

## RED PILLAR: PATRIOTISM

### CONVERSATION STARTERS from *The True Story of Lafayette*

(The principles refer to the 28 principles found in *The 5000 Year Leap*.)

(Front flap) *“To what did [Lafayette] sacrifice power, and rank and country and freedom itself? To the horror of licentiousness; to the sanctity of plighted faith, to the love of liberty protected by law.”*

Describe the result of “lawlessness” during the French Revolution. (See Chapter 10)

How do laws secure our liberty?

What makes a good law?

Is it possible to have too many laws?

Does freedom mean being able to do whatever we want?

Principle #1: The only reliable basis for sound government and just human relations is Natural Law.

Principle #9: To protect Man’s rights, God has revealed certain principles of Divine Law.

Principle #22: A free people should be governed by law and not by the whims of men.

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(p. 9) *“...if you try to make a horse do too many things perfectly the horse will grow restless and throw you,...in the days of the restless French Revolution [Lafayette] tried to train the people to be guided by his rein rather than their will and was “thrown” again and again.”*

What does this mean and how does it apply to a government that may enact too many laws for the “good” of the people?

Principle #19: Only limited and carefully defined powers should be delegated to government. All others being retained in the people.

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(p. 31) *“This was the last struggle of liberty; the defeat in America would have left it without refuge and without hope.”*

(p. 60) *“The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she is destined to become the safe and worthy asylum of virtue, integrity, tolerance, equality, and peaceful liberty.”*

Do you agree with this? What hope and what refuge have we given to the world?

Principle #28: The United States has a Manifest Destiny to be an example and a blessing to the entire human race.

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(p. 59) *“I bring my own free heart and my own good will; no ambition to fulfill and no selfish interest to serve.”*

What happens when we are ruled by men of selfish ambition?

(p. 208-218: *“Napoleon aimed to be the master and not the servant of France...”*)

What is the effect of one man of integrity on a people? (p. 238-245)

Principle #3: The most promising method of securing a virtuous and morally stable people is to elect virtuous leaders.

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(p. 260) *“Simplicity of manner, kindness of heart, love of country and of liberty, and a delightful state of equality, are met with universally. The richest and the poorest man are completely on a level; and although there are some immense fortunes in this country, I may challenge any one to point out the slightest difference in their respective manner towards each other... The American women are very pretty, and have great simplicity of character; and the extreme neatness of their appearance is truly delightful; cleanliness is everywhere... the citizens are all brethren of one family. In America there are none poor, and none even that can be called peasants. Each citizen has some property...”*

These are Lafayette’s first impressions of America. How do we compare today?

Principle #14: Life and liberty are secure only so long as the right to property is secure.

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(p. 89) *“Let us not talk of damages, let us talk of doing.”*

How can this advice move the cause of freedom forward today?

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(p. 175) *“...France was not America.”*

Lafayette tried to bring the gift of liberty to his own countrymen, which initially met with disastrous results. Why did the fight for liberty play out so differently in France than in America? How were the people of France different?

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(p. 184) *“The French people in the year 1789, like the runaway horse..., had taken the bit in their teeth; they broke free from all control, flung aside or trampled down those who would have restrained or guided them, and dashed away in a reckless and headlong gallop toward destruction, from which only a firm and masterful hand at last caught and saved them, the hand of Napoleon Bonaparte.”*

Under what conditions are a people willing to submit to a dictator? Is a dictator ever a good idea?

Principle #13: A Constitution should be structured to permanently protect the people from the human frailties of their rulers.

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(p. 243) “...America vowed never to forget [Lafayette].”

Did we keep our promise? Why is it so important for the “present and the past to touch hands”?

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(p. 244) “...Lafayette...an ardent lover of liberty.”

What price did he pay—what sacrifices did he make-- in his fight for liberty?

Principle #24: A free people will not survive unless they are strong.

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(p. 214) “During the thirty-four years of a union, in which the love and the elevation, the delicacy and the generosity of her soul charmed, adorned, and honored my days, I was so much accustomed to all that she was to me, that I did not distinguish her from my own existence. Her heart wedded all that interested me.”

What role did Lafayette’s family play in his fight for liberty?

How important are family members in helping us get through tough times?

Principle #26: The core unit which determines the strength of any society is the family; therefore, the government should foster and protect its integrity.

## WHITE PILLAR: CHARACTER

### EXAMPLES OF CHARACTER TRAITS WORTH EMULATING from *True Story of Lafayette*

**BRAVE:** Lafayette's daring escape attempt, (pp. 197-198)

**CHEERFUL:** "...the poor Frenchmen, sick, weary, and hungry, sleeping in the woods, and worn down by the hardships and hot weather, would have begun to doubt whether American liberty was really worth all it was costing them, had not Lafayette, hopeful and enthusiastic in spite of privations and misadventures, kept up their spirits, cheerfully shared all their trials..." (p. 83)

**DEVOTED FRIENDSHIP:** with General Washington, (p. 157)  
Lafayette's wife, (p. 191)  
other friends, (p. 206)

**DUTY-BOUND:** "...even in defeat and exile, his duty was to serve France, and what Lafayette believed to be his duty he did, unhesitatingly and devotedly." (p. 221)

**HUMBLE:** "I am here, your Excellency, to learn and not to teach." (p. 106)  
"...he was...the hero of the hour, Lafayette seems to have been a calm and level-headed young man, and did not permit all this overpraise and hero-worship to turn his head." (p. 161)

**INSPIRED:** "...as is wisest in all times of doubt and difficulty...they followed the light." (p. 69)

**INTEGRITY:** "Lafayette's chief characteristic, unflinching integrity and absolute loyalty to his convictions; it is what made good men great..." (p. 212)

**LOVING:** tribute from Lafayette to his wife, (p. 15, 214)

**PRINCIPLE-DRIVEN:** "If he believed a thing was right he would do it in spite of all opposition. (p. 49)  
"...Lafayette never would and never could surrender his principles..." (p. 208)

**PURPOSEFUL:** "...to help a devoted people attain their liberty. What can be nobler?" (p. 37)

**SELF-EDUCATED:** "...I read, I study, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and upon the result of all this I make an effort to form my opinion and to put it into as much common sense as I can..." (p. 119)

**THOUGHTFUL:** "Thoughtfulness and generosity are among the things that make people lovable and popular, and they were very prominent traits in the character of the young Marquis." (p. 93)

## BLUE PILLAR: FAITH

### EVIDENCES AND EXAMPLES from *The True Story of Lafayette*

As we read America's history, it's remarkable how often an unexpected change of weather alters the course of events. Some may view it merely as coincidence. But it's worth noting because of the frequency.

(p. 259) "On my arrival here every one told me that my ship must undoubtedly be taken, because two English frigates had blockaded the harbour. I even sent, both by land and sea, orders to the captain to put the men on shore, and burn the vessel, if he had still the power of doing so. Well! by a most extraordinary piece of good fortune, a sudden gale of wind having blown away the frigates for a short time, my vessel arrived at noon-day, without having encountered friend or foe."

(p. 151) "The next night Cornwallis endeavored to cut his way out, and escape across the York River to Gloucester; but American watchfulness and a Virginia storm drove him back,..."

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(p. 201) "...as the walls of the fortress came in sight, the devoted and noble woman, [Lafayette's wife], even though on her way to prison, broke out with the chant of thanksgiving she had learned as a girl in her convent school to sing in acknowledgment for mercies received from heaven: "Blessed be God that liveth forever, and blessed be his kingdom; I will extol my God and my soul shall praise the King of Heaven."