

This Week's Small Group Guide

Cornerstone Chapel | May 17, 2026

Sermon Title	America's Christian Heritage
Speaker	Pastor Gary Hamrick
Primary Passage	PSALM 33

Sermon Big Idea

God has blessed America with freedom, but true freedom depends on God's mercy, God's Word, and Christians living as salt and light so that others may know the greater freedom found in Jesus Christ.

Opening Question

When you think about the freedoms you enjoy, what is one freedom you are especially thankful for?

Read Together

Psalm 33:12–22

Sermon Recap

- A nation “under God” depends on people governed by God. The sermon connected America's self-government to the need for God's moral standard and His Word.
- Freedom and faith go hand in hand. Religious freedom must be protected, and Christians should not take it for granted.
- Christian faith has deeply shaped America's founding and its corrections. The pastor pointed to America's founding principles, while also honestly naming sins like slavery that needed to be confronted and corrected.
- The church's mission is not conformity but transformation. The world says, “be conformed,” but the church carries the message that lives can be transformed by the person and power of Jesus Christ.
- Gospel turn / final burden: Christians are the hope of America only because they know the hope of Jesus. We are called to keep “the light of Jesus” and “the lamp of religious freedom” shining brightly, not with pride or pressure, but so others may know freedom from sin, shame, and death in Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Observe: What phrase, image, or Scripture from the sermon stood out to you most? Why?
2. Understand: What did the sermon show us about why freedom cannot be separated from God, His mercy, and His Word?
3. Reflect: The pastor said the world's mission is "be conformed," while the church's mission is transformation through Jesus. Where do you feel that tension most in ordinary life?
4. Apply: What is one way God may be calling you this week to live as "salt and light" with courage, humility, and love?
5. Hope: How does Jesus free us not only to protect religious liberty, but to know deeper freedom from sin, shame, and death?

Leader Notes

- Emphasize: The main burden is not political pride, but grateful, courageous, humble Christian witness. The sermon calls believers to rededicate themselves to God, pray for mercy, and live publicly as light in a dark world.
- Avoid: Turning the discussion into partisan debate, national superiority, or pressure-heavy activism. Also avoid speaking as if America itself is the gospel or as if political freedom is the same as salvation.
- Guide toward: Gospel-shaped application: because Jesus has set us free, we can pray, repent, give thanks, protect religious liberty, and make Christ known with courage and humility.

Prayer Prompts

- Pray with gratitude for the freedoms to worship, gather, and live openly for Jesus.
- Pray for humility, repentance, and another awakening that begins with God's people.
- Pray for courage to be salt and light so others may know the freedom found in Jesus Christ.

This Week's Practice

Each day this week, pray one short prayer for America, one short prayer for your church, and one short prayer for someone who needs to know the freedom of Jesus Christ.