

## Leadership Foundation, Inc.

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Hello Everyone,

You may already know that I am teaching a few book clubs using literature to explore how the French Revolution influenced culture and history. As we move away from that moment in time, the lasting impacts it brought about fade in relevance, replaced by more immediate events and concerns. One of the gifts of doing these book clubs with you is seeing not just the impact of these historical moments but also how relatable they are to today.

Right now the French Revolution has particular impact as it came about because of fermenting anger against the established political system in France. Incensed by social injustices and the perceptions that their leaders were either corrupt or fools, France exploded into a Reign of Terror that would destroy their own land, slaughter hundreds of thousands of their own citizens, and – according to Alexis de Tocqueville – utterly fail to solve the underlying problems.

Historian Andrew Hussey describes French society leading up to the end of the French monarchy as one where everything was political, everyone was judgmental, and the culture was angry. It lead, he says, to “febrile revolutionaries” and a city (Paris) “full of rabid, ferocious, murderous energy” – the population of which forgot that its rulers were real people. Indeed, the population of Paris, quickly followed by the rest of France, forgot its humanity in favor of its rage.

When I look at socio-political discourse today, it scares me to see this growing anger. Anger rejects both logic and humanity; febrile is a good word for it, as this type of anger is like a fever; it suppresses rational thinking and eradicates self-control. I pray that God keeps us from another Reign of Terror, which ended only when France turned its military on its own citizens and had its own army invade and conquer Paris.

I thank God that He is in control and that we can come to Him in prayer. Again in a parallel to culture today, the French leading up to the Revolution had abandoned their belief in God, deifying human reason instead. History becomes an excellent alarm if we choose to hear it. But, in times of abundant peace as well as hardship, we are best served by remembering that God is in control and He declares that only His Word and people are eternal.

These days make me all the more thankful for you, as your abiding love and generosity make clear that anger does not hold sway over all the world. You encourage me to pursue the Eternal. Thank you indeed.

In Christ,

*Janna*

*“Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning  
and from ancient times things not yet done, saying  
‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’”*

*(Isaiah 46:9-10)*