

LAUS DEO!

On the aluminum cap atop the Washington Monument in Washington DC are two words: Laus Deo. No one can see these words. In fact ... most visitors to the monument have no idea they are even there and.... for that matter ... probably couldn't care less!

But there they are ... 555 feet, 5.125 inches high ... perched atop the monument to the father of our nation ... overlooking the 69 square miles which comprise the District of Columbia ... capital of the United States of America.

Laus Deo! Two seemingly insignificant, unnoticed words ... out of sight and, one might think, out of mind ... but very meaningfully placed at the highest point over what is the most powerful city in the world.

And what might those two words ... comprised of just four syllables and only seven letters ... mean? Very simply ... "Praise be to God!"

Though construction of this giant obelisk began in 1848 when James Polk was President of the United States, it was not until 1888 that the monument was inaugurated and opened to the public. It took twenty five years to finally cap the memorial with the tribute Laus Deo! Praise be to God!

From atop this magnificent granite and marble structure ... a visitor can take in the beautiful panoramic view of the city with its division into four major segments. And from that vantage point one can also easily see the original plan of the designer, Pierre Charles l'Enfant ... a perfect cross imposed upon the land... with the White House to the north ... the Jefferson Memorial to the south ... the Capitol to the east... and the Lincoln Memorial to the west. A cross ... you say?

How interesting! And ... no doubt... intended to carry a meaning for those who bother to notice. Praise be to God! Within the monument itself are 898 steps and 50 landings. As one climbs the steps and pauses at the landings the memorial stones share a message. On the 12th Landing is a prayer offered by the City of Baltimore; on the 20th is a memorial presented by some Chinese Christians; on the 24th a presentation made by Sunday School children from New York and Philadelphia quoting Proverbs 10:7, Luke 18:16 and Proverbs 22:6. Praise be to God!

When the cornerstone of the Washington Monument was laid on July 4th, 1848, deposited within it were many items including the Holy Bible presented by the Bible Society. Praise be to God! Such was the discipline, the moral direction, the spiritual mood given by the founder and first President of our unique democracy... "one nation, under God."

I am awed by Washington's prayer for America. Have you never read it? Well now is your opportunity... read on!

"Almighty God; We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to govern; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United states at large." "And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation.

"Grant our supplication, we be Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Laus Deo!

As you might have guessed... I kind of like the idea that our Pledge of Allegiance includes the phrase "under God." It is clear when one studies the history of our great nation that Washington's America was one of the few countries in all the world established under the guidance, direction and banner of Almighty God, to whom was given all praise, honor and worship by the great men who formed and fashioned her pivotal foundations. And ... when one stops to observe the inscriptions found in public places all over our nation's capitol ... one will easily find the signature of God.

We are a nation under God!!! Laus Deo!!! Praise be to God!!!

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalms 127:1)

—From *The National Statesman*

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