?
4. God’s hand had already been on Washington during the French and Indian War. Consider your past, how has God prepared you for what He is calling you to do now?
5. Washington had a praying mother. She not only prayed for George but encouraged him to be a man of prayer and devotion to the Lord. Washington not only prayed but saw God’s miraculous intervention. How serious are you about prayer? Do you expect God to intervene in miraculous ways?
6. Washington gave God the credit for victory of the War of Independence. How quick are you to give God credit for your victories?

Pray. The Bible says “With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.” Mark 10:27. Your prayers reflect whether you believe this or not. If not, ask God to help your unbelief.

Chapter 7: God Establishes Our Laws – The Constitution

1. We are a Constitutional Republic grounded in the inalienable rights given by God alone and declared in our Declaration of Independence. How does the Constitution show the brilliance of God in leading our founders to construct a governmental system that would protect our freedoms?
2. The Constitution defines how the government will function according to laws, not the whims of men. How does this reflect the teachings of the Bible?
3. The thinking underlying our Constitution is based on the understanding of the depravity of man. Why is this important? What role did this belief play in the establishment of our system of checks and balances which was designed to guard against tyranny?
4. Our Government consists of Three Branches reflecting the 3 roles of God – Isaiah 33:22: “The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, The Lord is our King.” Why is this important?

Pray. Ask God to protect our Constitutional Republic. In this precarious moment in America ask Him to place a burden on your heart to pray fervently for our nation.

Chapter 8: God Enshrines Our Individual Rights and Freedoms – The Bill of Rights

1. Our Bill of Rights provides for the rights and protections of individual citizens such as freedom of religion, speech and press. Why did our Founders put freedom of religion first? Why is it necessary for these three – and all of our rights – to be spelled out in this incredibly important document?
2. Our Bill of Rights guarantees due process of law for every citizen. Our rights are precious. How often do you stop and thank God for our rights in America – rights that people throughout the history of the world have longed for?
3. The Founders' understanding of separation of church and state is frequently misunderstood. What did our founders mean by the separation of church and state and what does that mean for every Christian in America?
4. Freedom must be defended in each generation. How seriously do you take your responsibility to defend our God-given freedoms and rights? What steps can you personally take to defend freedom?

Pray. Ask the Lord to impress upon your heart how rare and precious our rights are and ask Him how He would have you involved in defending them. Our right to preach the Gospel openly is at stake.

Chapter 9: God Rouses His People Again – The Second Great Awakening

1. How did God moved differently in the Second Great Awakening versus the First Great Awakening? Consider the Cain Ridge Revival 1801, the Western Circuit Riders, the Haystack Prayer Meeting of 1806 and the Missions Movement. How did the purposes of God seem to differ as related to what He brought forth in the nation as a result of these awakenings?
2. Charles Finney began preaching in rural New York in 1821. Like Whitefield he had an encounter with God that changed the course of his life. How are your encounters with God impacting your life today?
3. Jeremiah Lanphier, an ordinary person, was used by God to spark the 1857 Revival of Prayer which spread across the nation and ushered nearly a million souls into the Kingdom. He said yes to God. What are some examples in your life where you have said yes to God?
4. John Quincy Adams, the last Puritan as some call him, astonishingly knew both Washington and Lincoln and was used to keep the cause of freedom alive. Who is God using now to keep the cause of freedom alive in America?
5. God is incredibly faithful. How is His faithfulness evident in your life? In our nation?

Pray. Ask the Lord to work in Americans to draw us – you – back to Himself when we depart from an intimate relationship with Him. Ask Him to show where your heart is hard toward Him. What areas of your life need to be surrendered to Him in a fresh way?

Chapter 10: Freedom for All – The Emancipation Proclamation

1. Slavery was a heinous national sin that twice almost fractured the Union; and yet God, while not condoning the sin, moved to bring forth freedom in both instances. What are some other examples of God working in the midst of the often messy and imperfect affairs of men? How do we see God's hand even in the midst of our turbulent times?
2. Just as slavery was a national sin – a sin embedded for a time in our laws as well as our customs. What are some national sins that must be dealt with in our day?
3. There were several heroes of the abolitionist movement including but not limited to Frederick Douglass, the Tappan Brothers, Harriett Beecher Stowe, and ultimately Abraham Lincoln. Who do you see as fighting against sin in our nation?
4. Lincoln, like Washington, called for days of prayer and fasting. What is the significance of calling a nation to come together and pray?
5. The 13th Amendment abolished slavery, 14th Amendment guaranteed citizenship and equal protection under the law to former slaves, and the 15th Amendment gave voting rights to African American men. Prayer produced action. How is the church in America calling its people to action today? Are their efforts adequate?

Pray. Ask the Lord to reveal sin not only in our nation but in your own life. It is an incredibly positive thing that God gives us the opportunity to repent. What actions can you take to demonstrate that repentance?

Chapter 11: American Exceptionalism and Prosperity

1. Deuteronomy 28 outlines the Blessings of Obedience and Curses of Disobedience. List some of the blessings that America has experienced as a result of the obedience of our forefathers. Where are we suffering from the consequences of disobedience? How do both of these connect with what is written in Deuteronomy 28? Ask the same questions of your own life.
2. Private Property and Free Enterprise part of our heritage. How have these two facets of American life contributed to our exceptionalism and prosperity?
3. God's ways work for the benefit of people – our values and system of government provided the foundation for many types of success. How has our system of government provided opportunities that people in other nations have not enjoyed?

Pray. Genesis 39:2 and Joshua 1:8 demonstrate that God brings success to His faithful servants. Ask the Lord to show you what He is calling you to do and ask for His blessing. He blesses His work, done in obedience to His Word with a pure heart.

Chapter 12: Looking Forward as We Celebrate 250 Years

1. America stands at a crossroads. What are some future scenarios of America if we don't turn back to God? What do possible scenarios look like if we do turn back to Him?
2. God's plans for us – personally – are inextricably linked to this moment of time. How do you see your role in the kingdom and in America being linked to this moment?
3. As you reflect on our nation's past, which mighty acts of God in our nation impact you the most? Why?
4. The Word says: "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14. What does that verse entail for us in America today?
5. We should be incredibly proud of our Christian heritage. God worked through His people to bring about a nation whose freedoms and opportunities are unique in world history. That suggests that He will work through His people to preserve the nation into the future. How are you sensing that you fit into God's plan?

Pray. As you pray, recommit your life and our nation to God. As did our forefathers, we must look to God, obey Him and cry out to Him to move again in great and reforming ways to preserve our nation!