



OK, how do I do this? This is supposed to be the July 4 week a time for waving the flag and celebrating patriotism. On Saturday, we're having activities in the park, as we have done for years. On Monday, July 4 itself, our Chamber of Commerce will have the normal July 4 parade (but no fireworks. Rats.). This is supposed to be a happy occasion, the height of summer fun.

So how do I feel happy and wanting to celebrate this great country, when it isn't very great anymore? Do we just go through the motions of happy, happy, happy, while the substance of the holiday has long ago rotted away? We are like a fallen log, lying on the forest floor, with its insides eaten out by weather and by critters. It still looks like a log, but inside, it's just old rotted wood.

My confessions: I have a hard time saying the Pledge of Allegiance anymore. Here's the way it's written:



Even my dad would mutter softly under his breath, "That's the theory." That was 9 years ago, before we fell off the cliff. Now I just close my mouth, unable to say the empty words, or sometimes even edit the words out loud:

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the un-United States of America, and to the republic for which it stood, one nation, UNDER GOD at one time, with liberty and justice for the Ruling Class but not for us."

Should I hold out hope that we Americans will get through this "bad patch" and restore the "liberty and justice for all" that formed the foundation on which our nation was built, and then recite the Pledge accordingly? Or do I recite it as edited because that reflects what I see happening in this country?

Honestly, folks, I don't see us turning around any time soon. Wayne Allyn Root wrote this about our situation:

But I have bad news for America. We aren't going to make it to 2024 [Presidential elections]. America is hanging by a thread. America and the US economy are being destroyed so fast, I'm not even sure we can make it to the November midterms. . . .

GDP (economic growth) is collapsing. Interest rates are rising. Inflation is exploding.

Home sales are cratering.

The stock market has just suffered the worst few months since the 1929 stock market crash- which of course led to The Great Depression.

Gas is headed for shortages, gas lines and \$10 per gallon.

Grocery prices are exploding to unimaginable levels. The supply chain is ruined. Massive food shortages are coming. Baby formula shortages are getting worse. . . .

It's only going to get much worse this summer. Energy experts are promising mass blackouts of the electric grid across America this summer.

Then there's the massive crime and theft wave enveloping America's Democrat run big cities. Under Joe Biden and his Marxist handlers. . . .

America has become a "third world craphole."

Don't forget open borders. Biden is desperate to open the floodgates and allow the whole world in. . . .

Let's not forget Democrats want to take our guns away. . . .

Forced experimental vaccines also remind me of the Nazi regime. And just in time for the midterm elections, I predict we'll see attempts to bring back lockdowns, vaccine mandates and vaccine passports. What a perfect time for crisis!

Add in censorship, banning, intimidation and persecution of conservatives, patriots and even parents at PTA meetings. . . . Then there's the education system trying to brainwash and indoctrinate our children with communist, anti-American, anti-white, transgender and sex identity ideology.

And don't forget Biden's provoking Putin again and again- daring him to start World War 3. Does Biden want to provoke a nuclear Armageddon, or EMP attack to turn America into "Mad Max?" Is this all about selling out the USA to China?

This is a total decline, destruction and collapse of America- happening at a speed none of us has ever seen.

Wow. Makes you want to weep, doesn't it? I love the American flag, and I love what God gave us when He inspired our Founding Fathers to create this once great nation. I even feel guilty that I have been placed here for my life rather than anywhere else in the world!

So do we fight to restore what we had, and to fix all of the problems? Are they fixable? I for one think not. There are dozens of signs that things of this world are wrapping up, and this is the end. Sounds radical, doesn't it, as in "Have you lost your mind, Linda?"

Here are words of hope and promise from 2 Peter 3:

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, . . . according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Linda Gammel

LUCERNE VALLEY COMMUNITY INDEPENDENCE DAY CARNIVAL

SATURDAY, JULY 2ND
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
PIONEER PARK
LUCERNE VALLEY, CA



JULY 4TH PARADE
MONDAY, 9:00 A.M.

GAMES, VENDORS,
FOOD, MUSIC,
INFO BOOTHS,
AND MUCH MORE!

HOSTED BY THE LUCERNE VALLEY ROADRUNNERS

Back to the Garden

Ray Bentley Ministries



FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS
We honor Pastor Ray's life by continuing to share the daily devotions he prepared for you, his precious readers.

"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered."—John 18:1

Human history began in a garden, a place rich, full of life and all that God intended for us.

Then Adam and Eve committed the first sin. The first Adam disobeyed God and was banished from the garden, bringing the curse of death upon humanity. The "last Adam," Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:45), obeyed by entering a garden and surrendering to God's will, restoring life to humanity. The garden referred to is on the Mt. of Olives, where Jesus often went to pray, rest, and meditate (Luke 22:39).

Our souls long to return to the Garden where God created us. He gave us a love for His creation and a desire to be restored by its beauty.

The song complains, they paved paradise and put up a parking lot,¹ and we respond with a token of greenery. Anything growing and alive that helps meet a deep need to live among the plants, vines, flowers, and seeds that push their way through the earth in the cycle of rebirth.



We need the whisper of wind in the trees, the softness of grass underfoot. Even in the most arid locations, we water and work to plant gardens, in all

sizes and forms, from parks in the heart of a city to window boxes perched on skyscrapers, to postage stamp gardens, vegetable patches, and suburban lawns.

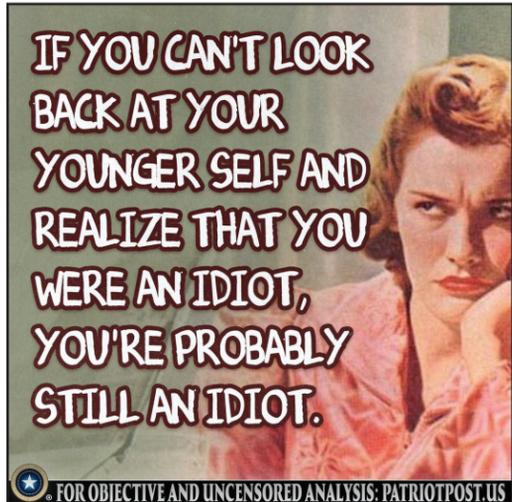
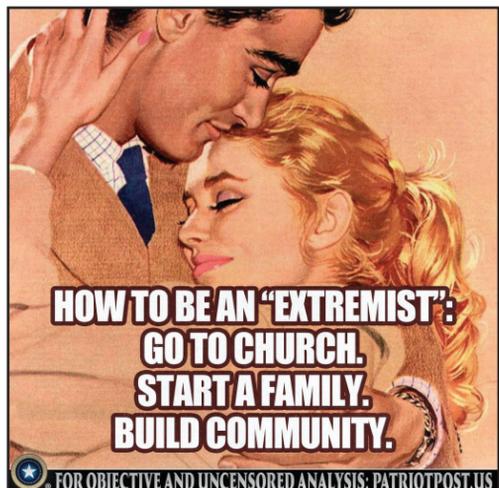
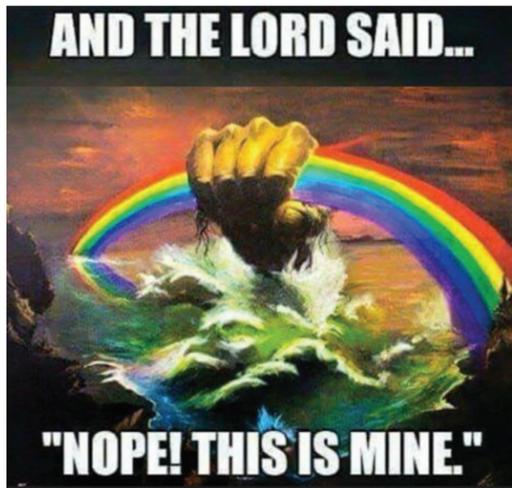
We toil to regain paradise. Even if we don't plant, tendrils of green will force their way through the cement cracks, determined to remind us.

The actual meaning of paradise is "enclosed garden," and we desperately want to somehow, somehow to return to the Garden.

Jesus gave His life so that we can once again walk in the cool of the evening with our Creator, as Adam and Eve once did. So we can return to the garden, at peace, and be restored to fellowship with our Creator, who loves us.

1. Joni Mitchell, Big Yellow Taxi, © Siquomb Publishing Company, 1970

On The Lighter Side . . . Contributed from the Web



4th of July Cookout Story

We were having a family cook-out and just before they were to arrive, a cousin calls, saying their neighbor's plans had just fallen through, and could they bring them along to the picnic — they even had extra food to bring. "Sure, the more the merrier!"

Upon arrival and meeting of their cousin's neighbor, it is discovered that he's a police officer. The father turns as innocently as he can to Jim, and whispers to him to grab the paper bag of fireworks sitting in the kitchen and hide them somewhere quickly. Jim disappears, and the father changes the topic to food for the day. This family had brought some chicken to grill, so the father tells them the gas grill is out back — just turn on the gas and push the ignition button with the lid still closed.

They head out to the back as Jim comes back in through the front door. The father hurries to him and says "Whew, that was close! That man's a police officer, and he almost saw the fireworks. Did you hide them real well?"

"Oh, yeah, nobody will ever think to look in the grill!"

