AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

In these trying times, it's important to appreciate the beauty of America – both the physical beauty like here at the McWay Waterfall in California's Big Sur, and the moral beauty of America's founding principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

Driving through all 50 US states as I have done with my sons gives you an awareness of the astounding beauty you discover, together with the cheerful friendliness you're met with, in every state. They overwhelm whatever ugliness and unfriendliness you may chance upon.

Studying American history in an unjaundiced way gives you an awareness of how a moral foundation of every individual American's inalienable right to their own personal life and liberty and the pursuit of their own personal happiness has enabled the creation of the most successful nation ever to exist – a success of widespread freedom and prosperity that overwhelms the multitude of imperfections afflicting our country.

Earth is not Heaven, humans are no angels, America is far from perfect – and we must never let the perfect be the enemy of the good. It is only with love and respect can we help America strive

towards what Aristotle called the *Kalon*, the morally beautiful. (*Glimpses of Our Breathtaking World #8,* photo ©Jack Wheeler)