

**RONALD WILSON REAGAN (FEBRUARY 6, 1911– JUNE 5, 2004) (REAGAN AND 2 BOOKS)**

*“General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate!*

***Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”***

*“To those who would crush religious freedom, our message is plain: You may jail your believers. You may close their churches, confiscate their **Bibles**, and harass their rabbis and priests, but you will never destroy the love of **God** and freedom that burns in their hearts. They will triumph over you.”*

In the same announcement President Reagan added,  
*“Think of it! The most awesome military machine in history [the USSR], but it is no match for that one, single Man, [that] Hero, [that] strong yet tender, **Prince of Peace.**”*



**President Ronald Reagan speaking in front of the Brandenburg Gate at the Berlin Wall, June 12, 1987**



It was stunning! The Berlin Wall was being dismantled by Berliners getting their first taste of freedom and unity. For more than 28 years – from August 1961 until November 1989 – the Berlin Wall had divided the city of Berlin. It stood as a mute testimony to the brutality and tyranny of Communism. After four “rebuilding projects,” the wall ran for 96 miles and was just under 12 feet high on average. Trying to surmount that wall and reach freedom, 192 persons had been killed and many more injured. Then, suddenly, the wall was demolished – first by exultant citizens and then by heavy industrial equipment. And not long after, the USSR collapsed as well. Why? How? President Ronald Reagan played a huge part in this. What were his reasons?

Note the quotes above: “*Bibles*,” “*God*,” the “*Prince of Peace*” (the Lord Jesus). Listen to his words:

- *“I’m accused of being simplistic at times. But within that single Book (the **Bible**) are all the answers to all the problems that face us. The Bible can touch hearts, order minds, and refresh souls.”*
- *Many countries are not “even allowed to read the **Bible**. It is up to us to make sure the message of hope and salvation gets through.”*
- *“Our mission stretches far beyond our borders; **God’s family** knows no borders. In your life you face daily trials, but millions of believers in other lands face far worse. They are mocked and persecuted for the crime of loving **God**. To every religious dissident trapped in that cold, cruel existence, we send our love and support. Our message? You are not alone; you are not forgotten; do not lose your faith and hope because someday you, too, will be free. If the **Lord** is our light, our strength, and our salvation, whom shall we fear? Of whom shall we be afraid? No matter where we live, we have a promise that can make all the difference, a promise from Jesus to soothe our sorrows, heal our hearts, and drive away our fears. He promised there will never be a dark night that does not end. Our weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. He promised if our hearts are true, His love will be as sure as sunlight. And, by dying for us, **Jesus** showed how far our love should be ready to go: all the way. ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.’ ... Helping each other, believing in Him, we need never be afraid. We will be part of something far more powerful, enduring, and good than all the forces here on Earth. We will be a part of paradise.”*

Ronald Reagan was born on February 6, 1911, in Tampico, IL. His mother, Nelle, was a godly Christian, active in numerous Christian endeavors. She ministered in hospitals, mental institutions, the TB sanitarium and to prisoners behind bars, to whom she read the Bible. She had a profound impact on his life, so much so that, as one biographer noted, had she not recovered from the flu in the 1918-1919 epidemic, “there’s an excellent chance he [Ronald] would never have become president.” Years later he said, *“My mother gave me a great deal, but nothing she gave me was more important than... the knowledge of the happiness and solace to be gained by talking to the Lord ... I grew up in a home where I was taught to believe in intercessory prayer.”*

Reagan was deeply spoken to by a book he read as a boy – *That Printer of Udell’s*. He called it a *“wonderful book about a devout itinerant Christian.”* He learned from this book that a Christian must have convictions and be true to them; he should help those in need. He should be obedient to God, and not be afraid to stand up for what is right or against what is wrong. He realized that Christianity was not just “for church,” but that one should always be faithful to Christ. This, the book conveyed, is the only true recipe for changing the world. When he finished the book, Reagan later recalled, he went to his mother and said, *“I want to be like that man in the book. I want to be baptized.”* By his own account, this one book had single-handedly changed his life. Years later, in a letter to the author’s daughter, he said, *“That book ... had an impact I shall always remember. After reading it and thinking about it for a few days, I went to my mother and told her I wanted to declare my faith and be baptized. We attended the Christian Church in Dixon, and I was baptized several days after finishing the book. The term, ‘role model,’ was not a familiar term in that time and place. But I realize I found a role model in that traveling printer whom Harold Bell Wright had brought to life. He set me on a course I’ve tried to follow even unto this day. I shall always be grateful.”*

He began teaching a Sunday-school class when he was 15. Records show that he didn’t miss a single Sunday in the two years that he taught that class before going away to college.

When Reagan was campaigning in 1980, Adrian Rogers, leader of the Southern Baptist convention, asked him whether he was “born again” and had “Jesus in his heart.” He answered “Yes,” replying that God was “real” to him, and that he had a personal experience when he “invited Christ” into his life. Rogers pressed: “Do you know the Lord Jesus or do you only know *about* him?” Rogers said Reagan declared, *“I **know** Him.”*

In an interview with the executive director of the Christian Book sellers Association, Reagan was asked what his favorite Bible verse was. He cited John 3:16 which he quoted from memory. When asked what the verse meant to him personally, Reagan explained by going to the same verse he quoted in his commencement speech at his high school graduation: *“It means that having accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior, I have God’s promise of eternal life in heaven, as well as the abundant life here on earth that He promises to each of us in John 10:10.”*

To graduating seniors of a public high school in New Jersey, Reagan said *“No nation which has outgrown its God has ever lived to write additional pages of history. This nation is in need of spiritual reawakening, and a reaffirmation of trust in God.”*



He asked Billy Graham to speak at the California statehouse. He invited members of the Supreme Court, executive branch and others to hear the celebrated evangelist addressing a joint session of the California legislature. Introducing Graham, Reagan stated, *“There is no need in our land today greater than the need to rediscover our spiritual heritage.”*

As Reagan recovered from the assassination attempt in 1981, he told a number of visitors *“I have decided that whatever time I have left is for Him (God).”* He wrote in his diary, *“Whatever happens now I owe my life to God and will try to serve Him in every way I can.”* He lived 23 more years, serving two terms as the nation’s 40<sup>th</sup> President, and died on June 5, 2004.