

Some of you may remember a few years ago when Indiana and Indianapolis went through a process of “rebranding” themselves—the state tourism office was trying to come up with a new slogan, a new identity that would draw more tourists—and more tourist’s dollars—to our capital city and our state.

They engaged marketing companies, tested ideas in focus groups across the Midwest, and solicited suggestions from residents. Some of the more positive, complimentary ones:

“Indiana—a well-kept secret.”                      “Indiana—escape the ordinary.”  
“Indiana—the heart of America.”                      “We understand if you wish you lived here.”  
“Indiana: It’s like coming home.”

But some of the offerings were not so kind; here are some of the less-complimentary ones:

“Indiana: Now open until nine pm.”                      “Indiana—come visit the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”  
“There’s more than corn in Indiana—but not much.”

My favorite: “Indiana—flat, fat and all that!” ☺ I could drive with that on my license plate.

Indianapolis didn’t fare much better: some of the tongue-in-cheek suggestions included:

“Indianapolis—your pork is ready.”  
“Indianapolis—that big brick circle between Carmel and Greenwood.”  
“Indianapolis—yes, you’ve flown over us before!”  
“Indianapolis—it’s actually not that bad!”

My favorite: “Indianapolis—nobody’s going to make fun of your mullet in this town.” ☺

Greetings! I’m Jim Taylor, thanks for joining me and IN Favor Resources in this video blog, the fourth in a series of four, entitled **HOOSIER PROUD:** or, more specifically, **Four reasons *Why you should never, ever be embarrassed to live in Indiana***

As I’ve said, I consistently see this “inferiority complex”—an embarrassment, almost a *shame*. If or when Indiana is mentioned by the media, or in a Hollywood production—TV or movie, it is almost always in a negative way, sometimes even insulting, and occasionally hateful.

There is no call for this; we’ve received some bad press. And the place you’re dreaming about? **NO PLACE IS PERFECT, BUT** I believe that **INDIANA IS BETTER THAN MOST** Today you’ll discover that most of the things you’ve been told about Indiana *simply aren’t true*. People have been misinformed, some of it is said out of their arrogance and ignorance.

Our previous posts: **Reason #1: BECAUSE GOD CALLED YOU TO BE HERE, NOW**  
There are several important decisions *you didn’t make for yourself; God made them for you*;  
Among them—the Bible teaches that God decided *when* and *where* you would live.  
If you find yourself in Indiana in 2021, *it is because God planned it that way*.

**Reason #2: GOD HAS GREAT PLANS FOR OUR STATE** We know this because *the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets*.  
In that post we heard some of the mind-blowing things God is going to do here.

And **Reason #3: BECAUSE YOU HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN WHAT GOD IS DOING**  
Without *your* contribution, we will not see those God-sized plans accomplished.

Today:

**Reason #4: BECAUSE NO PLACE IS PERFECT, BUT INDIANA IS BETTER THAN MOST**

Now I KNOW INDIANA HAS ITS DISADVANTAGES, *BUT SO DOES EVERYWHERE ELSE!*  
You may think, “Oh, I wish I could live in France/Jamaica/Hawaii/Aspen/North Carolina/etc.,”

but if you did live in one of those places, you’d find plenty to complain about there, too!  
California sure isn’t looking very good now, and people are fleeing New York City in droves.  
But after being away for 7 years in 3 different states, coming back here was like *coming home*.

For the next few minutes, I'm going to speak *personally* about Indiana; this is just me talking...

A few months ago, my wife and I were walking down our street, almost speechless at the blaze of beautiful colors in the leaves as they fell from the trees; a glorious display of God's handiwork—because in Indiana, the seasons change, and *fall* means something.

As I'm writing this, it's January; at 6:30 am, I went outside, saw a blanket of snow on everything:—every tree limb, fence, bush, roof, blade of grass; as I slept, God painted a masterpiece. I know I'll see more snow—*winter* means something in Indiana—but *spring* is coming. (But go to Minnesota, where it seems like 11 months of winter and 1 month of spring.)

I moved back here after four years in Florida, where every day was hot, with a blistering sun; it was 10 months of summer, 2 of fall. I'm so glad I live here, where the seasons *change*. (As they say, "Don't like the weather in Indiana? Just wait a few hours—it will change.")

Enough about weather. *I live on a street with no crime*; unlike when I lived in a Chicago suburb, where windows had bars, and the city is making headlines today for record violence. When we lived in Flint, MI, I caught a burglar in our apartment and our tires were slashed outside the building—and today, the residents can't even drink their own water!

Here, I know the names of all my neighbors on our street. If one of us needs something, the others are glad to help; if something looks suspicious, we look out for and warn each other. People I pass in the park smile, say "Hello," and comment on how cute my dog is (and he is!). It is like this here (and definitely not everywhere) because *Hoosier hospitality is a real thing*.

It's not just a slogan or motto—*its real*; visitors experience it. When we hosted the Superbowl in 2012 we received national plaudits for hospitality; the NCAA is planning to host this year's entire championship tourney *here*, in and near Indy, because we are widely recognized as one of the greatest sporting cities in the world—and for the way we welcome visitors to our state.

I could talk about the famous Hoosiers we've produced in science, politics, government, sports, invention, industry, religion, education, the arts—and *the list of names might surprise you*.

I could talk about the strong work ethic, low cost of living, the solid base of faith in God here.

I could talk about so *many* things that make Indiana *livable and enjoyable*—and even *preferable* over many other states.

I once made some of these points at a meeting in Indy; afterward, a woman from England said, "I've been all over the world and *Indiana is the best place to live*; God's *got* this place." Another said she had been traveling from Florida to Chicago to live; but she stopped to visit a friend in Indianapolis *and she never left*—she never got to Chicago. She stayed in Indiana.

We don't often hear things like this; we're called "Indiana-no-place," "flyover country," or worse.

I want to say this to everyone who looks down on us, sticks their nose in the air, dismisses us, calls us names, insults us, stereotypes us, and considers us of no account:

*You, sir, are misinformed. You don't know what you're talking about. You don't even know us.*

This is not the armpit of America; Indiana is not a state of losers; we are not hicks or hayseeds; we are not a dirty rabble; we don't live here because we couldn't get into any other state; most of us have our own teeth; most of us don't have junk automobiles in our yard;

most of us don't marry our cousins; we can do other things than drink beer and watch NASCAR.

**WE ARE HERE BECAUSE GOD CALLED US HERE.** *It is a privilege and an opportunity.*

So, when people ask where you're from, don't mumble. Don't say "Somewhere west of Ohio."

Don't hang your head. Tell them, "*I am thrilled and thankful to live in the Hoosier state.*"

And remember: **NO PLACE IS PERFECT, BUT I BELIEVE INDIANA IS BETTER THAN MOST**

Now at the end of this process, I trust that you are more *informed* by the facts, more *impressed* by your state, more *intrigued* by the possibilities, more *involved* in making it all happen. You now know you are in Indiana, in the center of God's will, fulfilling his plan for all of us.  
**YOU NEED NEVER, EVER AGAIN BE EMBARRASSED TO LIVE IN INDIANA.**  
**YOU CAN BE PROUD TO BE A HOOSIER.**

I am so glad, so grateful to be working with all of you to bring Indiana in line with God's favor!  
Thanks for joining me for these posts; signing off until next time, hope to see you then.



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