



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

America's Founders

It is good to know the men and women who helped build our nation.

FOR THE PARENT OR GRANDPARENT

This chapter is about people rather than a document. Let the child choose one Founder or Founding Mother to get to know well; the family activity at the end of the chapter builds on that choice.

The Sword, the Pen and the Trumpet

It is said of the bullet proof George Washington, who was “first in war, first in peace, and first in the heart of his countrymen” that he was the sword of the Revolutionary War. Thomas Jefferson was the Pen and Patrick Henry was the Trumpet.



THE SWORD

George Washington

1732–1799



THE PEN

Thomas Jefferson

1743–1826



THE TRUMPET

Patrick Henry

1736–1799

BIBLE VERSE

“Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, you who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.”

Isaiah 51:1, 2



John Adams

1735–1826

He wrote these words in a letter to his wife, Abigail, in 1777.

John Adams declared,

“Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it.”



Why should we study the Founders?

Every family has a history. Every church has a history. Every nation has a history. When we learn about the men and women who founded America, we discover how our nation began, the sacrifices they made, and the principles they believed were worth defending.

The Founders were not perfect. They sinned like us, argued with one another, and sometimes failed to live up to their own ideals. Yet God used their talents, courage, knowledge, and perseverance to establish a Constitutional Republic unlike any the world had ever seen.

Studying the Founders helps us appreciate the blessings of liberty and understand the responsibilities that come with freedom.



Who were the Founders?

The Founding Fathers were the leaders who guided America through the Revolutionary War and helped establish the United States. Some signed the Declaration of Independence, others helped write the Constitution, and many served in the nation's first government.

The Founding Mothers also played an important role. They encouraged patriotism, supported soldiers, wrote influential books and letters, managed homes and businesses during the war, and helped shape the character of the new nation. Together, they showed that building a free country required the efforts of many people.



What did they believe?

Although they came from different colonies, occupations, and Christian denominations, many of the Founders agreed on several important ideas:

- ◆ Our rights come from God, not government.
- ◆ Government should exist to protect liberty and justice.
- ◆ No one is above the law.
- ◆ Power should be divided and limited.
- ◆ Citizens should govern themselves with virtue and responsibility.
- ◆ Freedom requires education, morality, and faithfulness.

These ideas are reflected throughout the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.



The Character of a Citizen-Statesman

Most of the Founders were not lifelong politicians.

They were:

- ◆ Farmers
- ◆ Merchants
- ◆ Lawyers
- ◆ Printers
- ◆ Ministers
- ◆ Doctors
- ◆ Soldiers
- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Inventors

When their country needed them, they left their farms, shops, and businesses to serve. When their work was finished, many returned home.

They believed that public office was a temporary duty, not a lifelong career. George Washington set the greatest example by voluntarily stepping down after two terms as President, proving that in America, the people rule through the Constitution—not through one powerful leader.



Bible Connection

The Bible teaches that leadership is a calling to serve others.

Jesus taught, “And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave” (Matthew 20:27).

The Apostle Peter also instructed leaders, “Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3).

The best leaders lead with humility, honesty, courage, and with a heart for service.



Constitution Fun Facts

1

Fifty-five delegates attended the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787.

2

Thirty-nine delegates signed the Constitution on September 17, 1787.

3

Benjamin Franklin was 81 years old, the oldest delegate.

4

James Madison kept detailed notes that help us understand what happened during the Constitutional Convention.

5

The Constitution begins with just three unforgettable words: **"We the People."**

MEMORY VERSE

"Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

Proverbs 14:34



Chapter Review

- 1 It is said George Washington was the _____ of the Revolutionary War.
- 2 Thomas Jefferson was the _____.
- 3 Patrick Henry was the _____.
- 4 John _____ wrote, “Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your Freedom!”
- 5 The Founding _____ encouraged patriotism, supported soldiers, and managed homes and businesses during the war.
- 6 When their country needed them, the Founders left their farms, shops, and businesses to _____.
- 7 George Washington voluntarily stepped down after two _____ as President.
- 8 Benjamin _____ was 81 years old, the oldest delegate.
- 9 James _____ kept detailed notes of the Constitutional Convention.
- 10 The Constitution begins with three words: “We the _____.”

AMERICA'S FOUNDERS

You finished Chapter Sixteen! You have met the sword, the pen and the trumpet — and the many ordinary men and women who stood beside them.

America's Founders Word Search

Words run across, down, and diagonally — forwards and backwards. Circle each one as you find it.

N D J J V J C P U S F O R L
Y E L W Z E Q Z Y R M T N S
Z N O Z V I R T U E E T L M
P E F I N G M E Q D Z V E A
S R W W J E F P X N T D A D
W H Z R F S P M M U W S F A
O T U E H M F U A O S M O V
R S W V Z O R R D F P R F S
D Q Z R Y T A T I V D E H P
S G L E K H N Y S T M T E M
K P E S J E K M O C S O N R
Q F Q I T R L Q N H P M W X
T T O F Q S I R W L X Q O H
H P F M K J N U E C S P B I

WORD BANK

- ◆ Sword
- ◆ Adams
- ◆ Terms
- ◆ People
- ◆ Pen
- ◆ Mothers
- ◆ Franklin
- ◆ Founders
- ◆ Trumpet
- ◆ Serve
- ◆ Madison
- ◆ Virtue



Two of these words, in rust, are not answers to anything. They name who this chapter is about, and what they hoped we would keep.

Family Discussion

Talk these through together before you write. There is no hurry.

1 • Why is it important to study the lives of the Founders?

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2 • Which Founder's character trait would you most like to imitate? Why?

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3 • Why did many Founders return to their farms and businesses after serving their country?

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4 • What does it mean to be a servant leader?

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5 • How can our family help strengthen our community and nation?

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FOR THE PARENT OR GRANDPARENT

Question four is the heart of the chapter. If the child needs an example, Washington going home after two terms is the one to reach for.

Studying a Founder

1

As a family do a unit study on different Founding Fathers and Mothers.

2

Learn something about their lives.

3

Try to discover some character traits you would like to adopt in your life, virtues like courage, wisdom, humility and such.

4

Then discuss how each virtue can be practiced in your home, church, or neighborhood.



A Grandparent's Thought

America was not built by perfect people. The Constitution is not a perfect document in a Fallen world. It could be improved.

It was built by men and women who believed that liberty was a gift worth protecting and that self-government required courage, wisdom, and virtue.

The Founders understood that the Constitution could provide a framework for freedom, but only a people with good character forged by the Bible could preserve it.

God desires people to love justice, walk humbly, keep their promises, and serve others faithfully.

As you grow, remember that you do not have to become famous to make a difference. Every honest worker, faithful parent, caring neighbor, dedicated first responder, courageous soldier, and servant-hearted citizen can help strengthen our nation.

The Founders gave us a Constitutional Republic. It is now the responsibility of each generation to preserve it with wisdom, integrity, faith, and love for both God and neighbor.

