Faith and Freedom: The Christian Roots of America's Founding

1. Icebreaker

- *Discussion:* Thinking back over your life, how has your perspective on the 4th of July changed from when you were a boy to now?

2. The Historical Foundation

- **The Great Awakening (1730s–1740s):** Decades before the Revolution, this spiritual revival swept the colonies. Preachers emphasized that all people are equal before God and personally accountable to Him, laying the cultural groundwork for the belief that rights come from God, not the government.
- **The Declaration of Independence:** Our founding document explicitly grounds human rights in the divine: *"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..."*
- **The Founders on Religion and Morality:** The Founders agreed that a free republic requires a moral citizenry.
    - *George Washington (1796):* "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."
    - *John Adams (1798):* "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."
- *Discussion:* Why do you think the Founders believed that a free society *must* be a religious and moral society? How does the idea that our rights come from a "Creator" change the way we view our freedom?

3. Scriptural Anchor

Proverbs 14:34
"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Galatians 5:13
"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

- *Discussion:* According to Proverbs, what truly makes a nation great? What does "righteousness" look like in the public square today?
- *Discussion:* Paul warns that freedom can be abused. How can we, as Christian men, use our freedom to "serve one another" in our local community?

4. Application: The Christian Citizen

1 Timothy 2:1-2
"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."

- **Action Step:** We are commanded to pray for our leaders and live dignified, godly lives. Your challenge this week is to intentionally pray for local, state, and national leaders every day, regardless of political affiliation, asking God to grant them wisdom and to bring peace to the nation.

Notes: