America’s Greatness Found Wherever Compassion and Generosity Exceed Greed

I recently picked up a newspaper with headlines reporting praiseworthy work by volunteering young people. It was great to hear of youth who sacrifice to help make America and this world a better place. Their causes include work for victims of crime, natural disasters, poverty, accidents, disabilities, and discrimination. And, they’re working while others ignore the good and seek to discredit America and America’s leadership.

One reason America is great because of the generosity and compassion found in volunteer groups and faith-based organizations. This includes churches of every denomination, though some are composed totally of individuals who are poor themselves. It appears as though greatness can be found wherever compassion and generosity exceed the greed and selfishness of the citizens.

Influx Of Asylum Seekers

“In fiscal year (FY) 2015, the United States resettled 69,933 refugees and in FY 2013 (the most recent data available) granted asylum status to 25,199 people.”

As reported by the Center for Immigration Studies, “[m]ore than 4.4 million people are on the legal immigrant visa waiting list according to the State Department’s annual tally. That is 100,085 more people waiting for legal immigrant visas than at the same time last year.”

If all these citizens of the world are trying to relocate to the United States, what is so great about our country? And why is it that those who see nothing great about America are remaining here and are making no efforts to leave?

Improved Standing For The Average American

The highly respected Gallup organization, has recently reported on some aspects of America’s greatness as seen by Americans. Since President Barack Obama took office in January 2009, the percentage of U.S. adults who considered themselves to be “thriving” has improved by nearly four percentage points. That thriving 55.4% is on pace to be the highest recorded in the nine years Gallup and Healthways have tracked it,” writes Dan Witters, lead author of the report. He further reports that:

• Life evaluations across all racial/ethnic groups have improved since 2008
• Life evaluations among whites now at highest point in nine-year period

Take a look at Gallup’s and Healthway’s Well-being Index and its 2.3 million surveys. There you’ll find a list of 386 accomplishments achieved by the United States since the year 2009. These can be found with point by point documentation reference by any computer search.

As reported on National Public Radio, “Household incomes were up sharply in 2015, according to a report released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Median family income climbed 5.2 percent to $56,516 a year. That’s the biggest increase in nearly 50 years.” The good news for America indicated there are more jobs, higher wages, and the expanded Affordable Care Act.
Don’t Lose Liberty

It is easy for us to take some aspects of America for granted because we have never been without them. Our basic freedoms, as summarized in the Constitution and listed in the Bill of Rights are often taken for granted. Some would prefer a government managed like a business corporation. That could bring an end to many of our freedoms as we know them. Those freedoms have helped protect us from corporate decisions and excess. Freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion could specifically be diminished.

I am further reminded of how history repeats itself, when ordinary citizens narrow their focus upon themselves and lose sight of greater principles. “It was the desire for liberty of conscience that inspired the Pilgrims to brave the perils of the long journey across the sea, to endure the hardships and dangers of the wilderness, and with God’s blessing to lay, on the shores of America, the foundation of a mighty nation. Yet honest and God-fearing as they were, the Pilgrims did not yet comprehend the great principle of religious toleration. The freedom which they sacrificed so much to secure for themselves, they were not equally ready to grant to others. While the reformers rejected the creed of Rome, they were not entirely free from her spirit of intolerance” (Great Controversy, pp. 292, 293)

May we be grateful for all the freedoms we have and stand to protect them as we keep America great.