

Lincoln's Wisdom

Today is Presidents' Day, and many are observing it as a legal holiday. Its original version was in commemoration of George Washington's birthday in 1796, the last full year of his presidency. According to the calendar in use since at least the mid-18th century, Washington was born on February 22, 1732. Later, along came Abraham Lincoln, another revered president and fellow February baby (born on the 12th of the month). The first formal observance of his birthday took place in 1865, the year after his assassination. In 1968, legislation was enacted to make the third Monday in February a day for honoring both Washington and Lincoln, as well as all the other men who have served in the nation's highest office.

There is something about Lincoln's actions and thoughts that draws us to him. His wisdom lives on. Consider what he had to say on these subjects:

- **On integrity** – “I do the very best I know how; the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing it to the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out all wrong, then a legion of angels swearing I was right will make no difference.”
- **On the Bible** – “It seems to me nothing short of infinite wisdom could by any possibility have devised and given to man this excellent and perfect moral code. It is suited to man in all conditions of life, and includes all the duties they owe to their Creator, to themselves and to their fellow man.”
- **On God's will** – Some time in the early part of the War Between the States, a clergyman said in Lincoln's presence that he hoped “the Lord was on our side.” Lincoln replied: “I am not at all concerned about that. For I know that the Lord is always on the side of right, but it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side.”

And that, dear friends, should be our concern – our prayer for our nation and its presidents – in 2006 and beyond.

--Beecher Hunter