

# Can The American Dream Be Saved?

Robert Gray – February 25, 2023

Last Saturday on this show, “More Of The Story”, February 18, 2023 to be exact, we received a text question that basically asked, “is the American dream still alive”. My answer was that the dream is still alive, but it is under attack, and we need to work to save it.

In the past week I’ve thought a lot about that question and my response. Before Robert and I move on to other topics, I’d like to expand on that question and my answer.

Many of you listening probably have a somewhat unconscious assumption that you will inherit the same level of freedom that your parents and grandparents had. After all, the history of the United States has been one of continued success, incredible prosperity, and a level of freedom and self-determination that has made us the envy of the world. We have been what President Reagan called “the shining city on the hill”.

Are we perfect? Obviously, the answer is no. Those who seek perfection are asking for something unobtainable except in Heaven. In the meantime, we are here on Earth, with a continuous struggle not just to make things better, but to more simply and basically to retain what we have.

I love to collect quotes, and I am reminded of a couple from J. R. R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord Of The Rings*. I’m sure many of you have read that trilogy, and may remember these.

The first occurs early in the story, when Frodo discovers that he possesses the Ring of Power, and it is up to him to deal with its menace.

**“Frodo:** *“I wish the Ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened.”*

**Gandalf:** *“So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. There are other forces at work in this world, Frodo, besides the will of evil.”*

The second quote occurs toward the end of the tale. Frodo and Sam are somewhere in Mordor, and Gandalf is attempting to rally the Elves and Men to a last effort against the forces of Sauron.

*“It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.”*

Do you see the common thread between these two quotes? The fact that we do not wish to confront evil does not mean that evil will not come upon us. It is critical that we all understand

that freedom is not free, it has never been free, and it has never been easy. We have thousands of years of history of tyrants and self-appointed elites emerging onto the world's stage, bringing slavery and suffering in their quest for power. And that, alas, is what we face today, within our own country and with our current leaders.

We cannot fix everything; in fact, we may by ourselves be able to fix very little. As Gandalf said, it is *"not our part to master all the tides of the world"*. But it IS our part to do what we can, to remember the example and sacrifice of those who came before us. If we do not keep the dream alive, if we do not oppose the would-be tyrants among us, if we ignore history and believe the lies, then, in fact, the dream WILL die, and we will become another sad example for some historian, far in the future, to observe that *"they had so much, and they threw it away"*.

Finally, let me close with two more quotes. Arnold Toynbee, who wrote the 12-volume *A Study of History*, said *"societies always die from suicide or murder rather than from natural causes, and nearly always from suicide"*. And Edmund Burke observed, *"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."*

Understand this. The threat is real, it is powerful, and it is growing. We must all do what we can, while there is still time left to us to do anything, before the lights go out forever.