

George Washington's Farewell Address

September 17, 1796

Friends, and Fellow-Citizens:

(1) The period for a new election of a Citizen, to *Administer* the *Executive* government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in *designating* the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may *conduce* to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now *apprise* you of the *resolution* I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

(2) I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations *appertaining* to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country, and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no *diminution* of *zeal* for your future interest, no *deficiency* of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full *conviction* that the step is *compatible* with both.

(3) The acceptance of, and continuance *hitherto* in the office to which your *Suffrages* have twice called me have been a uniform sacrifice of *inclination* to the opinion of duty, and to a *deference* for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I am not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I have been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last Election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our Affairs with foreign Nations, and the *unanimous* advice of persons entitled to my confidence, *impelled* me to *abandon* the idea.

(4) I rejoice that the state of your concerns, *external* as well as *internal*, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or *propriety*, and am persuaded whatever *partiality* may be *retained* for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

(5) The impressions with which I first undertook the *arduous* trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed toward the Organization and Administration of the government the best *exertions* of which a very *fallible* judgment was capable. Not unconscious in the outset of the *inferiority* of my *qualifications*, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to *diffidence* of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years *admonishes* me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services they were temporary, I have the *consolation* to believe that, while choice and *prudence* invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

(6) In looking forward to the moment which is intended to *terminate* the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honors it has *conferred* upon me; still more for the *steadfast* confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of *manifesting* my *inviolable* attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our *annals* that under circumstances in which the Passions, *agitated* in every direction, were liable to mislead; amidst appearances sometimes *dubious*; *vicissitudes* of fortune often discouraging; in situations in which not unfrequently want of Success has *countenanced* the spirit of criticism, the *constancy* of your support was the essential prop of the efforts and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its *beneficence*; the free Constitution which is the work of your hands may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the *auspices* of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

(7) Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a *solicitude* for your *welfare*, which cannot end but with my life, and the *apprehension* of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present to offer to your solemn *contemplation*, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your *felicity* as a People. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to *bias* his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your *indulgent* reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

(8) *Interwoven* as is the love of liberty with every *ligament* of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to *fortify* or confirm the attachment.

(9) The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the *edifice* of your real independence, the support of your *tranquility* at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many *artifices* employed, to weaken in your minds the *conviction* of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often *covertly* and *insidiously*) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as the *palladium* of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to *alienate* any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

(10) For this you have every *inducement* of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any *appellation* derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

11) But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

(12) The North, in an *unrestrained intercourse* with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of *maritime* and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation *invigorated*; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds and, in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the union, directed by an *indissoluble* community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength or from an *apostate* and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be *intrinsically precarious*.

(13) While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an *exemption* from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government --which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which under any form of government are *inauspicious* to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty: in this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

(14) These considerations speak a *persuasive* language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the *auxiliary* agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

(15) In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical *discriminations*--northern and southern, Atlantic, and western -- whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the *expedients* of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by *fraternal* affection. The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the Executive and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate of the treaty with *Spain*, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the *United States*, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions *propagated* among them of a policy in the General Government and in the *Atlantic States* unfriendly to their interests in regard to the *Mississippi*; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties--that with *Great Britain* and that with *Spain*--which secure to them everything that they could desire in respect to our foreign relations toward confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

(16) To the *efficacy* and permanency of your union a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the *infractions* and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a Constitution of Government better calculated than your former for an intimate union and for the *efficacious* management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, *acquiescence* in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people is sacredly *obligatory* upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

(17) All *obstructions* to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever *plausible* character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the

alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and *incongruous* projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests.

(18) However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become *potent* engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to *usurp* for themselves the reins of government--destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

(19) Toward the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is *requisite* not only that you steadily discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of *innovation* upon its principles, however *specious* the pretext. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially that for the efficient management of your common interests in a country so extensive as ours a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprise of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

(20) I have already *intimated* to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular references to the founding of them on geographical discrimination. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the *baneful* effects of the spirit of party generally.

(21) This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or *repressed*; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

(22) The alternate *domination* of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party *dissension*, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful *despotism*. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and *repose* in the absolute power of an individual; and, sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this *disposition* to the purpose of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

(23) Without looking forward to an *extremity* of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

(24) It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; *foments* occasional riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

(25) There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every *salutary* purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to *mitigate* and *assuage* it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent it bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming, it should *consume*.

(26) It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department, to *encroach* upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to *consolidate* the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and *proneness* to abuse it, which *predominate* in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of *reciprocal* checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different *depositories*, and constituting each the guardian of the public *weal* against invasion of the others, has been *evinced* by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or *modification* of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an *amendment* in the way which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The *precedent* must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or *transient* benefit which the use can at any time *yield*.

(27) Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are *indispensable* supports. In vain would that man claim the *tribute* of patriotism, who should labor to *subvert* these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public *felicity*. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the *supposition* that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be *conceded* to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in *exclusion* of religious principle.

(28) It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every *species* of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

(29) Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general *diffusion* of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

(30) As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by *cultivating* peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater *disbursements* to repel it; avoiding likewise the *accumulation* of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts, which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon *posterity* the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the *intrinsic* embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties), ought to be a decisive *motive* for a *candid* construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue, which the public *exigencies* may at any time dictate.

(31) Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality *enjoin* this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the *magnanimous* and too *novel* example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt but, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it; can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas ! is it rendered impossible by its *vices*?

(32) In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, *inveterate antipathies* against particular nations and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and *amicable* feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of *umbrage*, and to be haughty and *intractable* when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence, frequent collisions, *obstinate, envenomed*, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national *propensity*, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the *animosity* of the nation *subservient* to projects of hostility, *instigated* by pride, ambition, and other *sinister* and *pernicious* motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty of nations, has been the victim.

(33) So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the *illusion* of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate *inducements* or justifications. It leads also to *concessions*, to the favorite nation, of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessary parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to *retaliate* in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted or deluded citizens who devote themselves to the favorite nation, facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without *odium*, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a *laudable* zeal for public good, the base or foolish *compliances* of ambition, corruption, or *infatuation*.

(34) As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to *tamper* with domestic factions, to practice the arts of *seduction*, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the *satellite* of the latter.

(35) Against the *insidious wiles* of foreign influence (I *conjure* you to believe me fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be *impartial*, else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike for another, cause those whom they *actuate* to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the *intrigues* of the favorite, are *liable* to become suspected and odious; while its tools and *dupes* usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interest.

(36) The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our *commercial* relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith:--Here let us stop.

(37) *Europe* has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very *remote* relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent *controversies*, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to *implicate* ourselves, by *artificial* ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collusions of her friendships or enmities.

(38) Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to *pursue* a different course. If we remain one people, under an *efficient* Government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be *scrupulously* respected; when *belligerent* nations, under the impossibility of making *acquisitions* upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us *provocation*, when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

(39) Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or *caprice*?

(40) It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of *patronizing infidelity* to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary, and would be unwise to extend them.

(41) Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments, on a respectable defense posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

(42) Harmony, and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting *exclusive* favors or *preferences*; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the Government to support them, *conventional* rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given *equivalents* for *nominal* favors, and yet of being *reproached* with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

(43) In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations, but if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the misciefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the *impostures* of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full *recompense* for the *solicitude* for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

(44) How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been *delineated*, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

(45) In relation to the still *subsisting* war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April 1793, is the index to my Plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or *divert* me from it.

(46) After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

(47) The considerations, which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

(48) The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain *inviolable* the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

(49) The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a *predominant* motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

(50) Though in reviewing the *incidents* of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to *avert* or *mitigate* the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of *incompetent* abilities will be *consigned* to *oblivion*, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

(51) Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and *actuated* by that *fervent* love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his *progenitors* for several generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat in which I promise myself to realize without *alloy*, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the *benign* influence of good laws under a free government--the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

Vocabulary

Either verbally or in written form, briefly, in one or two words, tell the meaning of ...

Administer, Executive, designating, conduce, apprise, resolution, appertaining, diminution, zeal, deficiency, conviction, compatible, hitherto, Suffrages, inclination, deference, unanimous, impelled, abandon, external, internal, propriety, partiality, retained, arduous, exertions, fallible, inferiority, qualifications, diffidence, admonishes, consolation, prudence, terminate, conferred, steadfast, manifesting, inviolable, annals, agitated, dubious, vicissitudes, countenanced, constancy, beneficence, auspices, solicitude, welfare, apprehension, contemplation, felicity, bias, indulgent, Interwoven, ligament, fortify, edifice, tranquility, artifices, conviction, covertly, insidiously, palladium, alienate, inducement, appellation, unrestrained, intercourse, maritime, invigorated, indissoluble, apostate, intrinsically, precarious, exemption, inauspicious, persuasive, auxiliary, discriminations, expedients, fraternal, propagated, efficacy, infractions, efficacious, acquiescence, obligatory, obstructions, plausible, incongruous, potent, usurp, requisite, innovation, specious, intimated, baneful, repressed, domination, dissension, despotism, repose, disposition, extremity, foments, salutary, mitigate, assuage, consume, encroach, consolidate, encroach, consolidate, proneness, predominate, reciprocal, depositories, weal, evinced, modification, amendment, precedent, transient, yield, indispensable, tribute, subvert, supposition, conceded, exclusion, species, diffusion, cultivating, disbursements, accumulation, posterity, intrinsic, motive, candid, enjoin, magnanimous, novel, vices, inveterate, antipathies, umbrage, intractable, obstinate, envenomed, propensity, animosity, subservient, instigated, sinister, pernicious, illusion, inducements, concessions, retaliate, odium, laudable, compliances, infatuation, tamper, seduction, satellite, insidious, wiles, conjure, impartial, actuate, intrigues, liable, dupes, commercial, remote, controversies, implicate, artificial, pursue, efficient, scrupulously, belligerent, acquisitions, provocation, caprice, patronizing, infidelity, exclusive, preferences, conventional, equivalents, nominal, reproached, impostures, recompense, solicitude, delineated, subsisting, divert, inviolate, predominant, incidents, avert, mitigate, incompetent, consigned, oblivion, actuated, fervent, progenitors, alloy, benign

Ideas for vocabulary words:

Make flashcards and use for ...

- a) learning terms
- b) to practice alphabetizing
- c) use some for spelling tests

Geography

- (1) Locate the following places on a map, an atlas, and on the globe.
- (2) Select one or two places below and compare / contrast the weather there with your own for one week.
- (3) Make a meal from one or two of the places below and have it accompanied by the music associated with this geographical area.

Spain, Atlantic States, Mississippi, Great Britain, Europe

Comprehension Questions

When was this speech given? To whom is this speech addressed? (i.e., what does the salutation say?)

Paragraph 1. Why is George Washington making this speech? What is about to happen?

Paragraph 2. What is George Washington assuring the listener and or reader of?

Paragraph 3. What was George Washington compelled to give up? Why? Compare Washington's sense of duty to what the Bible says about duty.

Paragraph 4. Why does Washington hold he can retire at this time?

Paragraph 5. What has Washington given? How does he hold his abilities? What does not forbid his decision at this time?

Paragraph 6. What does Washington acknowledge? What does he ask of heaven?

Paragraph 7. What impels Washington to continue with his speech at this point? Do you agree with him? Why?

Paragraph 8. What is interwoven?

Paragraph 9. What does Washington tell you, an American citizen, to prize? What does he warn you of?

Paragraph 10. What should the name American cause you to remember?

Paragraph 11. What should be the motives of Americans?

Paragraph 12. In what ways do the North, South, East, and West compliment one another?

Paragraph 13. What problems does Washington see with foreign nations?

Paragraph 14. Who should be distrusted? Why? Do you agree?

Paragraph 15. What does Washington mean by geographical discriminations? How can this harm the nation?

Paragraph 16. What warnings does Washington give with respect to alliances? Explain and discuss: "The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government."

Paragraph 17. What problems does Washington associated with respect to "combinations and associations"?

Paragraph 18. "Combinations and associations" may be popular. According to Washington, they may lead to "unjust dominion." How could this happen?

Paragraph 19. What is meant by "the spirit of innovations"? How can "the spirit of innovations ... undermine what cannot be directly overthrown."?

Paragraph 20. What is Washington now about to do in this speech?

Paragraph 21. What, according to Washington, is "inseparable from our nature"? Do you agree? Give scriptural support for your stance.

Paragraph 22. What encourages despotism? What ruins liberty?

Paragraph 23. What should be restrained? Why?

Paragraph 24. What harm do "parties" or factions cause? Give current event examples. Do you agree with Washington? Why? Give scriptural support for your stance.

Paragraph 25. According to Washington, what is the "natural tendency" of parties? Look at party politics today. Have Washington's prediction proven true or false? Give examples.

Paragraph 26. Discuss the "spirit of encroachment." How can the civil government protect itself from such a spirit?

Paragraph 27. What are indispensable supports to political prosperity? Why?

Paragraph 28. What is the "spring of popular government"?

Paragraph 29. According to Washington, what should be promoted? It would seem that Washington connected "enlightenment" with religion and morality. Discuss.

Paragraph 30. Discuss how Washington viewed debt? taxes? Do you agree/disagree? Give scriptural support for your stance.

Paragraph 31. What does Washington recommend with respect to other nations? Why?

Paragraph 32. How may "habitual hatred" or "habitual fondness" impact a nation?

Paragraph 33. Why does Washington state that "a passionate attachment of one Nation" is an illusion?

Paragraph 34. What is a primary danger of foreign influence on domestic groups?

Paragraph 35. According to Washington, what may dupe the confidence of the people to surrender their interests? Why?

Paragraph 36. What should our connection with foreign nations extend to?

Paragraph 37. What does Washington have to say about Europe? Why?

Paragraph 38. How may the detached and distance from Europe protect the United States?

Paragraph 39. What questions does Washington pose? Why?

Paragraph 40. What should the United States steer clear of? What is the best policy?

Paragraph 41. What does Washington recommend?

Paragraph 42. What should a "just pride" discard? Why?

Paragraph 43. What does Washington say he hopes to accomplish?

Paragraph 44. What did Washington say he was guided by?

Paragraph 45. What is happening in Europe at this time?

Paragraph 46. What position did Washington take with respect to Europe's war?

Paragraph 47. What has been admitted by all?

Paragraph 48. What is to be held inviolate?

Paragraph 49. Why did Washington choose to take this course of action at that time?

Paragraph 50. Does Washington deny he made mistakes? How does he respond to his errors?

Paragraph 51. How does Washington conclude his speech?

Discussion

After reading this speech, what did you think about ...

(1) The vocabulary? Do you think a president, reporter, or someone running for office could use this high level of vocabulary today? Why? Why do you think people would not be able to comprehend these terms? Compare / contrast the type of education during Washington's day (i.e., homeschooling and private Christian schools) with government school education today.

(2) Overall, what do you think Washington's message to you and to the people of his day was? Do you think it was important or unimportant for Washington to make his position plain? Why?

(3) Give scriptural support for the overall messages that Washington was giving to the citizens of the country at that time. Do you think people today would be able to make the connection between the main points in Washington's speech and the Bible? Why?

(4) How do you think George Washington would respond to the United Nations? Why? What do you think about the United Nations? Give scriptural support for your stance.