

The Wisdom of Lincoln

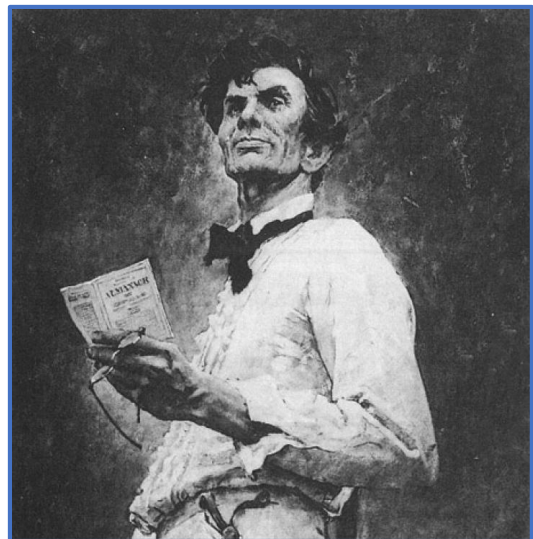
Today is Presidents' Day, and many are observing it as a legal holiday. Its original version was in commemoration of George Washington's birthday in 1796, the last full year of his presidency.

According to the calendar in use since at least the mid-18th century, Washington was born on Feb. 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. On this Presidents' Day, what can we learn from him? 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 the Constitution** – “Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained, for it is the only safeguard of our liberties. And not to Democrats alone do I make this appeal, but to all who love these great and true principles.”
- **On the law** – “Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief – resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer.”



(more)

- **On work** – “I don’t believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. So while we do not propose any war upon capital, we do wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else.”
- **On God’s will** – Sometime 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.”
- **On the providence of God** – “Nevertheless, amid the greatest difficulties of my administration, when I could not see any other resort, I would place my whole reliance on God, knowing that all would go well, and that He would decide for the right.”

Good advice – on all fronts – from one of our greatest presidents.

On this Presidents’ Day, we should pray for our presidents present and past, and as Lincoln stated: “with constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord’s side.”

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God (Romans 13:1 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter