



MONDAYS

with Mike

Independence Day

~ A History Lesson and a Reflection

Independence Day, or the 4th of July as many refer to it, is a holiday that has settled into a mid-summer milestone, nestled between Memorial Day and Labor Day. It is easy to plan and party right through it, enjoying cookouts, summer weather and getting together with family and friends.

This year, perhaps more than ever, we should not hurry through this holiday. Independence Day was a monumental and courageous act by leaders who risked everything because of their value of a principle. That principle was stated in the opening line of the Declaration of Independence:

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.

56 delegates signed their names (along with family, livelihood, and their own lives) to this document during the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia in support of separating from Great Britain. The authors, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and Robert Livingston led a movement to change a way of life. Sound familiar?

Here are two quotes that will lead us from history to reflection:

Our country is not the only thing to which we owe our allegiance. It is also owed to justice and humanity. Patriotism consists not in waving the flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous as well as strong.
- James Bryce

The American, by nature, is optimistic. He is experimental, an inventor, and a builder who builds best when called upon to build greatly.
- John F. Kennedy

This year, let's build greatly the tenants of justice for all humanity and wave that flag. Our forefathers would be very proud of us if we do!

Enjoy your holiday – and the opportunity to build greatly!

