



Under God

By TobyMac, Michael Tait

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In the same uncompromising style of *Jesus Freaks*, bestselling authors Michael Tait and TobyMac of *dc Talk* now urge readers to take their stand for America's future--by examining our past. Using unforgettable accounts of both famous and little-known Americans, *Under God* examines the stories of men and women who forged our nation. Against these, they pair the dark side of America's legacy--racism, slavery, injustice--in order that a new generation might seek God's face and avoid repeating sins of the past. The authors draw on the resources of *WallBuilders*, a national organization that distributes historical, legal, and statistical information and helps citizens become active in their communities.

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Under God By TobyMac, Michael Tait Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This attractive book should win awards for its innovative design and layout even while raising eyebrows with its revisionist text. Mac and Tait, the Grammy and Dove Award-winning members of Christian band DC Talk, move from the tremendous success of their Jesus Freaks series to take a quickie tour of American history. It's certainly more nuanced than some other Christian interpretations of the nation's founding, as the Founders are allowed to have a few flaws. (Benjamin Franklin, for all his teachings on thrift and industry, was a slave-owning dandy, for example.) The authors don't stop with the Founders and Framers, but carry forward the American story in a greatest-hits manner while touching on freedom fighters (Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr.) and political leaders through the 20th century. But the historical merits of this book are shallow in the area of religion. In their determination to show the Christian foundations of the American nation, the authors strongly overstate the evangelical bona fides of their heroes. Thomas Jefferson appears all through the book, for example, but the authors never discuss his controversial reworking of the Bible with all of the miracles and supernatural elements excised. And Sojourner Truth is cast as a classic evangelical Christian with no mention of her forays into the Kingdom of Matthias cult or spiritualist seances. Still, the lasting appeal of this book is its stunning design, not its one-sided view of history. With jagged-cut pages, Old World backgrounds, "distressed" illustrations and bold sidebars, the book's appearance is both arresting and ingenious.

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Review

"A beautiful book. This one does what it set out to do- stir the hearts and spirits of contemporary Americans." -- *Faithful Reader.com*

"I literally could not put it down." -- *Bookloons.com*

From the Inside Flap

THE SHINING LIGHT OF LIBERTY AND THE SHADOWS OF THE DREAM On July 4, 1776, the forefathers of our nation set upon a course and forged a direction that would reverberate throughout the world and lead this nation to offer unforeseen levels of hope, prosperity, and freedom to an amazing tapestry of people. The American Revolution was truly revolutionary.

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people" was a very radical concept. No one could have dreamed the impact it would have. In our founding document, the Declaration of Independence, one of the most profound ideals set forth was that "all men are created equal." Today, it is hard to truly understand how radical the introduction of that concept was. It helps to go back to the eighteenth century and gain a greater understanding of what the world was like. Kings and queens were the rulers and conquerors of the day. Justice and wealth was held in their hands. Our forefathers sought to take some of that tightly bound power and distribute it so that many who could never dream of hope and opportunity would find peace and prosperity through a freedom that was built upon the principles of God. In 1776, and for basically the next two hundred years, however, for some who lived in America, this concept of "all men are created equal" was more authentic in word than it was in deed.

Two enormous tragedies that occurred through Europe's colonization of America are found in the stories of Native Americans (or the Host Peoples) and the descendants of Africa. Slavery, the great scourge of our national history, became a gaping wound of injustice from the very outset of our nation's birth. As well, as

white settlers moved west in search of a better life, the Native American peoples were decimated and expelled from their lands. It is important to grasp that these two people groups—Native Americans and blacks—did not come to America seeking the American Dream. It is probably more accurate to say that they lived the American nightmare. What is often lost in all this, however, are the amazing contributions made to this great country. Every step of the way as our nation developed, they were right there making major contributions.

While our forefathers set forth the ideal of what this nation could become, it was immensely more difficult to carry out and ensure this ideal for all men and women. It is a profound task that continues to this very day. Here is where we see the greatness of the American Revolution: A foundation was laid that would allow for change, and this foundation could be built upon to lift this nation higher toward its grand ideal. Our forefathers cautioned, however, that if we were to lose our religion and morality, our foundation would surely crumble.

This is a glimpse into the battle that started roughly five hundred years ago when the first European explorers came to this land. Some have called it our "dual heritage." To help give a framework for examining this heritage, we can look at two of the earliest settlements—Jamestown and Plymouth. Jamestown, Virginia, was a colony primarily formed as a business venture by investors to obtain wealth. In contrast, Plymouth, Massachusetts, was a colony established by Pilgrims primarily to further the Gospel. The Protestant Reformation was a powerful force that fueled the vision of the Pilgrims.

If you study these two settlements in any kind of depth, you will find some interesting observations. Plymouth centered around covenanting with God and with one another. While they were not perfect, by any means, over and over the Pilgrims seemed to encounter divine providence at just the right times. Jamestown, on the other hand, centered primarily on the acquisition of gold and the building of capital. While there were some redemptive elements in the colony, the settlers seemed to encounter much fighting and bickering and failure.

Many people came to America. Many came seeking wealth. Many came seeking religious freedom.

When studying the founding of the United States, one thing that you can't help but encounter is the faith of our forefathers. Time and time again our forefathers recognized God's hand in the shaping of this nation. You will find Him mentioned repeatedly in their words and documents. Amazingly, hardly any of this factual history is taught today, whereas it was common public school teaching material seventy-five years ago. It is important to note, though, that while our forefathers were great men who did great things, they were also just men. Fallible. Imperfect.

When we decided to embark upon creating this book, we decided to use King David from the Bible as our model. He was a man after God's own heart, but he was also a murderer and adulterer. And though David repented of his errors, they haunted him the rest of his life. In the same way, our forefathers left some things undone, and along the way our nation plunged into some dark traditions.

Ours is a heritage of light and ours is a heritage of darkness.

This book is a collection of short stories about our heritage. Each short story could have—and has had—entire books written about its subject. Our collection of stories is by no means exhaustive. We have left out many great ones. But it is our hope that these accounts will ignite a passion and inspire you to learn more about the great heritage you have and to seek out the unfinished work left to do. It is our hope that you enjoy reading these stories as much as we did discovering them. TOBY and MICHAEL

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rafael Rainey:

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