

FBC Canton Sunday am June 28, 2026 Red, White and Blue Sunday
Remember our story or forget our Identity Psalm 33:1-12

Introduction: Our nation has crisis of identity flowing from biblical illiteracy.
That fact speaks to me as a Believer.

Wnd.com 'Not an oversight': Publishers, libraries are scrubbing Christianity out of the American story

'A generation that does not know where their freedoms come from will not know why those freedoms are worth fighting for'

By **WND Staff**

June 23, 2026

A new study has confirmed that libraries and publishers are working on cleaning Christianity out of the American story.

The study, from publisher Brave Books, was called "The America 250 Faith Gap" and reviewed more than 300 books from 25 reading lists assembled by children's publishers, libraries and others.

Among those so-called "top" books there were no titles directly addressing faith, explained a New York Post **report** on the results.

Nor were there titles directly addressing religious liberty and Christianity's role in the founding of the U.S.

That's even though the First Amendment deals specifically with religious rights.

There were no titles on the Great Awakening, the faith lives of the Founders, or the black church's role in history.

However, books that were there included Ibram X. Kendi's "Stamped for Kids," Nikole Hannah-Jones's "Born on the Water," a picture book tied to the made-up "1619 Project."

And, the report said, there were books on the lists about transgender activism, the 1969 Stonewall Riots promoting the LGBT lifestyle choices, and sympathetic biographies of pro-transgender Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

There were no equivalent writings about Republicans, the report said.

Why is Christianity being scrubbed out of the American story?

- It's not being scrubbed. That's absurd
- Today's executives are poorly educated and they are ignorant of Christianity's role in America
- It's the spirit of anti-Christ at work, diligently working to squelch anything to do with the true God, Jesus Christ

The report confirmed, "According to Brave Books, the most common themes across the lists were the American Revolution, minority perspectives, black history, civil rights and women's history. Books focused on American symbols, the classics, the Founders and civics made up the minority of the recommendations."

Brave Books assessment was that the agenda behind the lists was to reframe America's story, not celebrate it.

Former HUD Secretary Ben Carson and Outkick host Riley Gaines, both Brave Books authors, unleashed their criticism.

"The Declaration of Independence says our rights come from our Creator," Carson said. "Benjamin Franklin called the Constitutional Convention to prayer before they produced a document that has stood for 250 years. George Washington survived battle after battle in ways that defied all human explanation. These men knew where their strength came from."

The assessment of the study had Brave Books concluding that the exclusion of faith leaves students with a skewed view of U.S. history.

"A generation that does not know where their freedoms come from will not know why those freedoms are worth fighting for," Carson said. "Ronald Reagan said freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. He was not exaggerating. He was being precise. When you raise children on a version of history that calls America complicated and unfinished and never once tell them that this country was founded by men of extraordinary faith and courage who believed they were accountable to God for what they built, you are not educating them. You are making them vulnerable."

Trent Talbot, chief of Brave Books, said, "When reading lists for America's 250th anniversary don't include a single book acknowledging Christianity's role, that's not an oversight. That's a choice."

If We Forget Our Story, We Lose Our Identity by Tony Perkins/Washington Stand

June 23, 2026

“More than two decades ago, in 2004, Harvard professor Samuel Huntington warned in his book "Who Are We?" that America was facing a crisis of identity. He argued that a nation cannot remain united without a common culture, a common history, and a common understanding of itself. Remove those foundations, and a society inevitably fragments into competing tribes, interests, and identities.

Huntington pointed to the Anglo-Protestant Creed as the core of America's unifying identity. He argued that America's political institutions and civic ideals did not arise in a vacuum but were rooted in a culture shaped by Protestant Christianity.

If Huntington identified the foundation of America's shared identity, educator E.D. Hirsch explained how that identity was transmitted: through a common biblical literacy that provided Americans with a shared vocabulary, history, and moral framework. Without that shared knowledge, the cultural foundations of national identity inevitably begin to erode.

The Founding Fathers were immersed in biblical imagery. Benjamin Franklin famously proposed a national seal depicting Moses at the Red Sea. The Israelites' exodus taught lessons about liberty, tyranny, divine providence, and national purpose.

The Bible shaped how Americans understood freedom, law, covenant, human dignity, and self-government. Even those who were not orthodox Christians were influenced by the biblical worldview that permeated colonial America.”

I am believer in the Lord of the Bible, first!

Who happens to live in America...the foundation of our identity as Americans...is the Bible!

- I. Our identity flows from our common story. V. 1-12**
 - a. Praise with new songs. V. 1-3, Revelation 5:9**

Revelation 5:9

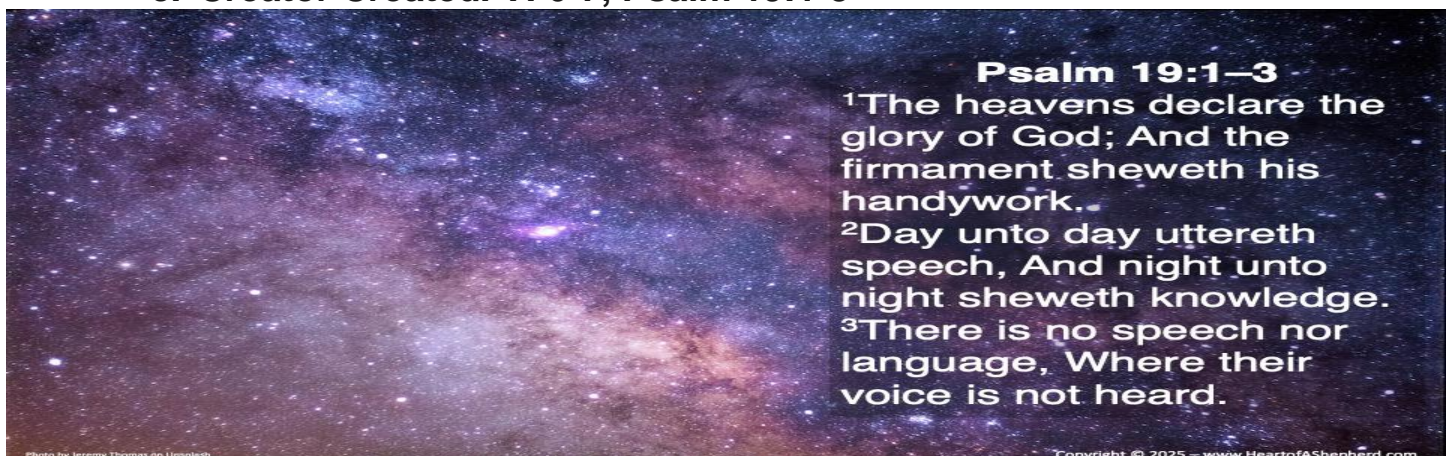
And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

Scripture
Look

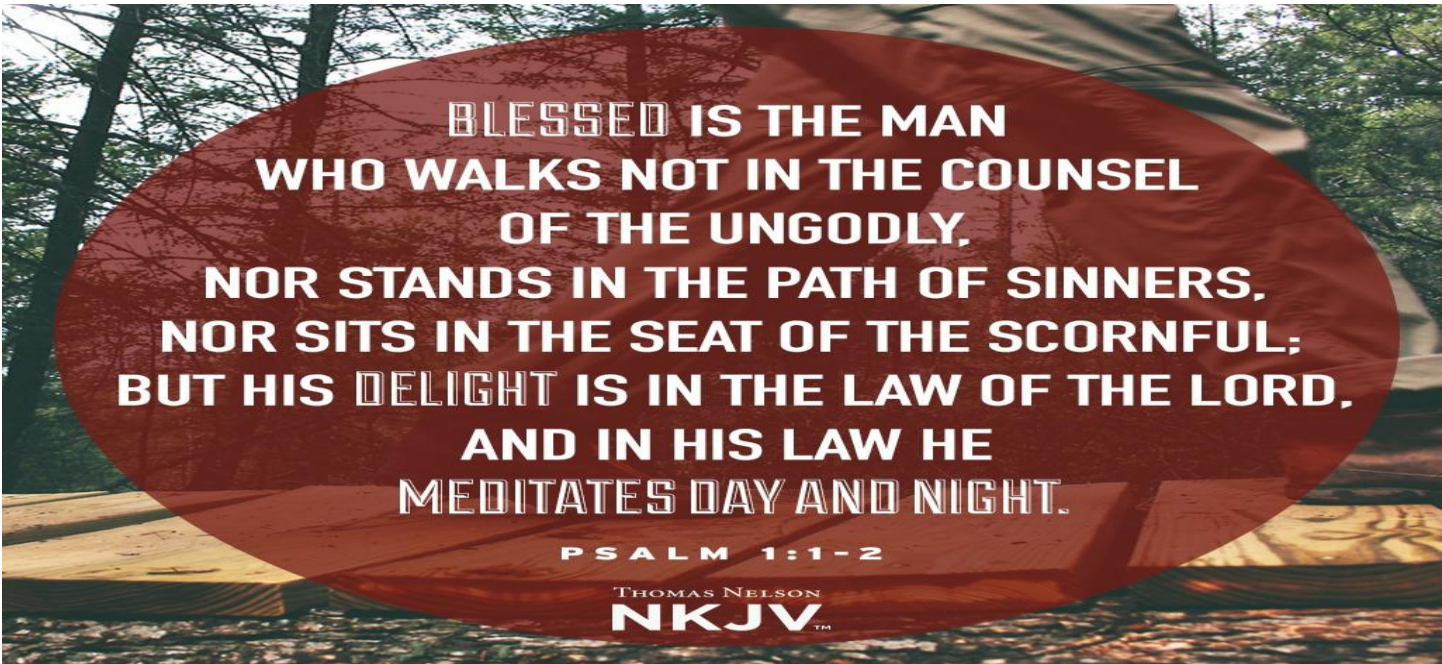
b. Word is right. V. 4-5, Psalm 19:7-8

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
Psalm 19:7-8

- a. The one who is the truth always produces truth.
- b. God defines what is right and just.
- c. Earth is full of God's goodness.
 - i. That's why people feel so distraught when bad things happen.
- c. Creator Created. V. 6-7, Psalm 19:1-3



- a. No fear of the Lord because we don't teach or believe creation. V. 8-9, Proverbs 1:7
- d. We have to decide which counsel is greater: Psalm 1

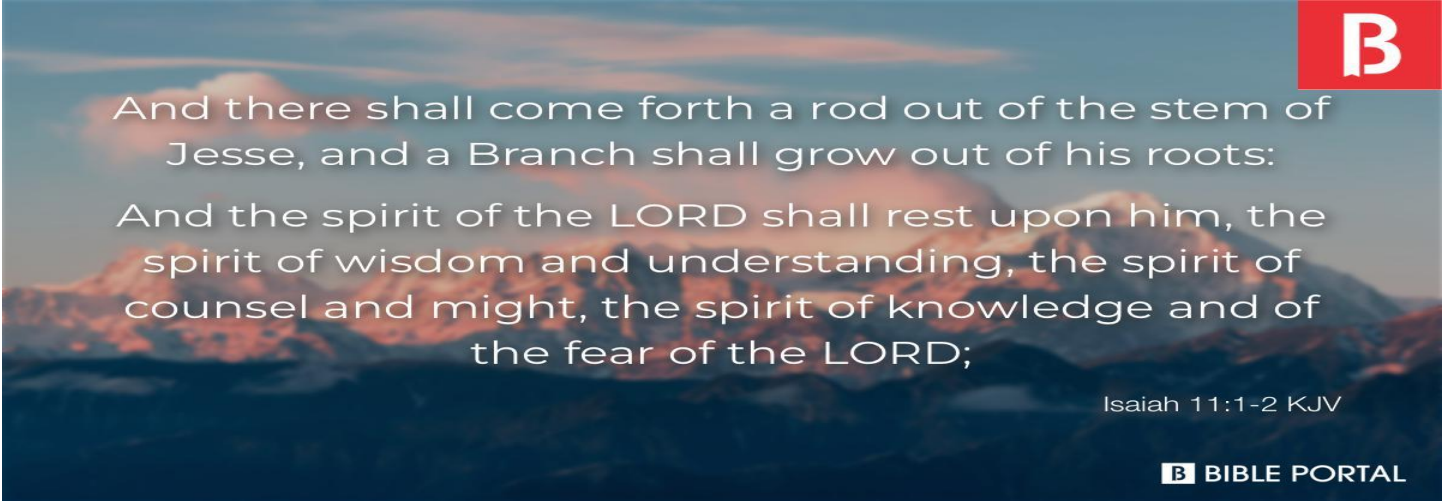


**BLESSED IS THE MAN
WHO WALKS NOT IN THE COUNSEL
OF THE UNGODLY,
NOR STANDS IN THE PATH OF SINNERS,
NOR SITS IN THE SEAT OF THE SCORNFUL;
BUT HIS DELIGHT IS IN THE LAW OF THE LORD,
AND IN HIS LAW HE
MEDITATES DAY AND NIGHT.**

PSALM 1:1-2

THOMAS NELSON
NKJVTM

- a. Nations: Psalm 2
 - i. Counsel to nothing.
 - ii. Plans to no effect.
- b. Lord: Isaiah 11:1-2



And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of
Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:
And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the
spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of
counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of
the fear of the LORD;

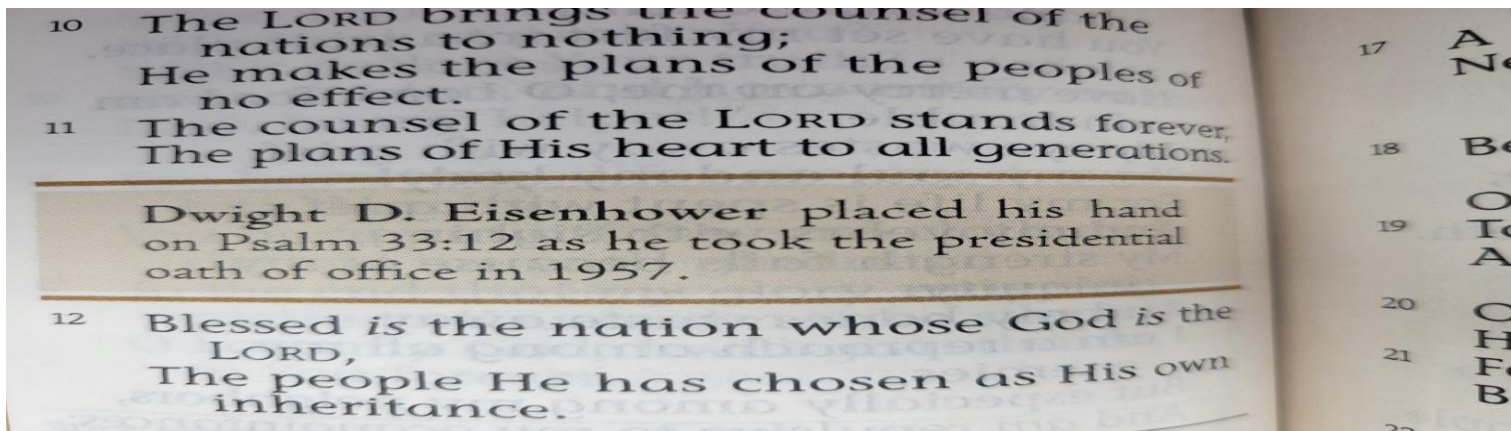
Isaiah 11:1-2 KJV

B BIBLE PORTAL

- i. Counsel stands forever.
- ii. Plans to my generations.

Conclusion: Blessed is the nation who blesses God. The people he has chosen, chose Him!

Our nation's identity has ties to scripture, like Psalm 33.



Oath taking: Genesis 26:2-3, Ezekiel 20:15, Psalm 106:26, Isaiah 62:8

U.S Constitution: 34% of the time quote the Bible.

“The single most cited authority in the writings of the Founding Era was the Bible: thirty-four percent of the documented quotes were taken from the Bible—a percentage almost four times higher than the second most-quoted source.”

The Declaration of Independence: “Entire framework of our government...expressed in both documents...is built upon the Christian idea of man and government”

“From the beginning, the interdependent relationship between these two documents was clear: together, both of them form our founding charter; and the entire framework of our government as expressed in both documents is built upon the Christian idea of man and government.”

No Sundays: Exodus 20

Attestation Clause in the Constitution Article VII: “In the year of our Lord 1787”

Natural born citizen as President: Deuteronomy 17:15

Capital punishment: Genesis 9

Innocence until proven guilty: Deuteronomy 17:6

Guilty only for your own acts: Attainder: Ezekiel 18:20

Checks and balances: Jeremiah 17:9

Three branches of government: Isaiah 33:22

Tax exemptions for churches: Ezra 7:24

Republic, not a democracy: Exodus 18:21

Checks and balances: Jeremiah 17:9

Oath-Taking

The five oath-taking clauses in the Constitution also demonstrate its religious nature, for the Founders universally affirmed oath-taking to be a singularly religious activity. For example, James Madison called an oath “*the strongest of religious ties*”[\[69\]](#); John Adams said oaths were “*sacred obligations*”[\[70\]](#); Declaration signer John Witherspoon said taking an oath “*indeed is an act of worship*”[\[71\]](#); Declaration signer Oliver Wolcott said that an oath “*is a direct appeal to...God*”[\[72\]](#); US Supreme Court Justice James Iredell said it was a “*solemn appeal to the Supreme Being*”[\[73\]](#); and George Washington warned to never let oath-taking become a secular activity.[\[74\]](#) For the Founding Fathers and Framers of the Constitution, the oath-taking clauses were overtly religious.



Rufus King

In fact, Constitution signer Rufus King declared that oaths were a “*principle which is proclaimed in the Christian system.*”[\[75\]](#) Consider how this “*principle*” from the “*Christian system*” is reflected in our American oath-taking process even today.

Traditionally, in taking an oath an individual raises their right hand, places the other on the Bible, takes the oath, and concludes with “*So help me God.*” Notice how the elements in this sequence directly parallels specific verses in the Bible.

For example, in Genesis 26:2-3, God told Isaac “I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father”—so God Himself swore an oath. Concerning the oath, God declared: “I raised my hand in an oath. . .” (Ezekiel 20:15, 23; 36:7; Psalm 106:26). The Scripture further tells us that “The Lord has sworn by His right hand” (Isaiah 62:8). And when God’s people were instructed about how to take an oath, they were told: “You shall . . . take oaths in his name” (Deuteronomy 10:20), which is what we do today when we use the phrase “So help me God.”

Clearly, the oath-taking clauses of the Constitution reflect specific Biblical practices.

“From the beginning, the interdependent relationship between these two documents was clear: together, both of them form our founding charter; and the entire framework of our government as expressed in both documents is built upon the Christian idea of man and government.”

Sadly, despite the abundant historical evidence, numerous modern jurists, academics, and others today wrongly claim the US Constitution is a Godless document. In fact, in the book *Godless Constitution*, two professors firmly assert the Constitution was completely secular and not influenced by religious principles. On what authoritative historical sources do those professors rely to prove this errant claim? Significantly, in their “*Note on Sources*” at the end of the book, they candidly admit: “*we have dispensed with the usual scholarly apparatus of footnotes.*”[\[61\]](#)

There are *no* footnotes—they use no original historical documentation to prove their “historical” claims. What a startling admission, but this is reflective of what often occurs in far too much of academia and media today.

For several reasons, the truth is actually the opposite of what they claim.

First, many of the specific ideas presented in the Constitution were developed from the Christian culture of the preceding two centuries. This is confirmed by the extensive work of political scientists who embarked on an ambitious ten-year project to analyze writings from the Founding Era (1760-1805) with the goal of isolating and identifying the specific political authorities quoted during in those writings. If the sources of the specific quotes in those writings could be identified, then the origin of the Founders’ political ideas could be documented.

Selecting some 15,000 representative writings, the researchers isolated 3,154 direct quotations, and then documented the origin of those quotations. [\[62\]](#)

Their research revealed the single most cited authority in the writings of the Founding Era was the Bible: thirty-four percent of the documented quotes were taken from the Bible—a percentage almost four times higher than the second most-quoted source. [\[63\]](#)

A second proof that the Constitution is not secular or Godless is that it was deliberately designed to be utilized alongside the Declaration of Independence—a document that explicitly refers to God multiple times. The Declaration is the foundation upon which first our nation and then our Constitution were built, and the Declaration and the Constitution were intended to be used side-by-side—hand-in-hand; one will not work properly if separated from the other. As the US Supreme Court attested (1897):

[T]he latter [Constitution] is but the body and the letter of which the former [Declaration of Independence] is the thought and the spirit, and it is always safe to read the letter of the Constitution in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence. [64]

This reality was also affirmed by John Quincy Adams in his famous oration, "*The Jubilee* [that is, the fiftieth anniversary] *of the Constitution*," in which he explained:



John Quincy Adams

[T]he virtue which had been infused into the Constitution of the United States...was no other than the concretion of those abstract principles which had been first proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence....This was the platform upon which the Constitution of the United States had been erected. Its virtues, its republican character, consisted in its conformity to the principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and as its administration...[and] was to depend upon the...virtue, or in other words, of those principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Constitution of the United States. [65]

From the beginning, the interdependent relationship between these two documents was clear: together, both of them form our founding charter; and the entire framework of our government as expressed in both documents is built upon the Christian idea of man and government.

A third proof that the Constitution is not a Godless secular document is found in its internal content. Several of its specific clauses actually incorporate specifically recognizable Biblical provisions and rhetoric. Here are a few examples.

The South Carolina supreme court (1846) similarly noted the fact that the US constitution officially recognized and set apart the Christian sabbath:

Christianity is a part of the common law of the land, with liberty of conscience to all. it has always been so recognized....the us constitution allows it as a part of the common law. the president is allowed ten days [to sign a bill], with the exception of sunday. the legislature does not sit; public offices are closed; and the government recognizes the day in all things....the observance of Sunday is one of the usages of the common law recognized by our us and state governments....Christianity is part and parcel of the common law. [67]

Sundays Excepted

The Constitution recognizes and sets apart Sunday from governmental work. Article II of the Constitution stipulates that when Congress passes a bill, for that bill to become law the president has ten days to sign it—not counting Sundays, or as the Constitution says, “*Sundays excepted.*”

Significantly, Christianity is the only major religion in the world that has a Sunday Sabbath. As the Supreme Court of California observed (1858), the Sabbaths observed by various religions included “*the Friday of the Mohammedan, the Saturday of the Israelite, or the Sunday of the Christian.*”[\[66\]](#) The South Carolina Supreme Court (1846) similarly noted the fact that the US Constitution officially recognized and set apart the Christian Sabbath:

Christianity is a part of the common law of the land, with liberty of conscience to all. It has always been so recognized....The US Constitution allows it as a part of the common law. The President is allowed ten days [to sign a bill], with the exception of Sunday. The Legislature does not sit; public offices are closed; and the government recognizes the day in all things....The observance of Sunday is one of the usages of the common law recognized by our US and state governments....Christianity is part and parcel of the common law. [\[67\]](#)

The Senate Committee on the Judiciary similarly commented (in 1853) on this constitutional provision, reaching the same obvious conclusion:

In the law, Sunday is a “*dies non*” [a day on which no legal business can be conducted]. It cannot be used for the services of legal process, the return of writs, or other judicial purposes. The executive department, the public establishments—are all closed on Sundays; on that day neither House of Congress sits....Here is a recognition by law and by universal usage not only of a Sabbath but of the Christian Sabbath, in exclusion of the Jewish or Mahammedan Sabbath....The recognition of the Christian Sabbath [by the Constitution] is complete and perfect. [\[68\]](#)

For decades, the specific recognition of the Christian Sabbath in the Constitution was cited by state and federal courts as proof of the Christian nature of our Constitution (and many other governing documents contain the same recognition of the Christian Sabbath).

Attestation Clause

The Constitution declares in Article VII that it was written “*in the year of our Lord*” 1787. Most legal documents of that day gave only the year; a few added “*in the year of the Lord*”; but the drafters of the Constitution personalized that phrase, making it “*in the year of our Lord.*” Our Founders deliberately dated the Constitution in a way that recognized the birth of Christ.

Other Clauses

Notice the extremely close parallels between the explicit wording of the Bible and the almost identical wording of that unique thought or idea in the Constitution. For instance:

- Concerning the selection of a national executive leader, the Bible says *“One from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother”* (Deuteronomy 17:15, ESV). The national leader cannot be an immigrant but must be native-born.
- Reflecting this same requirement, the Constitution stipulates: *“No person except a natural born citizen...shall be eligible to the office of President”* (Article II, Section 1, Paragraph 5). The Constitution allows a US Senator or Representative to be an immigrant, but it requires that the national leader—the President—must be native-born (or as the Bible specified, *“one from among your brethren”* who is *“not a foreigner”*).

Capital Punishment

- I. **Concerning the death penalty, the Bible says: “Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.”** (Deuteronomy 17:6, NKJV)
- II. **Concerning treason (a death penalty offense specifically named in the Constitution), the Constitution likewise requires: “No person shall be convicted of treason [and put to death], unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act”** (Article, Section 3, Paragraph 3).

Attainder

- The Bible says: *“The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself”* (Ezekiel 18:20, NKJV). The family is not to be punished for the wrongdoing of a single member of the family.

- Attainder (common in European governments at the time) punishes an entire family for the wrongdoing of one member of the family. For example, if one person in the family commits treason, then the bloodline of the entire family becomes “corrupt” and for generations thereafter no member of the family can own property or enjoy other rights. But the Constitution, echoing the Bible’s teaching, says: *“No attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture, except during the life of the person attained”* (Art. III, Sec. 3, Clause 2).

And notice also the three branches of government—the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive—is set forth in Isaiah 33:22 (*“The Lord is our judge [the judicial] , the Lord is our lawgiver [the legislative] , the Lord is our king [the executive]”*). And the type of tax exemptions the Founders gave to churches (tax exemptions that still exist today) is found in Ezra 7:24: *“You have no authority to impose taxes, tribute or duty on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers, temple servants or other workers at this house of God.”*

And the mandate of republicanism set forth in the Constitution in Art. IV, Sec. 4 (that is, of selecting our leaders at the local, county, state, and federal levels) has its origins in Exodus 18:21 (*“select capable men from all the people...as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens”*) and also Deuteronomy 1:13. In fact, Noah Webster (the Founder personally responsible for Art. I, Sec 8, ¶8 of the Constitution) specifically cites Exodus 18:21, [\[76\]](#) as do Declaration signers John Witherspoon and Benjamin Rush. [\[77\]](#)

Further demonstrating the Constitution’s reliance on and incorporation of Biblical precepts, on multiple occasions John Adams directly affirmed that the principle undergirding the constitutional separation of powers was specifically taken from the Bible is teaching in Jeremiah 17:9. Adams explained:



John Adams

To expect self-denial from men when they have a majority in their favor (and consequently power to gratify themselves) is to disbelieve all history and universal experience—it is to disbelieve [Divine] Revelation and the Word of God, which informs us, “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” [Jeremiah 17:9]....There is no man so blind as not to see that to talk of founding a government upon a supposition that nations and great bodies of

men, left to themselves, will practice a course of self-denial is either to babble like a new-born infant, or to deceive like an unprincipled impostor.[\[78\]](#)

To understand Adams' reference to Jeremiah 17:9, recall that the Founders largely viewed man from a Christian perspective. As such, they believed in what Christian theologians call "the depravity of man." This meant that man is in a fallen state; consequently, doing the wrong thing comes naturally to him—unless he has chosen to live by God's principles and the uplifting standards of the Bible. Because of man's sinful proclivity to do what is wrong, it was not likely that governments formed by men will automatically be inherently good and always serve the people. In fact, the record of countless governments across history repeatedly proves just the opposite—that nearly all governments which do not have internal safeguards and restraints that account for the inherent "depravity of man" will eventually become corrupt, selfish, oppressive, and tyrannical.

The Founders believed that the branches of government therefore needed to be separated from, and able to check and balance each other so that perhaps all might not go wicked at the same time. Thus, if the Judiciary became selfish and corrupt, then perhaps the Legislative and Executive could negate that influence; and the same was true with the other branches. So, using their Biblical understanding of the general fallen nature of man, the Founders were careful to construct a form of government that would not entrust any man or branch with too much power, knowing that sinful man tends to abuse that power.

Not only did John Adams cite Jeremiah 17:9 (on multiple occasions) to explain separation of powers, but the same point was similarly made by signers of the Constitution George Washington [\[79\]](#) and Alexander Hamilton. [\[80\]](#) And James Madison, affirming the same Biblical view of the fallen and sinful nature of man, in *Federalist 51* affirmed:

What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place oblige it to control itself.[\[81\]](#)

David Guzik Study Guide for Psalm 33

THE GREAT AND AWESOME GOD

"If the purest form of a hymn is praise to God for what He is and does, this is a fine example." (Derek Kidner)

A. Praising the great God.

1. ([Psalm 33:1-3](#)) A call to praise with songs and joy.

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous!

For praise from the upright is beautiful.

Praise the LORD with the harp;

Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings.

Sing to Him a new song;

Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

a. **Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous:** This unattributed psalm begins with a call for God's **righteous** to **rejoice** and **praise**. The psalmist primarily referred to those among God's people who walked rightly.

i. "[Psalm 32](#) ended by calling on the righteous to sing praises to God. This note is picked up on in [Psalm 33](#), almost as if its first [three verses](#) were written as an elaboration of [Psalm 32:11](#)." (Boice)

ii. **Rejoice in the LORD:** "Calling upon the saints to be cheerful; and indeed there is hardly any duty more pressed in the Old and New Testament, or less practised." (Trapp)

iii. God's people are called to **rejoice in the LORD**, and in nothing else. "To rejoice in temporal comforts is dangerous, to rejoice in self is foolish, to rejoice in sin is fatal, but to rejoice in God is heavenly." (Spurgeon)

iv. Under the New Covenant we may extend this to those declared righteous through faith in Jesus ([Romans 3:21-26](#)). Those who are **righteous** by God's decree have an even greater responsibility to **rejoice** and **praise**.

b. **For praise from the upright is beautiful:** God regards worship from His people (both **upright** in a relative sense and declared to be **upright**) as **beautiful**. It pleases Him and creates the sense of appreciation for beauty. *God appreciates our praise.*

i. "It is apparently meant for liturgical use.... The opening summons to praise takes us far away from the solitary wrestlings and communings in former psalms." (Maclaren)

ii. "Take away the Christian's power of praising God, and you make him a poor earth-worm, bound here with doubts, and fears, and cares; but let him but kindle in his soul the flame that burns in heaven of seraphic love to God, and away he mounts." (Spurgeon)

iii. "An upright person is one without deception ([Psalm 32:2](#)), full of integrity of heart, and the opposite of the perverse ([Proverbs 8:8](#))." (VanGemeren)

iv. "Praise in the mouth of a sinner is like an oracle in the mouth of a fool; how uncomely is it for him to praise God, whose whole life is a dishonouring of God? It is as indecent for a wicked man to praise God, who goes on in sinful practices, as it is for a usurer to talk of living by faith, or for the devil to quote Scripture." (Watson, cited in Spurgeon)

c. **Praise the LORD with the harp; make melody with an instrument of ten strings:** God also declared His satisfaction with worship through music and musical instruments. This can please God, the Creator of music and the Great Musician.

- i. “Experts tell us that the *kinnor* [**harp**]...and *nebel* [**instrument of ten strings**]...were both stringed instruments, differing in the position of the sounding board, which was below in the former and above in the latter, and also in the covering of the strings.” (Maclaren)
- ii. The psalmist clearly exhorted God’s people to praise Him with the accompaniment of musical instruments. Strangely, some have thought that such musical accompaniment belonged only to the Old Covenant and not to the New.
- iii. Spurgeon was one who preferred worship sung without musical instruments, but he would not command it. “We who do not believe these things to be expedient in worship, lest they should mar its simplicity, do not affirm them to be unlawful, and if any George Herbert or Martin Luther can worship God better by the aid of well-tuned instruments, who shall gainsay their right? We do not need them, they would hinder than help our praise but if others are otherwise minded, are they not living in gospel liberty?” (Spurgeon)
- iv. Nevertheless, the most important instrument is the *heart*. “Music, both vocal and instrumental, is of eminent use in setting forth the praises of God; but there is no instrument like the rational soul, and no melody like that of well-tuned affections.” (Horne)

d. **Sing to Him a new song:** God loves to receive the rejoicing and praise of His people expressed in **song**, especially the **new song**.

- i. “‘New song’ simply means that every praise song should emerge from a fresh awareness of God’s grace.” (Boice)
- ii. “As God gives you fresh occasions, so do not content yourselves with the old songs or psalms, made by the holy men of God, but make new ones suited to the occasions.” (Poole)
- iii. “Put off oldness ye know the new song. A new man, a New Testament, a new song. A new song belongeth not to men that are old; none learn that but new men, renewed through grace from oldness, and belonging now to the New Testament, which is the kingdom of heaven.” (Augustine, cited in Spurgeon)

e. **Play skillfully with a shout of joy:** Skillful musicianship and enthusiasm fitting for the **joy** of God’s people are other ways God is honored with praise.

- i. **A shout of joy:** “Heartiness should be conspicuous in divine worship. Well-bred whispers are disreputable here. It is not that the Lord cannot hear us, but that it is natural for great

exultation to express itself in the loudest manner. Men shout at the sight of their kings: shall we offer no loud hosannahs to the Son of David?" (Spurgeon)

ii. "Note the call in that verse for freshness and skill as well as fervour; three qualities rarely found together in religious music." (Kidner)

2. (Psalm 33:4-5) The greatness of God expressed in His character, who He is.

For the word of the LORD *is* right,

And all His work *is done* in truth.

He loves righteousness and justice;

The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

a. **For the word of the LORD *is* right, and all His work is done in truth:** The **truth** of God's word is a further reason for praise. In addition, God does His work in truth — not with deceit or manipulation.

i. "His **word** and His **work** are inseparable, for His words are never empty." (Kidner)

ii. "In all this we find the true secret of our confidence, and so of our joy. The word and the work of God are ever one. His word never returns to Him empty — it accomplishes that which He pleases." (Morgan)

b. **He loves righteousness and justice:** The psalmist kept thinking of the greatness of God's character — His love for **righteousness and justice** and His **goodness** spread all over the **earth**. The psalmist rightly rejoiced that Yahweh, the God who is really there, is not amoral or without goodness. He is what we who are made in His image would understand as "good."

i. "The Psalmist means that there is no spot in [**the earth**] where the traces and footprints of God's love may not be discerned, if only the eyes and the heart are opened." (Meyer)

ii. "The Lord's love (**hesed**) is evident in his works on earth. With respect to the rest of creation, he shows the same loyalty, constancy, and love that has found particular expression in the covenant relationship with his people." (VanGemeren)

iii. "He might, if he had pleased, have made everything we tasted bitter, everything we saw loathsome, everything we touched a sting, every smell a stench, every sound a discord." (Paley, cited in Spurgeon)

iv. "Earth might have been as full of terror as of grace, but instead thereof it teems and overflows with kindness.... If earth be full of mercy, what must heaven be where goodness concentrates its beams?" (Spurgeon)

3. (Psalm 33:6-7) The greatness of God expressed in His creation.

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,

And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

**He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He lays up the deep in storehouses.**

a. **By the word of the LORD the heavens were made:** The greatness of God goes beyond His moral goodness; He is also the God of all power and authority. By His mere **word** the universe was created.

i. "It is noteworthy that the occasions of the new song are very old acts, stretching back to the first creation and continued down through the ages." (Maclaren)

ii. "The world was created by the 'word' or fiat of God, which may be here described, after the manner of men, as formed by 'the breath of his mouth.'" (Horne)

b. **He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap:** The psalmist looked at the mighty oceans and understood that they reflected God's power and wisdom in creation.

i. **In storehouses:** either in the clouds, or in the bowels of the earth, whence he can draw them forth when he sees fit." (Poole)

ii. "What is meant, however, here, is the separation of land and water at first, and possibly the continuance of the same power keeping them still apart, since the verbs in **verse 7** are participles, which imply continued action." (Maclaren)

iii. "To speak of nature's obedient glory is to be reminded of man's blatant defiance." (Kidner)

4. **(Psalm 33:8-9) A call for all the earth to fear the LORD.**

Let all the earth fear the LORD;

Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

For He spoke, and it was **done;**

He commanded, and it stood fast.

a. **Let all the earth fear the LORD:** This is the logical response to recognizing a God who is perfect in both character and power. People should set themselves in a state of humble **awe** before Him.

i. "He who made all things, preserves all things, and can in a moment destroy all things, is the proper object of our 'fear'; and that we fear him so little, is a most convincing proof of the corruption and blindness of our hearts." (Horne)

b. **For He spoke, and it was done:** The psalmist again considered the **word** of God and its effective power. God never speaks empty words, they are full of active power to insure their fulfillment.

i. **Luke 7:1-9** tells the story of a Roman centurion who so trusted Jesus that he believed, "**For He spoke, and it was done.**" Jesus praised the faith of that centurion.

B. The greatness of God among the nations.

1. (**Psalm 33:10-12**) The greatness of God among the nations and His nation.

The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

The counsel of the LORD stands forever,

The plans of His heart to all generations.

Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD,

The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

a. **The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing**: The psalmist has already praised God for His moral character and His creative power. Now he praised God for His active, guiding hand through human history. God moves among the Gentile **nations** as He pleases to accomplish His **counsel** and the **plans of His heart**.

i. "Their persecutions, slanders, falsehoods, are like puff-balls flung against a granite wall — they produce no result at all; for the Lord overrules the evil, and brings good out of it. The cause of God is never in danger: infernal craft is outwitted by infinite wisdom, and Satanic malice held in check by boundless power." (Spurgeon)

b. **Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD**: In considering the perfections of God, it shows the blessedness of the **nation** that will consciously align itself with God and His purposes.

i. "The nations feared many gods, each of whom ruled over the various heavenly bodies and over the sky, land, and sea.... Since the Lord made everything and rules sovereign over the whole universe, the nations should recognize that he alone is the Creator-Ruler."
(VanGemeren)

ii. "O how happy is that nation which has *Jehovah* for its *Elohim*; the self-existent and eternal Lord for its covenant God; one who should unite himself to it by connections and ties the most powerful and endearing!" (Clarke)

c. **The people He has chosen as His own inheritance**: In a national sense this is Israel, the people and nation chosen for a unique place in the plan of God. In a broader sense it speaks of the blessing that belongs to all those chosen by the LORD, regarded as **His own inheritance**.

i. "So thrice happy is that people of Israel, who, though they be despised by the Gentiles, are chosen by this Almighty God, to be his peculiar portion, and friends, and servants." (Poole)

2. (**Psalm 33:13-15**) The greatness of God over each individual.

The LORD looks from heaven;

He sees all the sons of men.

From the place of His dwelling He looks

On all the inhabitants of the earth;

He fashions their hearts individually;

He considers all their works.

a. **He sees all the sons of men**: God in all His perfections and plans for the nations and ages also has His eye on humanity as individuals. His greatness does not exclude His individual interest in **all the inhabitants of the earth**.

b. **He fashions their hearts individually**: God made us one by one, each with our own particular physical, mental, emotional makeup, including the allowance of our weaknesses and sinful inclinations. As our Maker He has the right of inspection, so **He considers all** our **works**.

3. (Psalm 33:16-17) The weakness of even the mighty among men.

No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army;

A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

A horse *is* a vain hope for safety;

Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.

a. **No king is saved by the multitude of an army**: In considering the greatness of God and the extent of His reach, the psalmist understood that human effort **alone** does not determine events. God's work and plan in, and beyond, and sometimes instead of human effort, accomplish His purpose.

i. "All along the line of history this verse has been verified. The strongest battalions melt like snowflakes when God is against them." (Spurgeon)

b. **A horse is a vain hope for safety**: Horses were some of the most advanced military tools in that day. Because there is a God in heaven who governs the affairs and destiny of men, even the use of the most effective resources and technologies cannot in themselves determine the outcome.

i. "If the strength of horses be of God, or be his gift ([Job 39:19](#)), then trust not in the strength of horses: use the strength of horses, but do not trust the strength of horses." (Caryl, cited in Spurgeon)

4. (Psalm 33:18-19) The care of God for the individual.

Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* on those who fear Him,

On those who hope in His mercy,

To deliver their soul from death,

And to keep them alive in famine.

a. **The eye of the LORD *is* on those who fear Him**: The psalmist continues to think both of God's hand in world-shaking events (such as the battles of kings), and His most minute care for the individual.

i. Jesus told us that God cares for the smallest of birds ([Matthew 10:29](#)); surely He will care for those who honor Him, who are made in His image.

ii. "They who fear God need not fear anything else; let them fix their eye of faith on him, and his eye of love will always rest upon them." (Spurgeon)

b. **On those who hope in His mercy**: Those who truly **fear** the LORD find their **hope in His mercy**, not in their own goodness or righteousness.

i. **To deliver their soul**: "Freedom from troubles he promiseth not; but deliverance in due time he assureth them." (Trapp)

5. ([Psalm 33:20-22](#)) Resolution in light of God's greatness.

Our soul waits for the LORD;

He *is* our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in Him,

Because we have trusted in His holy name.

Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us,

Just as we hope in You.

a. **Our soul waits for the LORD**: Having praised Him and considered God's greatness from many angles, it was appropriate to simply **wait** for the LORD — for His guidance, His word, His deliverance — looking to Him as **our help and shield**.

b. **For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name**: Earlier the psalmist called God's people to rejoice because of God's character and might. Now he calls us to praise God because of our blessed experience of trusting in **His holy name**.

i. **Our heart shall rejoice in him**: "Here is the fruit of our confidence: our souls are always **happy**, because we have taken God for our **portion**." (Clarke)

ii. **Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us**: "The hymn concludes with a prayer, requesting that God will refresh his people with his love (**hesed**)."
(VanGemeren)

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iii. The Bible Says Psalm 33:1-5 Meaning

[Psalm 33:1-5](#) opens with a call from the writer, that urges the faithful to celebrate when he proclaims *Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones; Praise is becoming to the upright* (v. 1). This invitation to rejoice speaks directly to those who live in a right relationship with God, reminding them that praising Him is not only a privilege but a reflection of their standing before Him. The term *righteous* here indicates hearts that seek to align with God's character, understanding that gratitude and worship naturally flow from a life devoted to Him. The psalmist's words echo other passages where God's people are stirred to celebrate, as in Paul's encouragement to "rejoice always" and maintain a posture of thanksgiving.

This verse highlights the importance of corporate and personal worship. The psalmist's invitation—directed to *the upright*—encourages all believers to lift up their voices without hesitation. Such worship is *becoming*, meaning it is fitting, proper, and in harmony with their identity as God's people. When we gather or praise Him individually, we unite our devotion with generations of believers throughout the ages who have done the same.

Continuing the theme, the psalmist extends his call to include instruments, declaring *Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings* (v. 2). These instruments were commonly used in ancient Israel's temple worship, possibly in Jerusalem where the community would

gather for sacrificial rites and communal singing. Such tools not only accompanied vocal praise but also symbolized creativity and unique gifts offered back to God.

The mention of specific instruments serves as a reminder that *praise* can be expressed in a variety of ways. Musical worship, whether it be with a lyre, a *harp*, or any other device, allows for deeper connection and emotional expression. The physical act of playing skillfully on these instruments conveys reverence, dedication, and joy, demonstrating that every form of worship should be approached with care and sincerity.

The psalmist then exclaims *Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy* (v. 3), urging fresh expressions of worship to the God who continuously reveals new facets of His goodness. A *new song* signals a response to fresh blessings or newly discovered truths about His character. It also hints at spiritual renewal and creative worship, where believers continually find reasons to praise Him in new and vibrant ways.

By urging a *shout of joy*, the psalmist leaves little room for timid thanksgiving. Such an outburst resonates with the believers' deep gratitude and recognizes that genuine praise springs from hearts that are truly changed. Throughout the Bible, these shouts or cries of praise mark moments of victory, realization of God's power, and gratitude for His deliverance.

The psalm turns toward God's nature when it states *For the word of the LORD is upright, And all His work is done in faithfulness* (v. 4). Here, *word* can refer to His decrees, promises, and instructions. Believers are reminded that every utterance and plan originating from God stands firm and righteous. This conviction encourages trust since His words do not falter or lead astray.

The reliability of the Lord's work flows from His unchanging character. From the beginnings of creation all the way through biblical history, everything God sets into motion reflects His trustworthy nature. His faithfulness operates in both grand, universe—shaping events and in the personal details of each life, allowing servants of God to place confidence in Him.

Finally, the psalmist describes God's heart, declaring *He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD* (v. 5). This statement reveals that the Lord's rules and structures are not arbitrary. The moral foundations He establishes are an overflow of His love, exhibiting the harmony between moral responsibility and divine compassion.

Because *the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD*, we see evidence of His benevolence everywhere. It reminds believers that God's goodness is not confined to a single place or people but extends to all creation. His righteousness and justice ensure wrongs will ultimately be set right, while His lovingkindness envelops humanity, offering hope through every season of life.

Commentary on Psalm 33

Psalm 33

This is a psalm of praise; it is probable that David was the penman of it, but we are not told so, because God would have us look above the penmen of sacred writ, to that blessed Spirit that moved and guided them. The psalmist, in this psalm,

- I. Calls upon the righteous to praise God ([v. 1-3](#)).
- II. Furnishes us with matter for praise. We must praise God,
 - 1. For his justice, goodness, and truth, appearing in his word, and in all his works ([v. 4, 5](#)).
 - 2. For his power appearing in the work of creation ([v. 6-9](#)).
 - 3. For the sovereignty of his providence in the government of the world ([v. 10, 11](#)) and again ([v. 13-17](#)).
 - 4. For the peculiar favour which he bears to his own chosen people, which encourages them to trust in him ([v. 12](#)) and again ([v. 18-22](#)).

We need not be at a loss for proper thoughts in singing this psalm, which so naturally expresses the pious affections of a devout soul towards God.

C. H. Spurgeon Psalm 33

PSALM 33

[Exposition](#)

[Explanatory Notes and Quaint Sayings](#)

[Hints to the Village Preacher](#)

TITLE.—This song of praise bears no title or indication of authorship; to teach us, says Dickson, "to look upon Holy Scripture as altogether inspired of God, and not put price upon it for the writers thereof."

SUBJECT AND DIVISION.—The praise of Jehovah is the subject of this sacred song. The righteous are exhorted to praise him, [Psa 33:1-3](#); because of the excellency of his character, [Psa 33:4-5](#); and his majesty in creation, [Psa 33:6-7](#). Men are bidden to fear before Jehovah because his purposes are accomplished in providence, [Psa 33:8-11](#). His people are proclaimed blessed, [Psa 33:12](#). The omniscience and omnipotence of God, and his care for his people are celebrated, in opposition to the weakness of an arm of flesh, [Psa 33:13-19](#); and the Psalm concludes with a fervent expression of confidence, [Psa 33:20-21](#), and an earnest prayer, [Psa 33:22](#).

Alexander Maclaren

Psalm 33

PSALM 33

1 Rejoice aloud, ye righteous, in Jehovah,
For the upright praise is seemly.

2 Give thanks to Jehovah with harp;
With ten-stringed psaltery play unto Him.

3 Sing to Him a new song,
Strike well [the strings] with joyful shouts.

4 For upright is the word of Jehovah,
And all His work is in faithfulness.

5 He loves righteousness and judgment,
Of Jehovah's loving-kindness the earth is full.

6 By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made,
And all their host by the breath of His mouth.

7 Who gathereth as an heap the waters of the sea,
Who layeth up the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear Jehovah,
Before Him let all inhabitants of the world stand in awe.

9 For He, He spoke and it was;
He, He commanded and it stood.

10 Jehovah has brought to nothing the counsel of the nations,
He has frustrated the designs of the peoples.

11 The counsel of Jehovah shall stand for ever,
The designs of His heart to generation after generation.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah,
The people He has chosen for an inheritance for Himself.

13 From heaven Jehovah looks down,
He beholds all the sons of men.

14 From the place where He sits, He gazes
On all the inhabitants of earth:—

15 Even He who forms the hearts of them all,
Who marks all their works.

16 A king is not saved by the greatness of [his] army,
A hero is not delivered by the greatness of [his] strength.

17 A horse is a vain thing for safety;

And by the greatness of its strength it does not give escape.

18 Behold the eye of Jehovah is on them who fear Him,

On them who hope for His loving-kindness,

19 To deliver their soul from death,

And to keep them alive in famine.

20 Our soul waits for Jehovah,

Our help and our shield is He.

21 For in Him shall our heart rejoice,

For in His holy name have we trusted.

22 Let Thy loving-kindness, Jehovah, be upon us,

According as we have hoped for Thee.

This is the last of the four psalms in Book I. which have no title, the others being [Psalms 1](#), [2](#), which are introductory, and [10](#) which is closely connected with [9](#) Some have endeavoured to establish a similar connection between [Psalm 32](#) and [Psalm 33](#); but, while the closing summons to the righteous in the former is substantially repeated in the opening words of the latter, there is little other trace of connection, except the references in both to "the eye of Jehovah" ([32:8](#), [33:18](#)); and no two psalms could be more different in subject and tone than these. The one is full of profound, personal emotion, and deals with the depths of experience; the other is devoid of personal reference, and is a devout, calm contemplation of the creative power and providential government of God. It is kindred with the later type of psalms, and has many verbal allusions connecting it with them. It has probably been placed here simply because of the similarity just noticed between its beginning and the end of the preceding. The reasons for the arrangement of the psalter were, so far as they can be traced, usually such merely verbal coincidences. To one who has been travelling through the heights and depths, the storms and sunny gleams of the previous psalms, this impersonal didactic meditation, with its historical allusions and entire ignoring of sins and sorrows, is indeed "a new song." It is apparently meant for liturgical use, and falls into three unequal parts; the first three verses and the last three being prelude and conclusion, the former summoning the "righteous" to praise Jehovah, the latter putting words of trust and triumph and prayer into their mouths. The central mass ([vv. 4-19](#)) celebrates the creative and providential work of God, in two parts, of which the first extends these Divine acts over the world ([vv. 4-11](#)) and the second concentrates them on Israel ([vv. 12-19](#)). The opening summons to praise takes us far away from the solitary wrestlings and communings in former psalms. Now

"The singers lift up their voice, And the trumpets make endeavour, Sounding, 'In God rejoice! In Him rejoice for ever!'"

But the clear recognition of purity as the condition of access to God speaks in this invocation as distinctly as in any of the preceding. "The righteous" whose lives conform to the Divine will, and only they can shout aloud their joy in Jehovah. Praise fits and adorns the lips of the "upright" only, whose spirits are without twist of self-will and sin. The direction of character expressed in the word is horizontal rather than vertical, and is better represented by "straight" than "upright." Praise gilds the gold of purity and adds grace even to the beauty of holiness. Experts tell us that the kinnor (harp, A.V. and R.V.) and nebel (psaltery) were both stringed instruments, differing in the position of the sounding board, which was below in the former and above in the latter, and also in the covering of the strings (v. Delitzsch, Eng. transl. of latest ed., I. 7, n.). The "new song" is not necessarily the psalm itself, but may mean other thanksgivings evoked by God's meditated-on goodness. But, in any case, it is noteworthy that the occasions of the new song are very old acts, stretching back to the first creation and continued down through the ages. The psalm has no trace of special recent mercies, but to the devout soul the old deeds are never antiquated, and each new meditation on them breaks into new praise. So inexhaustible is the theme that all generations take it up in turn, and find "songs unheard" and "sweeter" with which to celebrate it. Each new rising of the old sun brings music from the lips of Memnon, as he sits fronting the east. The facts of revelation must be sung by each age and soul for itself, and the glowing strains grow cold and archaic, while the ancient mercies which they magnify live on bright and young. There is always room for a fresh voice to praise the old gospel, the old creation, the old providence.

This new song is saturated with reminiscences of old ones, and deals with familiar thoughts which have come to the psalmist with fresh power. He magnifies the moral attributes manifested in God's self-revelation, His creative Word, and His providential government. "The word of Jehovah," in [ver. 4](#), is to be taken in the wide sense of every utterance of His thought or will ("non accipi pro doctrina, sed pro mundi gubernandi ratione," Calvin). It underlies His "works," as is more largely declared in the following verses. It is "upright," the same word as in [ver. 1](#), and here equivalent to the general idea of morally perfect. The acts which flow from it are "in faithfulness," correspond to and keep His word. The perfect word and works have for source the deep heart of Jehovah, which loves "righteousness and judgment," and therefore speaks and acts in accordance with these. Therefore the outcome of all is a world full of God's loving-kindness. The psalmist has won that "serene and blessed mood" in which the problem of life seems easy, and all harsh and gloomy thoughts have melted out of the sky. There is but one omnipotent Will at work everywhere, and that is a Will whose law for itself is the love of righteousness and truth. The majestic simplicity and universality of the cause are answered by the simplicity and universality of the result, the flooding of the whole world with blessing. Many another psalm shows how hard it is to maintain such a faith in the face of the terrible miseries of men, and the more complex "civilisation" becomes, the harder it grows; but it is well to hear sometimes the one clear note of gladness without its chord of melancholy.

The work of creation is set forth in [vv. 6-9](#), as the effect of the Divine word alone. The psalmist is fascinated not by the glories created, but by the wonder of the process of creation. The Divine will uttered itself, and the universe was. Of course the thought is parallel with that of Genesis, "God said, Let there be... and there was..." Nor are we to antedate the Christian teaching of a personal Word of God, the agent of creation. The old versions and interpreters, followed by Cheyne, read "as in a bottle" for "as an heap," vocalising the text differently from the present pointing; but there seems to be an allusion to the wall of waters at the passage of the Red Sea, the same word being used in Miriam's song; with "depths" in the next clause, there as here ([Exod. 15:8](#)). What is meant, however, here, is the separation of land and water at first, and possibly the continuance of the same power keeping them still apart, since the verbs in [ver. 7](#) are participles, which imply continued action. The image of "an heap" is probably due to the same optical delusion which has coined the expression "the high seas," since, to an eye looking seawards from the beach, the level waters seem to rise as they recede; or it may merely express the gathering together in a mass. Away out there, in that ocean of which the Hebrews knew so little, were unplumbed depths in which, as in vast storehouses, the abundance of the sea was shut up, and the ever-present Word which made them at first was to them instead of bolts and bars. Possibly the thought of the storehouses suggested that of the Flood when these were opened, and that thought, crossing the psalmist's mind, led to the exhortation in [ver. 8](#) to fear Jehovah, which would more naturally have followed [ver. 9](#). The power displayed in creation is, however, a sufficient ground for the summons to reverent obedience, and [ver. 9](#) may be but an emphatic repetition of the substance of the foregoing description. It is eloquent in its brevity and juxtaposition of the creative word and the created world. "It stood,"—"the word includes much: first, the coming into being (Entstehen), then, the continued subsistence (Bestehen), lastly, attendance (Dastehen) in readiness for service" (Stier).

From the original creation the psalmist's mind runs over the ages between it and him, and sees the same mystical might of the Divine Will working in what we call providential government. God's bare word has power without material means. Nay, His very thoughts unspoken are endowed with immortal vigour, and are at bottom the only real powers in history. God's "thoughts stand," as creation does, lasting on through all men's fleeting years. With reverent boldness the psalm parallels the processes (if we may so speak) of the Divine mind with those of the human; "counsel" and "thoughts" being attributed to both. But how different the issue of the solemn thoughts of God and those of men, in so far as they are not in accordance with His! It unduly narrows the sweep of the psalmist's vision to suppose that he is speaking of a recent experience when some assault on Israel was repelled. He is much rather linking the hour of creation with to-day by one swift summary of the net result of all history. The only stable, permanent reality is the will of God, and it imparts derived stability to those who ally themselves with it, yielding to its counsels and moulding their thoughts by its. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever," but the shore of time is littered with wreckage, the sad fragments of proud fleets which would sail in the teeth of the wind and went to pieces on the rocks.

From such thoughts the transition to the second part of the main body of the psalm is natural. [Vv. 12-19](#) are a joyous celebration of the blessedness of Israel as the people of so great a God. The most striking feature of these verses is the pervading reference to the passage of the Red Sea which, as we have already seen, has coloured [ver. 7](#). From Miriam's song come the designation of the people as God's "inheritance," and the phrase "the place of His habitation" ([Exod. 15:17](#)). The "looking upon the inhabitants of the earth," and the thought that the "eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear Him, to deliver their soul in death" ([vv. 14, 18](#)), remind us of the Lord's looking from the pillar on the host of Egyptians and the terrified crowd of fugitives, and of the same glance being darkness to the one and light to the other. The abrupt introduction of the king not saved by his host, and of the vanity of the horse for safety, are explained if we catch an echo of Miriam's ringing notes, "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea.... The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea" ([Exod. 15:4, 21](#)).

If this historical allusion be not recognised, the connection of these verses is somewhat obscure, but still discernible. The people who stand in special relation to God are blessed, because that eye, which sees all men, rests on them in loving-kindness and with gracious purpose of special protection. This contrast of God's universal knowledge and of that knowledge which is accompanied with loving care is the very nerve of these verses, as is shown by the otherwise aimless repetition of the thought of God's looking down on men. There is a wide all-seeingness, characterised by three words in an ascending scale of closeness of observance, in [vv. 13, 14](#). It is possible to God as being Creator: "He fashions their hearts individually," or "one by one," seems the best interpretation of [ver. 15 a](#), and thence is deduced His intimate knowledge of all His creatures' doings. The sudden turn to the impotence of earthly might, as illustrated by the king and the hero and the battle-horse, may be taken as intended to contrast the weakness of such strength both with the preceding picture of Divine omniscience and almightiness, and with the succeeding assurance of safety in Jehovah. The true reason for the blessedness of the chosen people is that God's eye is on them, not merely with cold omniscience nor with critical considering of their works, but with the direct purpose of sheltering them from surrounding evil. But the stress of the characterisation of these guarded and nourished favourites of heaven is now laid not upon a Divine act of choice, but upon their meek looking to Him. His eye meets with love the upturned patient eye of humble expectance and loving fear.

What should be the issue of such thoughts, but the glad profession of trust, with which the psalm fittingly ends, corresponding to the invocation to praise which began it? Once in each of these three closing verses do the speakers profess their dependence on God. The attitude of waiting with fixed hope and patient submission is the characteristic of God's true servants in all ages. In it are blended consciousness of weakness and vulnerability, dread of assault, reliance on Divine Love, confidence of safety, patience, submission and strong aspiration.

These were the tribal marks of God's people, when this was "a new song"; they are so to-day, for, though the Name of the Lord be more fully known by Christ, the trust in it is the same. A threefold good is possessed, expected and asked as the issue of this waiting. God is "help and shield" to those who exercise it. Its sure fruit is joy in Him, since He will answer the expectance of His people, and will make His name more fully known and more sweet to those who have clung to it, in so far as they knew it. The measure of hope in God is the measure of experience of His loving-kindness, and the closing prayer does not allege hope as meriting the answer which it expects, but recognises that desire is a condition of possession of God's best gifts, and knows it to be most impossible of all impossibilities that hope fixed on God should be ashamed. Hands, lifted empty to heaven in longing trust, will never drop empty back and hang listless, without a blessing in their grasp.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

Dr. Jerry Newcombe: The pastors and the American Revolution

'Every single one of the issues mentioned by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence had been preached from the American pulpits in New England before 1763'



By [Jerry Newcombe](#)

[June 16, 2026](#)

A Revolutionary War-era band performs as President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump arrive to the South Lawn to participate in the annual White House Easter Egg Roll, Monday, April 21, 2025. (Official White House photo by Joyce Boghosian)

Ministers and the church should have nothing to do with politics – or so we hear all the time.

Thankfully, during the settling and founding eras of America, that was not the dominant opinion.

In fact, ministers often helped lead the way to American independence. Christian educator Travis Witt of Virginia once remarked: "Every single one of the issues mentioned by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence had been preached from the American pulpits in New England before 1763." His remarks are well-documented in a 1928 (revised in 1958) [book](#) by Duke professor Alice M. Baldwin (1879-1960), titled, "The New England Clergy and the American Revolution."

For example, Baldwin notes: "The teachings of the New England ministers provide one unbroken line of descent. For two generations and more New Englanders had heard their rights and the political philosophy underlying them carefully analyzed; they had been taught that these rights were sacred and came from God and that to preserve them they had a legal right of resistance and, if necessary, a right to resume the powers they had delegated and alter and abolish governments and by common consent establish new one." (p. 169)

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And she adds, "With a vocabulary enriched by the Bible they made resistance and at last independence and war a holy cause. ... Resistance thus became a sacred duty to a people who still were, on the whole, a religious people." (p. 177)

For Providence Forum, I have produced a 7-part [series](#) of hour-long documentaries on the Judeo-Christian roots of America. We call it "The Foundation of American Liberty" series. The above-mentioned Travis Witt was a guest in this series, and his remark can be found in the [episode](#) on the Declaration, titled "Endowed By Their Creator."

Of course, in America at 250, what we are celebrating is the 250th anniversary of the acceptance by voice-vote of the final wording of the [Declaration](#) by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

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America began long before July 4, 1776. And in different ways, ministers of the Gospel helped pave the way.

One of our Foundation [programs](#) is titled "The Road to Independence," and one of the facets of this program is the role of the church, officially and unofficially, in the whole push for American independence.

When this documentary was first released, it caught the attention of a notable Christian leader. On March 1, 2023, I was privileged to be interviewed by the late Charlie Kirk on his radio show.

He opened that program, [saying](#), "Hey everybody, today on the Charlie Kirk show, Dr. Newcombe joins us. He has an amazing film, 'The Road to Independence,' Is America a Christian nation?"

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The film shows how preaching on political subjects was nothing new to the ministers of New England. Elections were usually annual events, and before the ballots were cast, a minister would preach an "Election Day" sermon.

Rev. Dan Fisher, a Baptist minister and author in Oklahoma, has even written a whole [book](#) on the role of ministers, titled, "Bringing Back the Black Robed Regiment."

Fisher [remarks](#) in our film, "There never was an official regiment of black robed preachers, but the black robed regiment is the name that the British gave for these, what we often call, patriot pastors, these pastors that preached patriotism. They founded – they believed in Scripture, and so, they were the ones recruiting the men to go and fight. And they would typically preach in black robes on Sunday mornings."

In Mel Gibson's [movie](#), "The Patriot," he has a scene where a minister takes off his robe in the pulpit, revealing he is actually dressed in military garb, and he recruits men in the church to join the cause of freedom to defend their homeland.

That scene is based on a true story that took place in a church in Woodstock, Virginia, on Jan. 21, 1776, when Rev. Peter John Muhlenberg [preached](#) on Ecclesiastes 3, saying, There's a time and a place for everything – and now is a time for war.

And yet, Peter's older brother, Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, serving as a minister in New York, [rebuked](#) Peter in a letter exhorting him to stay out of politics. Interestingly, the older brother had a change of heart when the British invaded New York City and desecrated his church.

Later, both brothers served as U.S. congressmen, despite being ministers, and Frederick went on to become the first Speaker of the House of Representatives. It is *his* signature on the [First Amendment](#) (as well as John Adams, representing the Senate).

This example is just the tip of the iceberg of ministers being involved in early American politics. One of their favorite texts was

[Galatians 5:1](#): "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Franklin's Appeal for Prayer at the Constitutional Convention

May 29, 2023

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The Constitutional Convention

Although authorized by the Congress of the Confederation, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 was nevertheless cloaked with secrecy and confidentiality. The official papers of the Convention sat in the Department of State, untouched, until 1818. Yet in retrospect, the gathering reveals both the men and the issues they faced during the founding era. Through analysis of both the Philadelphia debates and the various ratification conventions, we realize the concerns and needs of a developing nation.

Men of means and education pursued a limited, federal government capable of providing political and economic stability in a land of diverse sectional interests. The fight for freedom had been experiential; much of the struggle for structure and unity would be theoretical. The doctrines of scholars would meet with the practical necessities of an emerging nation, resulting in a balanced blend of pragmatism and principle, the Constitution of the United States of America.

However, one of the most controversial issues, State's representation, could have nullified the entire process. Tempers flared and interests clashed as the delegates sought their respective goals. It was within this quagmire of divisiveness that the elder statesman, Benjamin Franklin, offered his famous appeal for harmony and conciliation, an appeal for God's intervention.

His solicitation seems almost out of character with our current understanding of the man. Wasn't he a deist, believing in the clockmaker God who stepped back to watch the hands of time move toward eternity? Could God govern in the affairs of men, or nations, from such a distance? Perhaps Franklin's appeal for prayer was out of despair and desperation; perhaps he was senile as some suggest; or perhaps we have misunderstood Franklin's deism, misreading the man in the coonskin cap.

William Steele's Account

Confusion still surrounds Franklin's efforts, however. The primary source of this confusion appears to be a letter from William Steele to his son, Jonathan. Written in September 1825, the letter contained William's recollection of a conversation with General Jonathan Dayton. (Dayton was a member of the Constitutional Convention and afterwards Speaker of the House of Representatives). This account also found its way into at least one national periodical, the *National Intelligencer*, and other sources as well. As Steele tells it, Dayton offered this account of Franklin's words:

We have arrived, Mr. President . . . at a very momentous and interesting crisis in our deliberations. Hitherto our views have been as harmonious, and our progress as great as could reasonably have been expected. But now an unlooked for and formidable obstacle is thrown in our way, which threatens to arrest our course, and, if not skillfully removed, to render all our fond hopes of a constitution abortive.

It is, however, to be feared that the members of this Convention are not in a temper, at this moment, to approach the subject in which we differ, in this spirit. I would, therefore, propose, Mr. President, that, without proceeding further in this business at this time, the Convention shall adjourn for three days, in order to let the present ferment pass off, and to afford time for a more full, free, and dispassionate investigation of the subject; and I would earnestly recommend to the members of this Convention, that they spend the time of this recess, not in associating with their own party, and devising new arguments to fortify themselves in their old opinions, but that they mix with members of opposite sentiments, lend a patient ear to their reasonings, and candidly allow them all the weight to which they may be entitled; and

when we assemble again, I hope it will be with a determination to form a constitution, if not such an one as we can individually, and in all respects, approve, yet the best, which, under existing circumstances, can be obtained.

(Here the countenance of Washington brightened, and a cheering ray seemed to break in upon the gloom which had recently covered our political horizon.) The doctor continued:

Before I sit down, Mr. President, I will suggest another matter; and I am really surprised that it has not been proposed by some other member at an earlier period of our deliberations. I will suggest, Mr. President, that propriety of nominating and appointing, before we separate, a chaplain to this Convention, whose duty it shall be uniformly to assemble with us, and introduce the business of each day by and address to the Creator of the universe, and the Governor of all nations, beseeching Him to preside in our council, enlighten our minds with a portion of heavenly wisdom, influence our hearts with a love of truth and justice, and crown our labors with complete and abundant success!

The doctor sat down, and never did I [General Dayton] behold a countenance at once so dignified and delighted as was that of Washington, at the close of the address! Nor were the members of the Convention, generally less affected. The words of the venerable Franklin fell upon our ears with a weight and authority, even greater than we may suppose an oracle to have had in a Roman Senate! A silent admiration superseded, for a moment, the expression of that assent and approbation which was strongly marked on almost every countenance.

The Recess

According to Steele, Dayton then recalled Alexander Hamilton's protest and sarcastic refusal to accept "foreign aid." And then he continued:

Washington fixed his eye upon the speaker [Hamilton], with a mixture of surprise and indignation, while he uttered this impertinent and impious speech, and then looked around to ascertain in what manner it affected others. They did not leave him a moment to doubt; no one deigned to reply, or take the smallest notice of the speaker, but the motion for appointing a chaplain was instantly seconded and carried; whether under the silent disapprobation of Mr. H___, or his solitary negative, I do not recollect. The motion for an adjournment was then put and carried unanimously, and the Convention adjourned accordingly.

The three days of recess were spent in the manner advised by Doctor Franklin. The opposite parties mixed with each other, and a free and frank interchange of sentiments took place. On the fourth day we assembled again, and if great additional light had not been thrown on the subject, every unfriendly feeling had been expelled; and a spirit of conciliation had been cultivated, which promised, at least, a calm and dispassionate reconsideration of the subject [state's representation].

William Steele closed the letter confident he had "*faithfully stated the facts*" motivated by a desire to "*perpetuate the facts.*" From this source, and others, one might easily draw the conclusion that Franklin's efforts brought a harmonious reconciliation to the Convention.

James Madison's Letter

James Madison, however, in a letter to Jared Sparks on April 8, 1831, referred to this account as "*erroneously given, with every semblance of authenticity.*" And then in another letter to Thomas S. Grimke (January 6, 1834), Madison went further in his clarification concerning the "*proposition of Doctor Franklin in favor of a religious service in the Federal Convention.*" He said:

The proposition was received and treated with the respect due to it; but the lapse of time which had preceded, with consternations growing out of it, had the effect of limiting what was done, to a reference of the proposition to a highly respectable Committee.

He then continued:

That the communication [Steele's account of Dayton's testimony] was erroneous is certain; whether from misapprehension or misrecollection, uncertain.

Journal of the Constitutional Convention

Madison's Journal originally contained a summary of Franklin's words. However, in a later revision, he inserted the speech as written in Franklin's own handwriting. It is the authoritative source concerning the Convention.

Mr. President

The small progress we have made after 4 or five weeks close attendance & continual reasonings with each other,"our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes and ays, is methinks a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, some we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of Government, and examined the different forms of those Republics which having been formed with the seeds of their own dissolution now no longer exist. And we have viewed Modern States all round Europe, but find none of their Constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the Contest with G. Britain, when we were sensible of danger we had daily prayer in this room for the divine protection. "Our prayers, Sir, were

heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a Superintending providence in our favor. To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that “except the Lord build the House they labour in vain that build it.” I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the Builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and byword down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing Governments by Human Wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the Clergy of the City be requested to officiate in that service.

Mr. Sherman (from Connecticut) seconded the motion.

Mr. Hamilton and several others expressed their apprehensions that however proper such a resolution might have been at the beginning of the convention, it might at this late day, 1, bring on it some disagreeable animadversions [criticisms], and 2, lead the public to believe that the embarrassments and dissensions within the Convention, had suggested this measure. It was answered by [Dr. Franklin], Mr. Sherman and others, that the past omission of a duty could not justify a further omission, that the rejection of such a proposition would expose the Convention to more unpleasant animadversions than the adoption of it: and that the alarm out of doors that might be excited for the state of things within, would at least be as likely to good as ill.

Mr. Williamson, observed that the true cause of the omission could not be mistaken. The Convention had no funds.

Mr. Randolph proposed in order to give a favorable aspect to the measure, that a sermon be preached at the request of the convention on the 4th of July, the anniversary of Independence; and thenceforward prayers be used in the Convention every morning. Dr. Franklin seconded this motion. After several unsuccessful attempts for silently postponing the matter by adjourning was at length carried, without any vote on the motion.

Franklin's Account

But the final word in this discussion comes from Franklin's own pen. In John Bigelow's, *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, a footnote (pg. 378) referring to Franklin's speech states:

To the original draft of this speech there is the following note appended in the handwriting of Dr. Franklin: "The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayer unnecessary." [This same notation is given as a footnote on page 452 of Max Farrand's *Records of the Federal Convention*.]

Bigelow continues by saying "the time which had elapsed without prayers in the convention, sufficiently explains the failures of Franklin's motions."

Analysis of the Accounts

The response to Franklin's motion should not be viewed as an atheistic or deistic expression from the delegates. In their view, prayer was an official ceremony. It required ordained clergy to "officiate," (as Franklin noted) and the funds to pay them (as Williamson observed). It was not as simple as asking "Brother George" to ask God's blessings on their deliberations. This was not the general approach to religion during this time in history. Orthodox formality was the preferable style and manner, at least in official settings. For example, when Rev. Duche offered the first prayer in the Continental Congress, he appeared "*with his clerk and in his pontificals, and read several prayers in the established form.*" Granted, he also unexpectedly "*struck out into an extemporary prayer,*" but the point is made: religious formality was the order of the day.

Those orders were followed a few days later at the Reformed Calvinist Lutheran Church. In response to Franklin's appeal, Virginia's Mr. Randolph offered a counter proposal. He recommended that a "*sermon be preached at the request of the convention on the 4th of July, the anniversary of Independence, & thence forward prayers be used in ye Convention every morning.*" One report has Washington leading most of the Convention delegates to the church, where James Campbell preached a sermon trusting in the wisdom of the delegates to establish a "*free and vigorous government.*"

As it turns out, after the Convention, and nine days after the first Constitutional Congress convened with a quorum (April 9, 1789), they implemented Franklin's recommendation. Two chaplains of different denominations were appointed, one to the House and one to the Senate, with a salary of \$500 each. This practice continues today, posing no threat to the First Amendment. How could it? The men who authorized the chaplains wrote the Amendment.

Conclusion

The real strength of Franklin's motion, from the conservative viewpoint, is as an example of his supposed "deism," which is a far cry from what some would make it out to be. Franklin obviously felt that God governed in the affairs of men, not exactly the general understanding of today's deism. But many people attempt to anachronously impose today's definition upon

Franklin, Jefferson, and others, implying they had nothing whatsoever to do with religion. This is usually done to support a broad, separationist approach to religion and government, which is inconsistent with the words and deeds of those who created America's political system.

Franklin, as well as all of the Framers of the Constitution, realized the value of religion in society. And they realized the value of prayer in the weightier matters of politics. As it turns out, Dr. Franklin was not senile at all; he was simply asking for divine assistance in what proved to be the formation of our American system. Perhaps there were no "official" prayers during the Convention, but denying that the delegates wanted God's blessing and direction, now that would be senility.

Summary

- An 1825 letter gave an erroneous account of Franklin's appeal.
- Various periodicals circulated the story, assuming it to be correct.
- Numerous others have presented the inaccurate details.
- Madison's 1831 letter called the account erroneous.
- Madison's 1834 letter clarified:

The proposition was received and treated with the respect due to it; but the lapse of time which had preceded, with consternations growing out of it, had the effect of limiting what was done, to a reference of the proposition to a highly respectable Committee.

- Franklin drafted his appeal, and Madison included the written speech in his revised Journal.
- Franklin offers the final say on the matter:

The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayer unnecessary.

- However, Virginia's Mr. Randolph offered a counter proposal: a July Fourth Sermon at the Convention's request, followed by morning prayers. Washington led most of the delegates to hear the sermon and enjoy the festivities.
- Although they did not bring in Chaplains, the first Congress instituted a Chaplaincy program that exists to this day.

If We Forget Our Story, We Lose Our Identity



BY TONY PERKINS/WASHINGTON STAND | JUNE 23, 2026

More than two decades ago, in 2004, Harvard professor Samuel Huntington warned in his book "Who Are We?" that America was facing a crisis of identity. He argued that a nation cannot remain united without a common culture, a common history, and a common understanding of itself. Remove those foundations, and a society inevitably fragments into competing tribes, interests, and identities.

Huntington pointed to the Anglo-Protestant Creed as the core of America's unifying identity. He argued that America's political institutions and civic ideals did not arise in a vacuum but were rooted in a culture shaped by Protestant Christianity.

If Huntington identified the foundation of America's shared identity, educator E.D. Hirsch explained how that identity was transmitted: through a common biblical literacy that provided Americans with a shared vocabulary, history, and moral framework. Without that shared knowledge, the cultural foundations of national identity inevitably begin to erode.

The Founding Fathers were immersed in biblical imagery. Benjamin Franklin famously proposed a national seal depicting Moses at the Red Sea. The Israelites' exodus taught lessons about liberty, tyranny, divine providence, and national purpose.

The Bible shaped how Americans understood freedom, law, covenant, human dignity, and self-government. Even those who were not orthodox Christians were influenced by the biblical worldview that permeated colonial America.

But what happens when that biblical literacy disappears?

A nation that forgets its story loses its identity. And when a people lose their identity, they become fragmented. That is precisely what Huntington warned about. Americans increasingly identify themselves by race, class, political ideology, or special interest rather than by a common national story.

The consequences of this loss of historical memory extend beyond America's understanding of itself. They also affect America's understanding of one of the most important sources of its cultural inheritance: the Jewish people and the biblical story of Israel.

America's affinity for the Jewish people did not begin with the modern State of Israel. For generations, Americans viewed Jewish history through the lens of Scripture and found in Israel's story lessons about liberty, covenant, and national purpose.



As biblical literacy declines, Israel is increasingly viewed only through a contemporary political lens, ignoring its biblical and historical foundations. Meanwhile, anti-Semitism has risen across America and the West. Certainly, anti-Semitism has many causes. Yet it is difficult to ignore the connection between a society that no longer understands the Bible and one that increasingly misunderstands the Jewish people whose history fills its pages.

The rise of anti-Semitism and the weakening of support for Israel did not occur overnight. The ground was prepared over decades as biblical literacy declined, historical memory faded, and Americans became disconnected from the sources that once helped them understand both their own identity and the identity of the Jewish people.

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, we have an opportunity not merely to commemorate our history but to recover it. We can rediscover the biblical foundations that shaped our nation and strengthen the shared identity Huntington warned was slipping away.

The Bible is not merely a religious text but one of the foundational documents of American civilization. To understand America, one must understand the Bible. And when that understanding is lost, we lose not only part of our history but part of our identity.

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Lesson 4: American Founding and Federal Era (1785-early 1800s)

September 27, 2023

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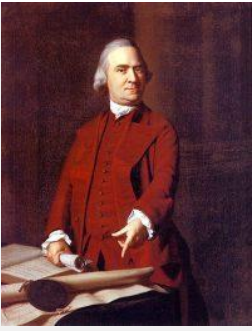
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Lesson 4: American Founding and Federal Era (1785-early 1800s)

Words such as “*virtue*,” “*piety*” and “*learning*” are emphasized in the writings of our Founding Fathers and therefore appear in many of our governmental documents. In fact, when modern political scientists examined seventy-six of the most representative pamphlets and essays written by our Founders, they found the word “*virtue*” stressed over 300 times. [\[1\]](#) Additionally, various synonyms meaning the same thing (such as “*religion*,” “*morality*,” and “*knowledge*”) also frequently appear in official writings (such as in the famous Northwest Ordinance, by which territories become states). [\[2\]](#) Significantly, to our Founders, “*religion*” meant Christianity; “*morality*” or “*virtue*” meant Biblical character; and “*knowledge*” meant information or skills acquired within the framework of a Biblical worldview.

The Founders consistently emphasized the elements of religion and morality (or piety and virtue) as the indispensable foundation and supports of our American system of government. They believed that if these pillars were lost, then our nation would eventually collapse. Notice some of their representative declarations affirming this:

[I]t is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. [\[3\]](#) [R]eligion and virtue are the only foundations...of republicanism and of all free governments. [\[4\]](#) Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other. [\[5\]](#) **John Adams**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION



Samuel Adams

[R]eligion and good morals are the only solid foundations of public liberty and happiness. [6] While the people are virtuous, they cannot be subdued; but when once they lose their virtue, they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader. [7] **Samuel Adams**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION

[A] free government...can only be happy when the public principles and opinions are properly directed...by religion and education. It should therefore be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality. [8] **Abraham Baldwin**, SIGNER OF THE CONSTITUTION



Charles Carroll

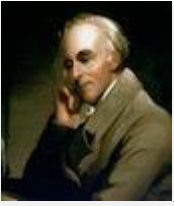
Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion (whose morality is so sublime and pure)... are undermining the solid foundation of morals- the best security for the duration of free governments. [9] **Charles Carroll**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION

Sensible of the importance of Christian piety and virtue to the order and happiness of a state, I cannot but earnestly commend to you every measure for their support and encouragement....Manners, by which not only the freedom but the very existence of the republics are greatly affected, depend much upon the public institutions of religion. [10] **John Hancock**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION

[T]he great pillars of all government and of social life [are] virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible. [11] **Patrick Henry**

[F]or avoiding the extremes of despotism or anarchy...the only ground of hope must be on the morals of the people.[12]I believe that religion is the only solid base of morals and that morals are the only possible support of free governments. [13] [T]herefore education should teach the precepts of religion and the duties of man towards God. [14] **Gouverneur Morris**, SIGNER OF THE CONSTITUTION

Religion and morality...[are] necessary to good government, good order, and good laws. [15] **William Paterson**, SIGNER OF THE CONSTITUTION



Benjamin Rush

Without [religion] there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. [\[16\]](#) **Benjamin Rush**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION



George Washington

The practice of morality being necessary for the well-being of society, He [God] has taken care to impress its precepts so indelibly on our hearts that they shall not be effaced by the subtleties of our brain. [\[17\]](#) [T]he studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make [us] better citizens. [\[18\]](#) **Thomas Jefferson**, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION

Purity of morals [is] the only sure foundation of public happiness in any country. [\[19\]](#) [R]eligion and morality are the essential pillars of civil society. [\[20\]](#) **George Washington**, SIGNER OF THE CONSTITUTION

[T]he primary objects of government are the peace, order, and prosperity of society....To the promotion of these objects, particularly in a republican government, good morals are essential. Institutions for the promotion of good morals are therefore objects of legislative provision and support, and among these...religious institutions are eminently useful and important. [\[21\]](#) **Oliver Ellsworth**, DELEGATE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION; CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT

[G]overnment...is a firm compact sanctified from violation by all the ties of personal honor, morality, and religion. [\[22\]](#) **Fisher Ames**, FRAMER OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS

[T]he cultivation of the religious sentiment represses licentiousness...inspires respect for law and order, and gives strength to the whole social fabric. [\[23\]](#) Moral habits...cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits....Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. [\[24\]](#) **Daniel Webster**, "DEFENDER OF THE CONSTITUTION"



Noah Webster

Republican government loses half of its value where the moral and social duties are...negligently practiced. To exterminate our popular vices is a work of far more importance to the character and happiness of our citizens, than any other improvements in our system of education. [25] [T]he moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws...All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible. [26] **Noah Webster**, “SCHOOLMASTER TO AMERICA”

There are many additional examples affirming the Founders’ belief that Biblical morality and Biblical faith were vital for the proper operation of both society and civil government. But the Founders did more than just hold these convictions, they also acted on them. This is apparent in the very first governments they created.

Significantly, America’s separation from Great Britain had wiped out all state and colonial governments, for each had been British authorized and operated. New purely American governments were needed, so many of the Founders who signed the Declaration returned home to assist in drafting their state’s first constitution and establishing its new government. They took deliberate steps to ensure that both Biblical religion and morality were directly incorporated into government from the beginning.

For example, Declaration signers George Read and Thomas McKean helped draft [27] Delaware’s 1776 constitution, which required:

Every person who shall be chosen a member of either house, or appointed to any office or place of trust...shall...make and subscribe the following declaration, to wit: “I, _____, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God – blessed forevermore; and I do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine inspiration.” [28]

Massachusetts’ 1780 constitution (written with the help of Declaration signers Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Robert Treat Paine, and John Adams, [29] as well as Constitution signer Nathaniel Gorham [30]) similarly required:

Any person chosen governor, lieutenant-governor, counselor, senator, or representative, and accepting the trust, shall—before he proceed to execute the duties of his place or office – make and subscribe the following declaration, viz. “I, _____, do declare, that I believe the Christian religion and have a firm persuasion of its truth.” [31]

Declaration signers Benjamin Franklin and James Smith of Pennsylvania helped write its 1776 Constitution, [32] which likewise stipulated:

And each member [of the legislature] before he takes his seat, shall make and subscribe the following declaration, viz: "I do believe in one God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, the Rewarder of the good, and the Punisher of the wicked; and I acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be given by Divine inspiration." [33]

Other constitutions contained similar clauses. [34] The Christian spirit undergirding America was so readily apparent even to the British that in England...

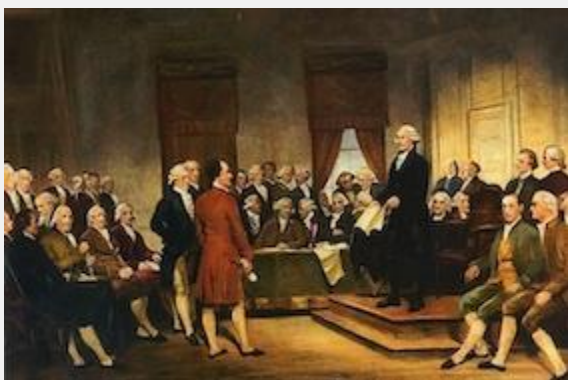
Sir Richard Sutton read a copy of a letter...from a governor in America to the Board of Trade showing that..."If you ask an American, 'Who is his master?' he will tell you he has none—nor any governor but Jesus Christ." [35]

Another reflection of the Founder's insistence that Biblical principles be part of public affairs is seen in the fact that all the states had Sabbath laws, requiring rest and abstinence from work on that day. In some cases, these laws continued for centuries; in fact, even today some states still use parts of those Sabbath laws.

Across the years, there were attempts to secularize the government and repeal these Sabbath laws and (until recent years) those efforts were largely rejected. For example, in 1838, the Legislature of New York received a petition seeking "*the repeal of the laws for the observance of the Sabbath.*" [36] They refused that call in a nearly unanimous vote, explaining:

With us it is wisely ordered that no one religion shall be established by law but that all persons shall be left free in their choice and in their mode of worship. Still, this is a Christian nation. Ninety-nine hundredths, if not a larger proportion of our whole population, believe in the general doctrines of the Christian religion. Our government depends for its being on the virtue of the people—on that virtue that has its foundation in the morality of the Christian religion and that religion is the common and prevailing faith of the people. There are, it is true, exceptions to this belief; but general laws are not made for excepted cases. [37]

The Articles of Confederation



George Washington, President of the Constitutional Convention, declared of the Convention, "The event is in the hands of God."

Just as the Founders created new *state* governments after their separation from Great Britain, so, too, they also created a *national* government. In 1777, they penned the Articles of Confederation, under which Congress governed itself throughout the remainder of the War for American Independence. But their experience over that time demonstrated that it had three major weaknesses:

1. Congress had no power to raise the money needed to fund its appropriate activities, such as national defense and operating the Continental Army.
2. Congress had no power to enforce any of its decisions.
3. There was no clear national leader—that is, no single executive head. Congress, as a body, had been the governing entity, but it was bulky, slow, and inefficient when it came to making important and timely decisions.

These flaws caused the government to be weak and inept, resulting in almost fatal problems. For example, because of these shortcomings, many times during the war the army lacked supplies and received no pay, which not only contributed to the suffering of the troops in places such as Valley Forge in 1777 but also caused some officers and men to threaten a military coup in 1783. It was evident that something must be done to correct these glaring weaknesses. Some proposed amending the Articles of Confederation; others, including James Madison, George Washington, and Noah Webster, felt that an entirely new system was needed.

The Constitutional Convention, 1787

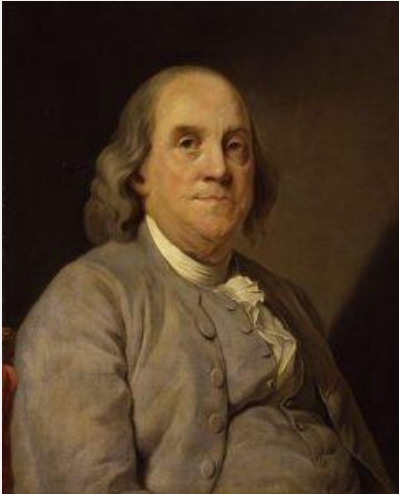
In an attempt to solve the problems in the national government, in the spring of 1787 delegates from across the country met together at the State House in Philadelphia (also known as Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence had been signed). Most came prepared to keep (but amend) the Articles of Confederation; but the Virginia delegates proposed an entirely new and different governing document. The initial reaction by the other delegates was hesitancy and doubt, believing any dramatic change would be opposed by the people and would fail; they felt that half-measures would be far more acceptable.

George Washington (who had been chosen by the other delegates to preside over this assembly) then arose and addressed the Convention in a brief but immortal speech. He agreed that it was indeed “*probable that no plan we propose will be adopted,*” but warned that if this occurred, then it was entirely possible that we would have to endure another dreadful war. [38] He therefore challenged the delegates to be bold, telling them, “*If—to please the people—we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work?*” [39] He concluded by urging the delegates to “*raise a standard*” of the best government they could possibly devise, no matter how much change it required, and then trust in the fact that “*The event is in the hands of God.*” [40] They accepted his challenge, but their way forward was neither easy nor smooth.

In fact, after only a few weeks of deliberations, the Constitutional Convention was on the verge of collapsing. For more than a month the delegates had been deadlocked on different

issues, such as that of fair representation between the small and large states. With this impasse, and no forward progress, patience was wearing thin and emotions were on edge. A somber George Washington began to despair of seeing success.

At this point, Benjamin Franklin, the oldest delegate (he was then 81-years-old at a time when the average lifespan in America was only about thirty-three [\[41\]](#)), asked for permission to speak. On previous occasions, he had always written his remarks and had someone else read them to the Convention, but this time Franklin was stirred to personally address the delegates, telling them:



Benjamin Franklin

In this situation of this assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Britain when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the Divine Protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor....And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel...and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of the city be requested to officiate in that service. [\[42\]](#)

Most modern observers, even critics, would certainly concede that these eleven sentences spoken by Franklin carry a general religious overtone, but they likely would not admit much more. However, there is much more. Unrealized by most today is that in those eleven

sentences, Franklin had specifically referenced or quoted by memory eight different Bible phrases that appear in thirteen different Bible verses:

1. “groping in the dark” (Job 12:25)
2. “the Father of Lights” (James 1:17)
3. “illuminate our understanding” (James 1:5)
4. “a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice” (Matthew 10:29, Luke 12:6)
5. “can an empire rise without His aid” (Daniel 4:17, Psalm 75:7)
6. “except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Psalm 127:1)
7. “the builders of Babel” (Genesis 11:1-9)
8. “a reproach and a byword” (Deuteronomy 28:37, 2 Chronicles 7:20, 1 Kings 9:7, Psalm 44:14)

Many Americans now know so little of the Bible that they no longer recognize these Bible references and phrases. In fact, unless speakers today announce they are citing a specific Bible verse, people listening usually don't recognize Bible quotations or references. But in the Founders' day, they didn't need to call attention to which Bible verses they were quoting, for nearly all Americans had learned to read from the Bible and studied it in school and therefore knew and recognized its phrases.

Roger Sherman of Connecticut seconded Franklin's motion for prayer, but then Hugh Williamson of North Carolina pointed out that they had no funds to pay the salary of a full-time chaplain. [43] Edmund Randolph of Virginia then proposed “*that a sermon be preached, at the request of the Convention, on the Fourth of July, the anniversary of Independence*” and that “*thenceforward prayers to be read in the Convention every morning.*” [44]

The Constitutional Convention therefore recessed for three days, attended church, and listened to patriotic orations. [45] They gathered at the Calvinist Reformed Church in Philadelphia, and the Rev. William Rogers prayed a special prayer over them:

[W]e fervently recommend to Thy fatherly notice...our Federal Convention...[F]avor them from day to day with Thy immediate presence; be Thou their wisdom and their strength! Enable them to devise such measures as may prove happily instrumental for healing all divisions and promoting the good of the great whole...that the United States of America may furnish the world with one example of a free and permanent government....May we....continue, under the influence of republican virtue, to partake of all the blessings of cultivated and civilized society. [46]



Calvin Coolidge

After those three days off, with attending church, listening to orations, and having special prayer, there was an apparent change in atmosphere: the delegates slowly began making

progress and were gradually able to reach a solution on major problematic issues. This resulted in the best form of government ever devised by man, and the US Constitution has proven to be the most valuable and stable civil document in history. [\[47\]](#)

As President Calvin Coolidge affirmed, *“no other document devised by the hand of man has brought so much progress and happiness to humanity. The good it has wrought can never be measured.”*[\[48\]](#) He correctly concluded that *“To live under the American Constitution is the greatest political privilege that was ever accorded to the human race.”*[\[49\]](#) The finished Constitution was signed by thirty-nine delegates on September 17, 1787 (which is why September 17 is annually celebrated nationally as “Constitution Day”), and then sent to the states for approval. The ratification debates in several of the state conventions were heated, and in many states the votes were close.

Significantly, some forty-four clergy from various denominations had been elected by their states as delegates to the state ratification conventions, [\[50\]](#) and in states such as Connecticut, North Carolina, and Massachusetts, the ratification conventions for the Constitution were actually held in churches. [\[51\]](#) Many of those clergy delegates (especially in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and New Hampshire) played key roles in securing approval for the Constitution.

For example, twenty clergy in Massachusetts served in that state’s convention, and their support was crucial since the Constitution was ratified in that state by a margin of only nineteen votes (187 to 168). Benjamin Lincoln of Massachusetts (one of George Washington’s most trusted generals during the final campaigns of the War for Independence) reported to his former Commander-in-Chief: *“It is very fortunate for us that the clergy are pretty generally with us.”*[\[52\]](#)

In South Carolina, celebration broke out after the successful ratification vote was announced. When order was restored, elder statesman Christopher Gadsden addressed the convention. Acknowledging his advanced age, he said that he would probably not live long enough to see the happy results of the final adoption of the Constitution by the entire nation, but for his own part, he declared: *“I shall say with good old Simeon [when he saw the Christ child brought into the Temple] ‘Lord, now let Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen the salvation of my country [Luke 2:29]’”*[\[53\]](#)

He believed the new Constitution would be a significant force for good in the nation, and was grateful to have lived long enough to see it approved before he died.

Despite sometimes vigorous debates, state after state continued approving the Constitution. New Hampshire became key; if it ratified, it would be the ninth state to do so, which meant that the necessary threshold had been reached for the Constitution to officially become the new governing document for America. Just prior to that vote, George Washington told American hero Marquis de Lafayette:

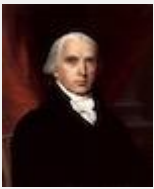
Should everything proceed with harmony and consent according to our actual wishes and expectations, it will be so much beyond anything we had a right to imagine or expect eighteen months ago that it will, as visibly as any possible event in the course of human affairs, demonstrate the finger of Providence. [\[54\]](#)

The Constitution was indeed ratified by New Hampshire; and all of the remaining states also eventually approved it.

Significantly, numerous Framers of the Constitution openly avowed that the final document reflected God's hand and providence. For example, signer William Samuel Johnson of Connecticut declared that the finished Constitution was the result of "*a signal [obvious] intervention of Divine providence.*" [\[55\]](#)

Alexander Hamilton similarly affirmed:

For my own part, I sincerely esteem it a system which without the finger of God never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests. [\[56\]](#)



James Madison

James Madison agreed, and reported:

It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty Hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the Revolution. [\[57\]](#)

According to these delegates (and others), the finger of God—that is, His Divine power (specifically referenced in Bible passages such as Exodus 8:19, Exodus 31:18, Deuteronomy 9:10, Luke 11:20)—had guided their writing of the Constitution. Benjamin Franklin certainly believed this to be the case, explaining:

[I] beg I may not be understood to infer that our general Convention was Divinely inspired when it formed the new federal Constitution...[yet] I can hardly conceive a transaction of such momentous importance to the welfare of millions now existing (and to exist in the posterity of a great nation) should be suffered to pass without being in some degree influenced, guided, and governed by that omnipotent, omnipresent, and beneficent Ruler in Whom all inferior spirits "live and move and have their being" [Acts 17:28]. [\[58\]](#)

George Washington (president of the Convention) similarly attested:

As to my sentiments with respect to the merits of the new Constitution...It appears to me then little short of a miracle that the delegates from so many different states...should unite in forming a system of national government. [\[59\]](#)



Benjamin Rush

Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration from Philadelphia (and a ratifier of the Constitution), closely monitored the proceedings and openly testified:

I do not believe that the Constitution was the offspring of [Divine] inspiration, but I am as perfectly satisfied that the Union of the states in its form and adoption is as much the work of a Divine Providence as any of the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testament were the effects of a Divine power. [\[60\]](#)

Clearly, many of the Founding Fathers involved with writing and approving the US Constitution believed that God had been a direct force in its creation.

The US Constitution

Sadly, despite the abundant historical evidence, numerous modern jurists, academics, and others today wrongly claim the US Constitution is a Godless document. In fact, in the book *Godless Constitution*, two professors firmly assert the Constitution was completely secular and not influenced by religious principles. On what authoritative historical sources do those professors rely to prove this errant claim? Significantly, in their “*Note on Sources*” at the end of the book, they candidly admit: “*we have dispensed with the usual scholarly apparatus of footnotes.*”[\[61\]](#)

There are *no* footnotes—they use no original historical documentation to prove their “historical” claims. What a startling admission, but this is reflective of what often occurs in far too much of academia and media today.

For several reasons, the truth is actually the opposite of what they claim.

First, many of the specific ideas presented in the Constitution were developed from the Christian culture of the preceding two centuries. This is confirmed by the extensive work of political scientists who embarked on an ambitious ten-year project to analyze writings from the Founding Era (1760-1805) with the goal of isolating and identifying the specific political authorities quoted during in those writings. If the sources of the specific quotes in those

writings could be identified, then the origin of the Founders' political ideas could be documented.

Selecting some 15,000 representative writings, the researchers isolated 3,154 direct quotations, and then documented the origin of those quotations. [\[62\]](#)

Their research revealed the single most cited authority in the writings of the Founding Era was the Bible: thirty-four percent of the documented quotes were taken from the Bible—a percentage almost four times higher than the second most-quoted source. [\[63\]](#)

A second proof that the Constitution is not secular or Godless is that it was deliberately designed to be utilized alongside the Declaration of Independence—a document that explicitly refers to God multiple times. The Declaration is the foundation upon which first our nation and then our Constitution were built, and the Declaration and the Constitution were intended to be used side-by-side—hand-in-hand; one will not work properly if separated from the other. As the US Supreme Court attested (1897):

[T]he latter [Constitution] is but the body and the letter of which the former [Declaration of Independence] is the thought and the spirit, and it is always safe to read the letter of the Constitution in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence. [\[64\]](#)

This reality was also affirmed by John Quincy Adams in his famous oration, "*The Jubilee* [that is, the fiftieth anniversary] *of the Constitution*," in which he explained:



John Quincy Adams

[T]he virtue which had been infused into the Constitution of the United States...was no other than the concretion of those abstract principles which had been first proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence....This was the platform upon which the Constitution of the United States had been erected. Its virtues, its republican character, consisted in its conformity to the principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and as its administration...[and] was to depend upon the...virtue, or in other words, of those principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Constitution of the United States. [\[65\]](#)

From the beginning, the interdependent relationship between these two documents was clear: together, both of them form our founding charter; and the entire framework of our government as expressed in both documents is built upon the Christian idea of man and government.

A third proof that the Constitution is not a Godless secular document is found in its internal content. Several of its specific clauses actually incorporate specifically recognizable Biblical provisions and rhetoric. Here are a few examples.

Sundays Excepted

The Constitution recognizes and sets apart Sunday from governmental work. Article II of the Constitution stipulates that when Congress passes a bill, for that bill to become law the president has ten days to sign it—not counting Sundays, or as the Constitution says, “*Sundays excepted.*”

Significantly, Christianity is the only major religion in the world that has a Sunday Sabbath. As the Supreme Court of California observed (1858), the Sabbaths observed by various religions included “*the Friday of the Mohammedan, the Saturday of the Israelite, or the Sunday of the Christian.*”[\[66\]](#) The South Carolina Supreme Court (1846) similarly noted the fact that the US Constitution officially recognized and set apart the Christian Sabbath:

Christianity is a part of the common law of the land, with liberty of conscience to all. It has always been so recognized....The US Constitution allows it as a part of the common law. The President is allowed ten days [to sign a bill], with the exception of Sunday. The Legislature does not sit; public offices are closed; and the government recognizes the day in all things....The observance of Sunday is one of the usages of the common law recognized by our US and state governments....Christianity is part and parcel of the common law. [\[67\]](#)

The Senate Committee on the Judiciary similarly commented (in 1853) on this constitutional provision, reaching the same obvious conclusion:

In the law, Sunday is a “*dies non*” [a day on which no legal business can be conducted]. It cannot be used for the services of legal process, the return of writs, or other judicial purposes. The executive department, the public establishments—are all closed on Sundays; on that day neither House of Congress sits....Here is a recognition by law and by universal usage not only of a Sabbath but of the Christian Sabbath, in exclusion of the Jewish or Mahammedan Sabbath....The recognition of the Christian Sabbath [by the Constitution] is complete and perfect. [\[68\]](#)

For decades, the specific recognition of the Christian Sabbath in the Constitution was cited by state and federal courts as proof of the Christian nature of our Constitution (and many other governing documents contain the same recognition of the Christian Sabbath).

Oath-Taking

The five oath-taking clauses in the Constitution also demonstrate its religious nature, for the Founders universally affirmed oath-taking to be a singularly religious activity. For example, James Madison called an oath “*the strongest of religious ties*”[\[69\]](#); John Adams said oaths were “*sacred obligations*”[\[70\]](#); Declaration signer John Witherspoon said taking an

oath “indeed is an act of worship”^[71]; Declaration signer Oliver Wolcott said that an oath “is a direct appeal to...God”^[72]; US Supreme Court Justice James Iredell said it was a “solemn appeal to the Supreme Being”^[73]; and George Washington warned to never let oath-taking become a secular activity.^[74] For the Founding Fathers and Framers of the Constitution, the oath-taking clauses were overtly religious.



Rufus King

In fact, Constitution signer Rufus King declared that oaths were a “principle which is proclaimed in the Christian system.”^[75] Consider how this “principle” from the “Christian system” is reflected in our American oath-taking process even today.

Traditionally, in taking an oath an individual raises their right hand, places the other on the Bible, takes the oath, and concludes with “So help me God.” Notice how the elements in this sequence directly parallels specific verses in the Bible.

For example, in Genesis 26:2-3, God told Isaac “I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father”—so God Himself swore an oath. Concerning the oath, God declared: “I raised my hand in an oath. . .” (Ezekiel 20:15, 23; 36:7; Psalm 106:26). The Scripture further tells us that “The Lord has sworn by His right hand” (Isaiah 62:8). And when God’s people were instructed about how to take an oath, they were told: “You shall . . . take oaths in his name” (Deuteronomy 10:20), which is what we do today when we use the phrase “So help me God.”

Clearly, the oath-taking clauses of the Constitution reflect specific Biblical practices.

Attestation Clause

The Constitution declares in Article VII that it was written “in the year of our Lord” 1787. Most legal documents of that day gave only the year; a few added “in the year of the Lord”; but the drafters of the Constitution personalized that phrase, making it “in the year of our Lord.” Our Founders deliberately dated the Constitution in a way that recognized the birth of Christ.

Other Clauses

Notice the extremely close parallels between the explicit wording of the Bible and the almost identical wording of that unique thought or idea in the Constitution. For instance:

The Natural-Born Citizen Presidential Requirement

- Concerning the selection of a national executive leader, the Bible says *“One from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother”* (Deuteronomy 17:15, ESV). The national leader cannot be an immigrant but must be native-born.
- Reflecting this same requirement, the Constitution stipulates: *“No person except a natural born citizen...shall be eligible to the office of President”* (Article II, Section 1, Paragraph 5). The Constitution allows a US Senator or Representative to be an immigrant, but it requires that the national leader—the President—must be native-born (or as the Bible specified, *“one from among your brethren”* who is *“not a foreigner”*).

Capital Punishment

iv. **Concerning the death penalty, the Bible says: “Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness.” (Deuteronomy 17:6, NKJV)**

v. **Concerning treason (a death penalty offense specifically named in the Constitution), the Constitution likewise requires: “No person shall be convicted of treason [and put to death], unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act” (Article, Section 3, Paragraph 3).**

Attainder

- The Bible says: *“The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself”* (Ezekiel 18:20, NKJV). The family is not to be punished for the wrongdoing of a single member of the family.
- Attainder (common in European governments at the time) punishes an entire family for the wrongdoing of one member of the family. For example, if one person in the family commits

treason, then the bloodline of the entire family becomes “corrupt” and for generations thereafter no member of the family can own property or enjoy other rights. But the Constitution, echoing the Bible’s teaching, says: *“No attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture, except during the life of the person attained”* (Art. III, Sec. 3, Clause 2).

And notice also the three branches of government—the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive—is set forth in Isaiah 33:22 (*“The Lord is our judge [the judicial] , the Lord is our lawgiver [the legislative] , the Lord is our king [the executive]”*). And the type of tax exemptions the Founders gave to churches (tax exemptions that still exist today) is found in Ezra 7:24: *“You have no authority to impose taxes, tribute or duty on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers, temple servants or other workers at this house of God.”*

And the mandate of republicanism set forth in the Constitution in Art. IV, Sec. 4 (that is, of selecting our leaders at the local, county, state, and federal levels) has its origins in Exodus 18:21 (*“select capable men from all the people...as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens”*) and also Deuteronomy 1:13. In fact, Noah Webster (the Founder personally responsible for Art. I, Sec 8, ¶8 of the Constitution) specifically cites Exodus 18:21, [\[76\]](#) as do Declaration signers John Witherspoon and Benjamin Rush. [\[77\]](#)

Further demonstrating the Constitution’s reliance on and incorporation of Biblical precepts, on multiple occasions John Adams directly affirmed that the principle undergirding the constitutional separation of powers was specifically taken from the Bible is teaching in Jeremiah 17:9. Adams explained:



John Adams

To expect self-denial from men when they have a majority in their favor (and consequently power to gratify themselves) is to disbelieve all history and universal experience—it is to disbelieve [Divine] Revelation and the Word of God, which informs us, “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” [Jeremiah 17:9]....There is no man so blind as not to see that to talk of founding a government upon a supposition that nations and great bodies of men, left to themselves, will practice a course of self-denial is either to babble like a new-born infant, or to deceive like an unprincipled impostor.[\[78\]](#)

To understand Adams' reference to Jeremiah 17:9, recall that the Founders largely viewed man from a Christian perspective. As such, they believed in what Christian theologians call "the depravity of man." This meant that man is in a fallen state; consequently, doing the wrong thing comes naturally to him—unless he has chosen to live by God's principles and the uplifting standards of the Bible. Because of man's sinful proclivity to do what is wrong, it was not likely that governments formed by men will automatically be inherently good and always serve the people. In fact, the record of countless governments across history repeatedly proves just the opposite—that nearly all governments which do not have internal safeguards and restraints that account for the inherent "depravity of man" will eventually become corrupt, selfish, oppressive, and tyrannical.

The Founders believed that the branches of government therefore needed to be separated from, and able to check and balance each other so that perhaps all might not go wicked at the same time. Thus, if the Judiciary became selfish and corrupt, then perhaps the Legislative and Executive could negate that influence; and the same was true with the other branches. So, using their Biblical understanding of the general fallen nature of man, the Founders were careful to construct a form of government that would not entrust any man or branch with too much power, knowing that sinful man tends to abuse that power.

Not only did John Adams cite Jeremiah 17:9 (on multiple occasions) to explain separation of powers, but the same point was similarly made by signers of the Constitution George Washington [79] and Alexander Hamilton. [80] And James Madison, affirming the same Biblical view of the fallen and sinful nature of man, in *Federalist 51* affirmed:

What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place oblige it to control itself.[81]

The Preamble to the Constitution

Significantly, the Preamble (that is, the introduction) to the Constitution set the tone for the limited nature of that document. It identifies five basic functions of civil government, and each reflects Biblical precepts. Those five enumerated purposes of America's federal government are to:

1. "Establish justice." Dozens of Bible verses specifically address this as being a proper and primary object of government. For example:
 - Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Execute true justice." (Zechariah 7:9)
 - All His ways are justice—a God of truth and without injustice. (Deuteronomy 32:4)
 - Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. (Psalm 89:14)Government must administer God's justice.

2. *“Insure domestic tranquility.”* In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, the Bible urges Christians to pray for civil rulers *“in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all Godliness and dignity.”* God wants His people to seek and enjoy, and the government to produce domestic tranquility.
3. *“Provide for the common defense.”* In Romans 13:4, the Bible affirms that civil government *“does not bear the sword in vain.”* The “sword” is a military weapon, and even Jesus Christ taught His disciples the legitimacy of being armed, telling them in Luke 22:36, *“Now...let him who has no sword sell his robe and buy one.”* Protecting innocent human life is a primary purpose of government (cf. Romans 13:1-5 and 1 Peter 2:13-14), and to fulfill this purpose, governments organize armies to protect citizens from international threats, and establish police forces to protect citizens from domestic threats.
4. *“Promote the general welfare.”* Romans 13:4 says that civil leaders are to be servants *“to you for good”*—they are to serve and seek the common good of all classes of citizens. God wants government to reflect equality in the same way He does; after all, God uses the same standards for all (see Matthew 5:45), and all were created equal by and before God. As the Bible affirms:

- Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? (Malachi 2:10)
- God does not show favoritism. (Acts 10:34, Romans 2:11)
- For the Lord your God...shows no partiality. (Deuteronomy 10:17)

By the way, notice that the Preamble says that government is to *“promote the general welfare,”* not *“provide for the general welfare.”* Numerous Scriptures make clear that needy individuals are to be cared for by private acts of charity from individuals, churches, and families, but not from government. The Framers of our government frequently reiterated the same point about promoting welfare.[\[82\]](#)

5. The fifth purpose of American government set forth in the preamble is to *“Secure the blessings of liberty.”* *“Blessings”* means *“God’s favor and protection”* and liberty is one of God’s blessings for all the people.
- Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof. (Leviticus 25:10)
 - Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Corinthians 3:17)
 - You have been called unto liberty. (Galatians 5:13)



The US Constitution contains many Biblical ideas and principles.

Significantly, the most basic of our Creator-endowed blessings are identified in the Declaration of Independence as well as in the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution as “*life, liberty, [and] private property.*” Just as God is the source of liberty, the Scriptures also identify Him as the source of life (Genesis 1:27, “*And God created man...*” and Acts 17:28 “*In Him we live, move, and have our being*”). God is also the source of private property (Ecclesiastes 5:19 states, “*For every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them...and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God*”; and 1 Chronicles 29:12, likewise affirms: “*Both riches and honor come from Thee.*”)

The purpose for which American government exists and the Constitution was written is set forth in the five clauses of the Preamble, and all five are firmly rooted in Bible teachings.

The First Inauguration, 1789



Washington took the Presidential oath of office with his hand on the Bible.

By June 1788, the Constitution had been ratified. Electors from the states then unanimously chose George Washington as the first president. He was the only president in US history to be elected with no opposition.[\[83\]](#)

Constitutional experts abounded at that first presidential inauguration in March 1789. Not only did George Washington help create the Constitution that was now to govern the nation but one fourth of the members of the Congress that organized and directed his inauguration had been delegates with him in writing that Constitution.[\[84\]](#)

Furthermore, this very same Congress also penned the First Amendment to the Constitution with its religion clauses. Clearly, therefore, this Congress definitely knew what was and was

not constitutional; so the religious activities that were part of the first inauguration may well be said to have had the approval of the greatest congressional collection of constitutional experts America has ever known.

That inauguration occurred in New York City, which served as the nation's capital during the first year of the new federal government. The preparations had been extensive; everything had been well planned; and religious activities abounded.

The newspapers reported on the very first activity of the inauguration:

[O]n the morning of the day on which our illustrious President will be invested with his office, the bells will ring at nine o'clock, when the people may go up to the house of God and in a solemn manner commit the new government, with its important train of consequences, to the holy protection and blessing of the Most High. An early hour is prudently fixed for this peculiar act of devotion and...is designed wholly for prayer. [85]

As the parade carrying Washington by horse-drawn carriage to the swearing-in was nearing Federal Hall, it was realized that no Bible had been obtained for administering the oath, and New York state law required that a Bible be part of the ceremony. [86] Parade Marshal Jacob Morton therefore hurried off and soon returned with a large 1767 Bible.

The inauguration ceremony was conducted on the balcony at Federal Hall; and with a huge crowd gathered below watching the proceedings, the Bible was laid upon a crimson velvet cushion and the oath of office was administered. The Bible was opened (at random) to Genesis 49; [87] Washington placed his left hand upon the open Bible, raised his right, took the oath of office, then bent over and reverently kissed the Bible. [88] Washington and the other officials then departed the balcony and went inside Federal Hall to the Senate Chamber, where Washington delivered his Inaugural Address.

In that first-ever presidential speech, Washington opened with his own heartfelt prayer. [89] He then called on his listeners to remember and acknowledge God. [90] Finishing his address, Washington offered his closing prayer. [91]

Moving on to the next inaugural activity, the Senate directed:

That after the oath shall have been administered to the President, he—attended by the Vice-President and members of the Senate and House of Representatives—proceed to St. Paul's Chapel to hear Divine service. [92]

The House approved the same resolution, [93] so the president and Congress thus went *en masse* to church as an official body. As affirmed by congressional records:

The President, the Vice-President, the Senate, and House of Representatives, &c., then proceeded to St. Paul's Chapel, where Divine Service was performed by the chaplain of Congress.[\[94\]](#)

There were thus at least seven distinctly religious activities included in this first presidential inauguration, and those activities have been repeated in whole or part in every inauguration since: (1) the use of the Bible to administer the oath; (2) solemnifying the oath with multiple religious expressions (placing a hand on the Bible, saying "So help me God," and then kissing the Bible); (3) prayers offered by the president himself; (4) religious content in the inaugural address; (5) the president calling on the people to pray or acknowledge God; (6) church inaugural worship services; and (7) clergy-led prayers.

Christianity and the Congress

The Continental Congress had passed an important act known as "The Northwest Ordinance." President Washington and Congress passed a federal law to ensure that this Ordinance would be in effect under the new Constitution.[\[95\]](#)

It is so important that even today, it is still considered one of the four organic, or fundamental American laws on which all others are to be based.[\[96\]](#) It not only declared that "*civil and religious liberty...form the basis whereon these republics, their laws, and constitutions are erected,*"[\[97\]](#) but it was also the first federal law to address education. Article III of that national law directly linked religion and public education together, declaring:

Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. [\[98\]](#)

(Across history, numerous state constitutions, complying with this provision, likewise declared that religion, morality, and knowledge were to be part of public education, and many state constitutions today still retain this requirement.[\[99\]](#))

Some six weeks later on September 25, 1789, Congress finished framing the Bill of Rights (the first Ten Amendments, setting forth the God-given inalienable rights that belong to every individual). The Bill of Rights was the Capstone of the Constitution. Significantly, 165 years later, US Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren declared:

I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under law, and the reservation of powers to the people....I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of the Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country. [\[100\]](#)

On that notable day in 1789 on which the Bill of Rights was completed, the *Journals of Congress* record that:



Ten of the twelve originally proposed amendments to

the Constitution were ratified by the states, and those then are now known as the Bill of Rights. Mr. [Roger] Sherman [the only Founding Father to sign all four founding documents] justified the practice of thanksgiving on any signal [important] event not only as a laudable one in itself but as warranted by precedents in Holy Writ [i.e., the Scriptures]: for instance, the solemn thanksgivings and rejoicings which took place in the time of Solomon after the building of the temple was a case in point [1 Kings 8, 2 Chronicles 5-7]. This example he thought worthy of Christian imitation on the present occasion. [\[101\]](#)

Congress therefore unanimously requested that President Washington issue a proclamation for the people of the United States to thank Almighty God for the “*opportunity peaceably to establish a Constitution of government for their safety and happiness.*” [\[102\]](#) Washington happily complied with that request, affirming that it is “*the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.*” [\[103\]](#)

Notice that George Washington said *nations*—not just individuals, but *nations*—have four distinct duties: (1) to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, (2) to obey His will, (3) to be grateful for His benefits, and (4) humbly to implore His protection and favor. Our Congress and our presidents have fulfilled this duty hundreds of times in our nation’s history.

The First Amendment

The First Amendment to the Constitution (part of the Bill of Rights passed by the Congress) is misunderstood by many people today, including numerous courts. Concerning religion, the Amendment states: “*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.*” Many today claim that this Amendment mandates a “*separation of church and state,*” which to them means that government can have nothing to do with religion in general, or Christianity in particular. But our Founders wrote this clause only to ensure that Congress could not establish a national church, or give official preference to a particular religious denomination, as had been the centuries-long practice for many European governments at that time.

The Founders considered the idea of separating God from government, or making government purely secular, a ridiculous notion. They repeatedly affirmed that God was

Supreme over all earthly governments; to them, any attempt to separate government from Godly principles would mean the death of the nation. As George Washington openly reminded Americans:

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. [\[104\]](#)

According to Washington, anyone who sought to remove religion or morality from government could not be considered a patriot—he was not a friend to or supporter of America. Founding Father John Witherspoon likewise declared:

[H]e is the best friend to American liberty who is the most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion, and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality of every king. Whoever is an avowed enemy of God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his country. [\[105\]](#)

The Founders were adamantly opposed to any notion of a secular society or a Godless public square.

The proper view of the meaning of the First Amendment was accurately set forth by early Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story (called a “Father of American Jurisprudence,” placed on the Court by President James Madison). Story authored the famous *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (1833), considered one of the most respected American legal works. Concerning the First Amendment, he explained:

At the time of the adoption of the Constitution, and of the Amendment to it now under consideration [i.e., the First Amendment], the general if not the universal sentiment in America was that Christianity ought to receive encouragement from the state....An attempt to level all religions and to make it a matter of state policy to hold all in utter indifference would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation....The real object of the [First] Amendment was not to countenance [approve], much less to advance Mahometanism, or Judaism, or infidelity, by prostrating Christianity, but to exclude all rivalry among Christian sects [denominations] and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment which should give to a hierarchy the exclusive patronage of the national government [i.e., establish an official national church or denomination, such as Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, or any other].[\[106\]](#)

Justice Story further explained:

In some of the states, Episcopalians constituted the predominant sect [denomination]; in others, Presbyterians; in other, Congregationalists; in others, Quakers; and in others again, there was a close numerical rivalry among contending sects [denominations]. It was

impossible that there should not arise perpetual strife and jealousy...if the national government were left free to create a [national] religious establishment...Thus the whole power over the subject of religion is left exclusively to the state governments.[107]

Significantly, even Thomas Jefferson (the man often credited today with being the originator of the phrase “separation of church and state”) adamantly opposed the concept of a secular nation, or Godless public square. In fact, he frequently introduced religious activities directly into the public arena.

For example, in 1774 while serving in the Virginia state legislature, he introduced a resolution for a colony-wide day of fasting and prayer. And in 1779 as governor of Virginia, he issued a proclamation calling for a statewide day of prayer and thanksgiving.[108]

In 1789, he began serving in the federal government as Secretary of State for President George Washington where he was placed in charge of laying out the city of Washington DC, including building the White House and the US Capitol. He then became Vice President under President John Adams, and during this time, on November 22, 1800, Congress moved into the newly constructed US Capitol building.

Two weeks later on December 4, 1800, with Theodore Sedgwick presiding over the House and Thomas Jefferson over the Senate, a plan was approved whereby Christian church services would be held every Sunday in the Hall of the House of Representatives[109] —the largest room in the Capitol building. The spiritual leadership for each Sunday’s service would alternate between the chaplain of the House and the chaplain of the Senate, each of whom would either personally conduct the service or invite some other minister to preach.

It was in this most recognizable of all government buildings that Vice President Jefferson attended church[110] —a practice he continued throughout his two terms as president.[111] In fact, US congressman Manasseh Cutler, who also attended church at the Capitol, affirmed that “*He [Jefferson] and his family have constantly attended public worship in the Hall.*”[112] Mary Bayard Smith, another attendee at the Capitol services, confirmed, “*Mr. Jefferson, during his whole administration, was a most regular attendant.*”[113] She even noted that Jefferson had a designated seat at the Capitol church: “*The seat he chose the first Sabbath, and the adjoining one, which his private secretary occupied, were ever afterwards by the courtesy of the congregation left for him and his secretary.*”[114]

Each Sunday, Jefferson rode his horse from the White House to the church at the Capitol, [115] a distance of 1.6 miles and a trip of about thirty minutes. He made this ride regardless of weather conditions. In fact, among Representative Cutler’s entries is one noting that “*[i]t was very rainy, but his [Jefferson’s] ardent zeal brought him through the rain and on horseback to the Hall.*”[116] Other diary entries similarly confirm Jefferson’s faithful attendance despite unfavorable weather.[117]

Interestingly, the Marine Corps band, now known as the President's Own Band, played worship services at the Capitol. [\[118\]](#) According to attendee Margaret Bayard Smith, the band, clad in their scarlet uniforms, made a “*dazzling appearance*” as they played from the gallery, providing instrumental accompaniment for the singing. [\[119\]](#) However, good as they were, they seemed too showy for the services and “*the attendance of the Marine Band was soon discontinued.*”[\[120\]](#)

Under President Jefferson, Sunday church services were also started at the War Department and the Treasury Department[\[121\]](#)—government buildings of the Executive Branch under Jefferson's direct control. If Jefferson thought such religious services in government buildings and government settings were unconstitutional or improper, he certainly had the power to stop them; but he did not. To the contrary, he helped start them and encouraged their use. Therefore, on any given Sunday, worshippers could choose between attending church at the US Capitol, the War Department, or the Treasury Department—all with the blessing of Jefferson. (By 1867, the church in the Capitol that Jefferson helped start had become the largest church in Washington, DC.[\[122\]](#))

When Jefferson was asked why he attended church at the Capitol, he answered:

No nation has ever yet existed or been governed without religion—nor can be. The Christian religion is the best religion that has been given to man and I, as Chief Magistrate of this nation, am bound to give it the sanction of my example. [\[123\]](#)

Additionally, while serving as President of the United States, Jefferson authored the original plan of education for the public schools of Washington, DC. He used the Bible and *Watt's Hymnal* (one of the greatest doctrinal hymnals in Christendom) as the primary reading texts.[\[124\]](#) In 1803, he signed a federal act renewing provisions related to propagating the Gospel among the Delaware Indian tribe[\[125\]](#) and also approved a treaty with the Kaskaskia tribe to provide them Christian ministry and teaching.[\[126\]](#) And in 1804 he signed a federal act related to the propagation of the Gospel among Indians on federal land trusts.[\[127\]](#) President Jefferson not only personally undertook federal initiatives to help propagate Christianity and Christian teachings among native peoples, he also praised others who did the same.[\[128\]](#)

After he left the presidency, Jefferson established the University of Virginia, where he encouraged the teaching of religion and set apart space in the Rotunda for chapel services.[\[129\]](#) He also praised the use of the local courthouse in his home town for religious services.[\[130\]](#)

Congressional Actions

Many significant acts of Congress in promoting religion and Biblical Christianity have already been noted, but there are many more. For example, between 1836 and 1847, Congress commissioned four massive paintings to be hung in the Rotunda of the US Capitol for public viewing. They were designed to depict events reflecting the Christian heritage of the nation,

and among the four paintings are featured three Christian prayer services, a Christian Bible study, and a Christian baptism. [\[131\]](#)

A few years later in 1852-1853, a group petitioned Congress for a complete secularization of the public square and a cessation of all religious activities by government. But Congress rejected that request, instead making unambiguous declarations about America as a God-centered and Christian nation:

House Judiciary Committee: Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, not any one sect [denomination]....In this age there can be no substitute for Christianity. That [Christianity], in its general principles, is the great conservative element on which we must rely for the purity and permanence of free institutions.[\[132\]](#)

Senate Judiciary Committee: We are Christians, not because the law demands it, not to gain exclusive benefits or to avoid legal disabilities, but from choice and education; and in a land thus universally Christian, what is to be expected—what desired—but that we shall pay a due regard to Christianity? [\[133\]](#)

In 1856, the House of Representatives likewise declared:

[T]he great vital and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and Divine truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. [\[134\]](#)

There are countless other examples from congressional records that could similarly be cited to affirm that America's culture and institutions, including that of civil government, were shaped by Christianity.

American Courts

The Christian presence so visible across America and throughout government was also openly acknowledged in the Judicial Branch. For example, in a unanimous decision in 1844, the US Supreme Court affirmed that America was "*a Christian country.*"[\[135\]](#) Then in 1892, after having reviewed scores of historical documents, the Court again delivered a unanimous ruling, declaring:

[N]o purpose of action against religion can be imputed to any legislation, state or national because this is a religious people....[T]his is a *Christian nation.* [\[136\]](#)

In 1931, the Court rearticulated the same message:

We are a *Christian people*...according to one another the equal right of religious freedom, and acknowledging with reverence the duty of obedience to the will of God. [\[137\]](#)

These “*Christian country*,” “*Christian nation*,” and “*Christian people*” declarations were subsequently cited by numerous lower federal courts for decades, including well into the modern era.[\[138\]](#) And because the Supreme Court viewed America as a Christian nation, it is not surprising that it regularly invoked Christian principles as the basis of its rulings on marriage,[\[139\]](#) citizenship,[\[140\]](#) foreign affairs, [\[141\]](#) domestic treaties,[\[142\]](#) and other issues.

(By the way, these decisions about America as a “Christian nation” were not issued because only Christians inhabited America, for such was never the case—not ever, not at any time. These decisions were rendered because the Court rightly recognized that Christianity had indeed shaped America’s institutions and formed the basis of its unique culture, and that those principles provided freedom and liberty for *all* citizens, regardless of whether or not they happened to be Christians. Thus, being a Christian nation did not exclude anyone from participation in or protection by American government.)

Significantly, state courts were just as forthright in their declarations on this subject as the federal courts had been. For example:

[O]ur laws and institutions must necessarily be based upon and embody the teachings of the Redeemer of mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. And in this sense, and to this extent, our civilization and institutions are emphatically Christian. [\[143\]](#) Illinois Supreme Court, 1883

Democracy is the outgrowth of Christianity. Although the constitutional decree of freedom of religion and worship embraces any faith...ours is a Christian nation.[\[144\]](#) **Kentucky Court of Appeals, 1945**

Our great country is denominated a Christian nation....We imprint “In God We Trust” on our currency. Our state has even sometimes been referred to by cynics as being in the “Bible Belt.” It cannot be denied that much of the legislative philosophy of this state and nation has been inspired by the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount and other portions of the Holy Scriptures.[\[145\]](#) Mississippi Supreme Court, 1950

[I]t is well settled and understood that ours is a Christian Nation, holding the Almighty God in dutiful reverence. It is so noted in our Declaration of Independence and in the constitution of every state of the Union. Since George Washington’s first presidential proclamation of Thanksgiving Day, each such annual proclamation reiterates the principles that we are such a Christian Nation....At public expenditure we engrave on our coins, “In God We Trust” and print the same on currency. Our National Motto adopted by joint resolution of Congress is “In God We Trust.” Our National Anthem closes with these words “In God is Our Trust.” ...[W]e consider the language used in our Declaration of Independence, and in our national

Constitution, and in our Constitution of Oklahoma, wherein those documents recognize the existence of God, and that we are a Christian Nation and a Christian State. [\[146\]](#) **Oklahoma Supreme Court, 1959**

Numerous other courts made similarly succinct pronouncements.

The Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution were clearly founded upon Christian ideas of man and government. Our Founders were the first civil leaders to (as the Declaration of Independence announced) “*hold these truths*” and establish a nation upon them. Without Christianity, there never would have been the US Constitution that has caused America to become the longest on-going constitutional republic in the history of the world. As Noah Webster (father of the American dictionary and a key individual in the passage of the Constitution) affirmed:

The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and His apostles, which enjoins humility, piety, and benevolence; which acknowledges in every person a brother, or a sister, and a citizen with equal rights. This is genuine Christianity, and to this we owe our free constitutions of government. [\[147\]](#) ■

[\[1\]](#) Charles Hyneman and Donald Lutz, *American Political Writing during the Founding Era 1760-1805* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1983), see listing for “virtue” in the index.

[\[2\]](#) The American Museum, or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces, & c. (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1787), Vol. II, p. 191, “An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio,” July 30, 1787, Article III.

[\[3\]](#) John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, Charles Francis Adams, editor (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1850), Vol. IX p. 401, to Zabdiel Adams on June 21, 1776.

[\[4\]](#) John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, Charles Francis Adams, editor (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1850), Vol. IX p. 636, to Benjamin Rush on August 28, 1811.

[\[5\]](#) John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1854), Vol. IX, pp. 228-229, “A Letter to the Officers of the First Brigade of the Third Division of the Militia of Massachusetts, October 11, 1798.”

[\[6\]](#) Samuel Adams, *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, Harry Alonzo Cushing, editor (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1905), Vol. IV, p. 74, to John Trumbull on October 16, 1778.

[\[7\]](#) Samuel Adams, *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, Harry Alonzo Cushing, editor (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1905), Vol. IV, p. 124, to James Warren on February 12, 1779.

- [8] Charles C. Jones, *Biographical Sketches of the Delegates from Georgia to the Continental Congress* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), pp. 6-7.
- [9] Bernard C. Steiner, *The Life and Correspondence of James McHenry* (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1907), p. 475, Charles Carroll to James McHenry on November 4, 1800.
- [10] The Independent Chronicle (Boston: Nathaniel Willis) on November 4, 1780, Vol. XIII, p. 4, from John Hancock's Inaugural Address as Governor of Massachusetts. *See also* Abram English Brown, *John Hancock, His Book* (Boston: Lee and Shepard Publishers, 1898), p. 269.
- [11] Patrick Henry, *Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, William Wirt Henry (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), Vol. II, p. 592, to Archibald Blair on January 8, 1799.
- [12] Gouverneur Morris, *A Diary of the French Revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939), Vol. II, p. 172, April 29, 1791.
- [13] Gouverneur Morris, *A Diary of the French Revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939), Vol. II, p. 452, [to Lord George Gordon](#), June 28, 1792.
- [14] Jared Sparks, *The Life of Gouverneur Morris* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1832), Vol. III, p. 483, from his "Notes on the Form of a Constitution for France."
- [15] United States Oracle (Portsmouth, NH), May 24, 1800. *See also The Documentary History of the Supreme Court of the United States, 1789-1800*, Maeva Marcus, editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), Vol. III, p. 436.
- [16] Benjamin Rush, *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical* (Philadelphia: Thomas and Samuel Bradford, 1798), p. 8, "On the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic."
- [17] Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Albert Ellery Bergh, editor (Washington, DC: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), Vol. XII, p. 315, to James Fishback on September 27, 1809.
- [18] Daniel Webster, *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster Hitherto Uncollected* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1903), Vol. IV, pp. 657, to Professor Pease on June 15, 1852.
- [19] George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington*, John C. Fitzpatrick, editor (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1936), Vol. XIII, p. 118, from General Orders, October 21, 1778.

[20] George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington*, Jared Sparks, editor (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1838), Vol. XII, p. 245, to the Clergy of Different Denominations Residing in and Near the City of Philadelphia, on March 3, 1797.

[21] Connecticut Courant, June 7, 1802, p. 3.

[22] Independent Chronicle(Boston), February 22, 1787, Fisher Ames writing as Camillus. See also Fisher Ames, *The Works of Fisher Ames*, Seth Ames, editor (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1983), Vol. I, p. 67.

[23] Daniel Webster, *Mr. Webster's Address at the Laying of the Cornerstone of the Addition to the Capitol; July 4th, 1851* (Washington: Gideon and Co., 1851), p. 23.

[24] Daniel Webster, *A Discourse Delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820. In Commemoration of the First Settlement of New England* (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1821), pp. 49-50.

[25] Noah Webster, *History of the United States* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1832), p. 6.

[26] Noah Webster, *History of the United States* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1832), p. 339, ¶ 53.

[27] [Proceedings of the Convention of the Delaware State Held at New-Castle on Tuesday the Twenty-Seventh of August, 1776](#) (Wilmington: Star Publishing, 1927; reprint of Wilmington: James Adams, 1776), pp. 12 & 15.

[28] *The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of the America* (Boston: Norman and Bowen, 1785), pp. 99-100, Delaware, 1776, Article 22.

[29] Samuel Adams, *Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1865), Vol. III, pp. 84-85.

[30] *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, editors (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1888), s.v. "Nathaniel Gorham."

[31] *A Constitution or Frame of Government Agreed Upon by the Delegates of the People of the State of Massachusetts-Bay* (Boston: Benjamin Edes & Sons, 1780), p. 44, Chap. VI, Art. I.

[32] *The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1784), pp. 32, 34.

[33] *The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of the America* (Boston: Norman and Bowen, 1785), p. 81, Pennsylvania, 1776, Article II, Section 10.

[34] See, for example, *The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of the America* (Boston: Norman and Bowen, 1785), p. 108, Maryland, 1776, Declaration of Rights, Section 35; p. 4, New Hampshire, 1783, Bill of Rights, Article I, Section 6; etc.

[35] Hezekiah Niles, *Principles and Acts of the Revolution in America* (Baltimore: William Ogden Niles, 1822), p. 198, debate on the bill for regulating the civil government of Massachusetts Bay, April 26, 1774.

[36] *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New-York, Sixty-First Session. 1838* (Albany: E. Croswell, 1838), Vol. V, p. 1, "No. 262: Report of the committee on the judiciary on the petition of Joseph Frost, Joseph Sibley, and others, praying the repeal of the laws for the observance of the Sabbath & c.," March 13, 1838.

[37] *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New-York, Sixty-First Session. 1838* (Albany: E. Croswell, 1838), Vol. V, p. 6, "No. 262: Report of the committee on the judiciary on the petition of Joseph Frost, Joseph Sibley, and others, praying the repeal of the laws for the observance of the Sabbath & c.," March 13, 1838.

[38] Gouverneur Morris, *An Oration Upon the Death of General Washington by Gouverneur Morris. Delivered at the Request of the Corporation of the City of New York, On the 31st day of December 1799* (New York: John Furman, 1800), p. 21. Evans #38002.

[39] Gouverneur Morris, *An Oration Upon the Death of General Washington by Gouverneur Morris. Delivered at the Request of the Corporation of the City of New York, On the 31st day of December 1799* (New York: John Furman, 1800), p. 21. Evans #38002.

[40] Gouverneur Morris, *An Oration Upon the Death of General Washington by Gouverneur Morris. Delivered at the Request of the Corporation of the City of New York, On the 31st day of December 1799* (New York: John Furman, 1800), p. 21. Evans #38002.

[41] "The Changes in American Lifestyle: 1776 vs. 2005," *Mineral Information Institute* (at: <https://mineralseducationcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/minerals1776vstoday.pdf>), p. 1.

[42] James Madison, *The Papers of James Madison*, Henry D. Gilpin, editor (Washington: Langtree and O'Sullivan, 1840), Vol. II, pp. 984-985, Benjamin Franklin on June 28, 1787.

[43] James Madison, *The Papers of James Madison*, Henry D. Gilpin, editor (Washington: Langtree and O'Sullivan, 1840), Vol. II, p. 986, June 28, 1787.

[44] James Madison, *The Papers of James Madison*, Henry D. Gilpin, editor (Washington: Langtree and O'Sullivan, 1840), Vol. II, p. 986, June 28, 1787. Hamilton opposed the resolution, saying such an action at that time might communicate to the populace (who knew nothing of the events in the closed convention) they were having troubles and, hence,

undermine the people's support. Mr. Sherman from Connecticut pointed out they would have greater troubles if they neglected this important duty. It was also proposed to have a sermon preached on July 4th at the request of the convention. Dayton records the motion appointing a chaplain was seconded and carried. Madison records they did not vote on the issue. If this were so, it was because they had no funds to officially invite a chaplain, as pointed out by Delegate Williamson. (See James Madison, *The Papers of James Madison*, Henry D. Gilpin, editor (Washington: Langtree and O'Sullivan, 1840), Vol. II, p. 986, June 28, 1787.) However, chaplains were certainly obtained in some manner as they opened future daily sessions with prayer. (See Max Farrand, *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911), Vol. III, p. 472, from William Steele to Jonathan Steele, September 1825 recounting a conversation with Jonathan Dayton.)

[45] James Madison's records for Monday, July 2, 1787 notes, "That time might be given to the Committee, and to such as chose to attend to the celebration on the anniversary of Independence, the Convention adjourned till Thursday." (James Madison, *The Papers of James Madison*, Henry D. Gilpin, editor (Washington: Langtree and O'Sullivan, 1840), Vol. II, pp. 1023-1024.) George Washington's notes on July 4, 1787, "and (the Convention having adjourned for that purpose), [he] went to hear an Oration on the anniversary of Independence." (Worthington Chauncy Ford, *George Washington* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), Vol. II, p. 132.)

[46] The Massachusetts Centinel, August 15, 1787, p. 1.

[47] See *The North American Review* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, January 1867), Vol. 104, p. 249: "Mr. [J. Arthur] Partridge... "the American government and Constitution is the most precious possession which the world holds, or which the future can inherit." This is true—true because the American system is the political expression of Christian ideas."; Daniel Webster, *An Anniversary Address, Delivered Before the Federal Gentlemen of Concord and Its Vicinity, July 4th, 1806* (Concord, NH: George Hough, 1806), p. 6: "We live under the only government that ever existed, which was formed by the deliberate consultations of the people. Miracles do not cluster. That which has happened but once in six thousand years, cannot be expected to happen often. Such a government, once destroyed, would have a void to be filled, perhaps for centuries, with evolution and tumult, riot and despotism."

[48] Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004; originally printed in 1929), p. 40.

[49] James M. Beck, *The Constitution of the United States, 1787-1927*, Edwin L. Miller, C. C. Barnes, editors (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1927), p. viii, a letter from the White House by Calvin Coolidge, December 12, 1924.

[50] John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1987), p. 352, n. 15.

[51] The Debates in the Several Conventions, on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, Jonathan Elliot, editor (Washington, DC: 1836), Vol. II, p. 2-3, Massachusetts Convention, January 10, 1788; Vol. IV, p. 1, North Carolina Convention, July 21, 1788; Mark David Hall, *Roger Sherman and the Creation of the American Republic* (Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 118-119, n75.

[52] George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington*, Dorothy Twohig, editor (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), Vol. 6, pp. 104-105, from Benjamin Lincoln on February 9, 1788.

[53] George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1882), Vol. VI, p. 420, address by Christopher Gadsden originally reported in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 14, 1788.

[54] George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1882), Vol. VI, p. 414, George Washington to Marquis de la Fayette on May 28, 1788.

[55] George Bancroft, *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States of America* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1882), Vol. II, p. 257, address by William Samuel Johnson originally reported in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 24, 1788.

[56] Essays on the Constitution of the United States, Published During its Discussion by the People, 1787-1788, Paul Leicester Ford, editor (Brooklyn: Historical Printing Co. 1892), p. 288, Caesar to Mr. Childs, October 17, 1787, originally printed in *The Daily Advertiser*. (This was written under his pseudonym Ceasar.)

[57] Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, & James Madison, *The Federalist on the New Consitution; Written in 1788* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818), p. 194, James Madison, Federalist #37.

[58] Benjamin Franklin, *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, Jared Sparks, editor (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company, 1840), Vol. V, p. 162, from "A Comparison of the Conduct of the Ancient Jews and of the Anti-Federalists in the United States of America," no date.

[59] George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington*, Jared Sparks, editor (Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Metcalf, 1835), Vol. IX, p. 317, to Marquis de Lafayette on February 7, 1788.

[60] Benjamin Rush, *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, L. H. Butterfield, editor (Princeton, New Jersey: American Philosophical Society, 1951), Vol. I, p. 475, to Elias Boudinot on July 9, 1788.

[61] Isaac Kramnick and R. Laurence Moore, *The Godless Constitution* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996) p. 179.

[62] Donald S. Lutz, "The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 78, Issue 1, March 1984, p. 191.

[63] Donald S. Lutz, "The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 78, Issue 1, March 1984, pp. 192-193. *See also* Donald Lutz, *The Origins of American Constitutionalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), pp. 141-142.

[64] *Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railway Company v. Ellis*, 165 U. S. 150, 160 (1897).

[65] John Quincy Adams, *The Jubilee of the Constitution. A Discourse Delivered at the Request of the New York Historical Society, in the City of New York, On Tuesday the 30th of April, 1839; Being the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Inauguration of George Washington as President of the United States, on Thursday, the 30th of April, 1789* (New York: Samuel Colman, 1839), p. 54.

[66] *Ex parte Newman*, 9 Cal. 502, 509 (1858).

[67] *City Council of Charleston v. S. A. Benjamin*, 2 Strob. 508, 518-521 (Sup. Ct. S.C. 1846)

[68] The Reports of Committees of the Senate of the United States For the Second Session of the Thirty-Second Congress, 1852-53 (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853), pp. 3, "Rep. Com. No. 376," January 21, 1853.

[69] James Madison, *The Writings of James Madison*, Gaillard Hunt, editor (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), Vol. V, p. 30, to Thomas Jefferson on October 24, 1787.

[70] John Adams, *The Works of John Adams*, Charles Francis Adams, editor (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1854), Vol. IX, p. 229, to the Officers of the First Brigade of the Third Division of the Militia of Massachusetts on October 11, 1798.

[71] John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Edinburgh: J. Ogle, 1815), Vol. VII, p. 139, from his "Lectures on Moral Philosophy," Lecture 16 on Oaths and Vows.

[72] Jonathan Elliot, *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* (Washington: Printed for the Editor, 1836), Vol. II, p. 202, Oliver Wolcott on January 9, 1788.

[73] Jonathan Elliot, *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* (Washington: Printed for the Editor, 1836), Vol. IV, p. 196, James Iredell on July 30, 1788.

[74] George Washington, *Address of George Washington, President of the United States, and Late Commander in Chief of the American Army, to the People of the United States, Preparatory to His Declination* (Baltimore: Christopher Jackson, 1796), p. 23.

[75] Reports of the Proceedings and Debates of the Convention of 1821, Assembled for the Purpose of Amending The Constitution of the State of New York (Albany: E. and E. Hosford, 1821), p. 575, Rufus King, October 30, 1821.

[76] Noah Webster, *Letters to a Young Gentleman Commencing His Education* (New Haven: S. Converse, 1823), pp. 18-19, Letter 1. See also a similar comment in Noah Webster, *History of the United States* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1832), pp. 336-337, ¶ 49, although the Scripture citation in this work is closer to 2 Samuel 23:3 than Exodus 18:21.

[77] John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Edinburgh: J. Ogle, 1804), Vol. V, pp. 266-267, from “A Sermon Delivered at a Public Thanksgiving after Peace”; and a handwritten manuscript of Dr. Benjamin Rush in the private collection of David Barton. In that work, Dr. Rush lists several headings, and under the heading, verses that he believed pertained to that subject. Under the heading, “Government” in his manuscript, Dr. Rush lists Exodus 18:21 as an applicable verse.

[78] John Adams, *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (London: C. Dilly, 1788), Vol. III, p. 289.

[79] George Washington, *Address of George Washington, President of the United States, and Late Commander in Chief of the American Army, to the People of the United States, Preparatory to His Declination* (Baltimore: Christopher Jackson, 1796), p. 13.

[80] Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, & James Madison, *The Federalist on the New Constitution; Written in 1788* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818), p. 85, Federalist #16 by Alexander Hamilton.

[81] Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, & James Madison, *The Federalist on the New Constitution; Written in 1788* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Warner, 1818), p. 281, Federalist #51 by James Madison.

[82] See *The Founders Bible* (Newbury Park, CA: Shiloh Road, 2017), articles relating to Deutereonmy 15:11 (p. 311) and Deutereonmy 24 (p. 337).

[83] For George Washington’s unanimous vote, see: *Journal of the First Session of the Senate of the United States of America, Begun and Held at the City of New York, March 4, 1789* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1820), Vol. 1, p. 8, Senate vote of April 6, 1789, and p. 9, John Langdon’s letter to George Washington on April 6, 1789.

[84] Significantly, many of the US Senators at the first Inauguration had been delegates to the Constitutional Convention that framed the Constitution including William Samuel Johnson, Oliver Ellsworth, George Read, Richard Bassett, William Few, Caleb Strong, John Langdon, William Paterson, Robert Morris, and Pierce Butler; and many members of the House had been delegates to the Constitutional Convention, including Roger Sherman, Abraham Baldwin, Daniel Carroll, Elbridge Gerry, Nicholas Gilman, Hugh Williamson, George Clymer, Thomas Fitzsimmons, and James Madison.

[85] *The Daily Advertiser*, New York, Thursday, April 23, 1789, p. 2.

[86] *Laws of the State of New York* (New York: Thomas Greenleaf, 1798), p. 21, "Chap. XXV: An Act to dispense with the usual mode of administering oaths, in favor of persons having conscientious scruples respecting the same, Passed 1st of April, 1778"; and James Parker, *Conductor Generalis: Or the Office, Duty and Authority of the Justices of the Peace* (New York: John Patterson, 1788), pp. 302-304, "Of oaths in general."

[87] Clarence W. Bowen, *The History of the Centennial Celebration of the Inauguration of George Washington* (New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1892), p. 52, Illustration.

[88] *Gazette of the United States* (May 9-13, 1789), p. 3, "Extract of a letter from New-York, May 3." See also *The American Museum: Or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces, & c. Prose and Poetical* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1789), Vol. V, p. 505.

[89] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, p. 27. See also George Washington, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, James D. Richardson, editor (Washington, D.C.: 1899), Vol. 1, pp. 44-45, April 30, 1789, Inaugural Address.

[90] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, pp. 27-29, April 30, 1789.

[91] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, pp. 27-29, April 30, 1789.

[92] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, p. 25, April 27, 1789.

[93] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, p. 241, April 29, 1789.

[94] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1834), Vol. I, p. 29, April 30, 1789.

[95] *The Constitutions of the United States of America With the Latest Amendments* (Philadelphia: Robert Campbell, 1800), p. 272, “An Act to Provide for the Government of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio,” August 7, 1789.

[96] *United States Code Annotated* (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1987), “The Organic Laws of the United States of America,” p. 1. This work lists America’s four fundamental laws as the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Northwest Ordinance.

[97] *The American Museum, or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces, & c.* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1787), Vol. II, p. 190, “An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio,” July 30, 1787.

[98] *The American Museum, or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces, & c.* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1787), Vol. II, p. 191, “An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio,” July 30, 1787, Article III.

[99] *The Constitutions of the United States of America With the Latest Amendments* (New York: Evert Duygkinck, 1820), p. 409, Mississippi, 1817, Article 6, §16; House of Representatives, Mis. Doc. No. 44, 35th Congress, 2nd Session, February 2, 1859, pp. 3-4, Article 1, §7, of the Kansas Constitution; *The Constitution of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Rufus L. Edmisten, 1989), p. 42, Article 9, §1; *Constitution of the State of Nebraska* (Lincoln: Allen J. Beermann, 1992), pp. 1-2, Article 1, §4; *Page’s Ohio Revised Code Annotated* (Cincinnati: Anderson Publishing Co., 1994), p. 24, Article 1, §7; *The Constitution of Michigan*, Article VII, §1; and so forth.

[100] “Breakfast in Washington,” *Time Magazine*, February 15, 1954 (at: <https://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,936197,00.html>).

[101] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834) Vol. I, pp. 949-950, September 25, 1789.

[102] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States*, Joseph Gales, editor (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834) Vol. I, pp. 949-950, September 25, 1789.

[103] *The Providence Gazette and Country Journal* (Providence: October 17, 1789), p. 1. George Washington, “A Proclamation,” issued on October 3, 1789, observance date November 26, 1789.

[104] George Washington, *Address of George Washington, President of the United States, and Late Commander in Chief of the American Army, to the People of the United States, Preparatory to His Declination* (Baltimore: Christopher Jackson, 1796), pp. 22-23.

[105] John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Philadelphia: William Woodward), Vol. III, p. 42, from “The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men,” May 17, 1776.

[106] Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company, 1833), Vol. III, pp. 726, 726, §1868 & §1871.

[107] Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company, 1833), Vol. III, p. 731, §1873.

[108] *Official Letters of the Governors of the State of Virginia*, H. R. McIlwaine, editor (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1928), Vol. II, p. 65, Thomas Jefferson, “Proclamation,” November 11, 1779.

[109] *Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States* (Washington, D. C.: Gales and Seaton, 1851), 6th Cong., p. 797, December 4, 1800.

[110] Bishop Claggett’s letter of February 18, 1801, attests that while Vice-President, Jefferson attended church services in the House. Available in the Maryland Diocesan Archives.

[111] Margaret Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1906), p. 13.

[112] Rev. Manasseh Cutler, *Life, Journal, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler, editors (Cincinnati: Colin Robert Clarke & Co., 1888), Vol. II, p. 119, to Joseph Torrey on January 3, 1803.

[113] Margaret Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1906), p. 13.

[114] Margaret Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1906), p. 13.

[115] See, for example, Rev. Manasseh Cutler, *Life, Journal, and Correspondence*, William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler, editors (Cincinnati: Colin Robert Clarke & Co., 1888), Vol. II, p. 119, to Dr. Joseph Torrey on January 3, 1803.

[116] Rev. Manasseh Cutler, *Life, Journal, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler, editors (Cincinnati: Colin Robert Clarke & Co., 1888), Vol. II, p. 119, to Joseph Torrey on January 3, 1803.

[117] Rev. Manasseh Cutler, *Life, Journal, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler, editors (Cincinnati: Colin Robert Clarke & Co., 1888), Vol. II, p. 114, diary entry for December 26, 1802.

[118] James Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1998), p. 89.

[119] Margaret Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 14.

[120] Margaret Smith, *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 16.

[121] John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, Charles Francis Adams, editor (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1874), Vol. I, p. 265, diary entry for October 23, 1803; and Vol. I, p. 268, diary entry for October 30, 1803; *National Intelligencer*, December 9, 1820, p. 3. See also James Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1998), p. 89.

[122] James Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1998), p. 91.

[123] James Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1998), p. 96, quoting from a handwritten history in possession of the Library of Congress, "Washington Parish, Washington City," by Rev. Ethan Allen.

[124] Records of the Columbia Historical Society (Washington, D. C.: Columbia Historical Society, 1897), Vol. 1, pp. 122-123, 127, from the report by Mr. Henry Ould on February 10, 1813. See also *National Intelligencer*, March 20, 1817, p. 2.

[125] *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1851), 7th Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 1602, "An Act to Revive and Continue in Force An Act in Addition to an Act, Entitled, 'An Act in Addition to an Act Regulating the Grants of Land Appropriated for Military Services, and for the Society of the United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen,' and for Other Purposes," March 3, 1803.

[126] *American State Papers: Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States*, Walter Lowrie and Matthew St. Claire Clarke, editors (Washington, D. C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832), Vol. IV, p. 687, "The Kaskaskia and Other Tribes," October 31, 1803.

[127] *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, Richard Peters, editor (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1845), Vol. II, pp. 271-272, "An Act Granting Further Time for Locating Military Land Warrants, and for Other Purposes," March 19, 1804.

[128] See, for example, Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Andrew A. Lipscomb, editor (Washington, D. C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), Vol. XVI, p. 289, to Thomas, Ellicot, and Others on November 13, 1807.

[129] Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Andrew A. Lipscomb, editor (Washington, D. C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), Vol. XIX, pp. 449-450, "A Meeting of the Visitors of the University of Virginia on Monday the 4th of October, 1824."

[130] Thomas Jefferson, *Memoir, Correspondence, and Miscellanies*, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, editor (Charlottesville: F. Carr and Co., 1829), Vol. IV, p. 358, to Doctor Thomas Cooper on November 2, 1822.

[131] See information about all the painting in the US Capitol Rotunda from *Architect of the Capitol* (at: <https://www.aoc.gov/artwork/type/historic-rotunda-paintings>). These paintings include: "Landing of Columbus," *Architect of the Capitol* (at: <https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/landing-columbus>), showing some of the members of Columbus' landing party kneeling in prayer; "Discovery of the Mississippi by De Soto," *Architect of the Capitol* (at: <https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/discovery-mississippi-by-de-soto>), depicting "a monk pray[ing] as men set a newly constructed crucifix in the ground"; "Baptism of Pocahontas," *Architect of the Capitol* (at: <https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/baptism-pocahontas>), showing Pocahontas kneeling as the minister rests his hand on the "baptismal font"; "Embarkation of the Pilgrims," *Architect of the Capitol* (at: <https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/embarkation-pilgrims>), "The group appears solemn and contemplative of what they are about to undertake as they pray for Divine protection through their voyage."

[132] *Reports of Committees of the House of Representatives Made During the First Session of the Thirty-Third Congress* (Washington: A. O. P. Nicholson, 1854), pp. 6, 8, "Rep. No. 124," March 27, 1854.

[133] *The Reports of Committees of the Senate of the United States for the Second Session of the Thirty-Second Congress, 1852-53* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853), p. 3, "Rep. Com. No. 376," January 21, 1853.

[134] *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States: Being the First Session of the Thirty-Fourth Congress* (Washington: Cornelius Wendell, 1855), p. 354, January 23, 1856.

[135] *Vidal v. Girard's Executors*, 43 U. S. 126, 198 (1844).

[136] *Church of the Holy Trinity v. U. S.*, 143 U. S. 457, 465, 471 (1892).

[137] *United States v. Macintosh*, 283 U. S. 605, 625 (1931).

[138] See for example, *Warren v. United States*, 177 F.2d 596 (10th Cir. Ct. of App., 1949); *United States v. Girouard*, 149 F.2d 760 (1st Cir. Ct. of App., 1945); *Steiner v. Darby*, 88 Cal. App. 2d 481 (1948); *Vogel v. County of Los Angeles*, 68 Cal. 2d 18 (Ca. Sup. Ct., 1967); and many others.

[139] See, for example, *Davis v. Beason*, 133 U. S. 333, 341-344, 348 n (1890); *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints v. United States*, 136 U. S. 1, 49 (1890); and many others.

[140] See, for example, *U. S. v. Macintosh*, 283 U. S. 605, 625 (1931); and many others.

[141] See, for example, *Ross v. McIntyre*, 140 U. S. 453, 463 (1891); *Kinsella v. Krueger*, 351 U. S. 470 (1956); *Reid v. Covert*, 354 U. S. 1 (1957); and many others.

[142] See, for example, *Beecher v. Wetherby*, 95 U. S. 517, 525 (1877); *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock*, 187 U. S. 553, 565 (1903); *Yankton Sioux Tribe of Indians v. U. S.*, 272 U. S. 351 (1926); *U. S. v. Choctaw Nation*, 179 U. S. 494 (1900); *Atlantic & P R Co v. Mingus*, 165 U. S. 413 (1897); *Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Company v. Roberts*, 152 U. S. 114 (1894); *Buttz v. Northern Pac. R. Co.*, 119 U. S. 55 (1886); *Tee-Hit-Ton Indians v. United States*, 348 U. S. 272 (1955); and many others.

[143] *Richmond v. Moore*, 107 Ill. 429 (Ill. Sup. Ct., 1883).

[144] *Mordecai F. Ham Evangelistic Ass'n v. Matthews*, 30 Ky. 402, 189 S.W. 2d. 524 (Ky. Ct. of Ap., 1945).

[145] *Paramount-Richards Theatres v. City of Hattiesburg*, 210 Miss. 271 (Miss. Sup. Ct., 1950).

[146] *Town of Pryor v. Williamson*, 374 P.2d 204, 207 (Ok. Sup. Ct. 1959).

[147] Noah Webster, *History of the United States* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1832), p. 300.