

WHAT THE FOUNDERS SAID (PART I)

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

[**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The August and September issues of *Reason & Revelation* are being devoted to examining what the Founders of the American Republic said regarding a number of vital topics that are even now impacting Americans. May we soberly listen and reflect.]

The several hundred men who were responsible for orchestrating the founding of America were very explicit in their pronouncements about their intentions. They left a wealth of writings that articulate their genius. Indeed, these intelligent, well-educated men combed through the annals of human history in order to learn from the mistakes of the past. They examined the human governments that riddle the halls of history in order to construct the best possible government. Their conclusion: the form of government that “fits hand in glove” with the Christian religion (the religion professed by the vast majority of Americans at the time) is a Republic. Listen carefully to prominent Founder Noah Webster:

[O]ur citizens should early understand that **the genuine source of correct republican principles is the Bible**, particularly the New Testament or the Christian religion.... Almost all the civil liberty now enjoyed in the world owes its origin to the principles of the

Christian religion.... [C]ivil liberty has been gradually advancing and improving, as genuine Christianity has prevailed.... **[T]he 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** (1838, pp. v, 273-274, emp. added).

In what way is our Republic dependent on Christianity? If Noah Webster (and the scores of other Founders and Framers who expressed similar sentiments) was correct, what specific features of the Republic are dependent on Christianity and Bible principles if America is to be perpetuated? Please consider what the Founders said...

ABOUT THE BASIS OF INDEPENDENCE

One of the fundamental attributes of the United States of America from its inception has been “liberty.” That is, Americans have enjoyed an unprecedented level of freedom, with minimal government intrusion, that enables them, within the bounds and confines of Christian morality, to pursue their dreams and goals, thereby achieving for themselves a standard

of living and progress unparalleled in human history. Indeed, the freedom that characterizes American civilization has been the envy of the world for over two centuries. People by the thousands continue to yearn to come to America’s shores, as reflected by the inscription within the Statue of Liberty: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” (“Statue of Liberty...”).

The salient question is: from whence does this independence derive? What

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is **the source** of this incredible state of affairs? On what is America's freedom **based** and on what does it continue to depend? Whereas the singular answer to the question was understood by the vast majority of Americans for the first century and a half of the life of the Republic, these days, a host of answers are continually articulated by political leaders and citizens alike that show a fundamental ignorance of America's origins. For example, some would say that America's independence is rooted in a fundamental human desire to be free, unhampered by the interference of human government or other authorities. This explanation bears a close resemblance to the 1960s attitude that clamored for freedom to pursue unrestrained, immoral behavior—to "do your own thing." The Founders would not dignify such with the noble term "freedom." They would use the biblical term "licentiousness" (see, for example, Washington, 1790; West, 1776) to describe such behavior, i.e., sinful in the sight of God. Others claim that at the root of America's independence was the desire to be released from the overbearing control of British rule. They believe that such

matters as "taxation without representation" and the coercive quartering of British troops in private homes lay at the basis of the desire for independence. While these, and other, circumstances were certainly part of the overall situation, the Founders did not consider them to be the **basis** of freedom.

Further, the "politically correct" crowd insists that the basis of American independence is pluralism and multiculturalism. That is, they claim that the Founders intended to create an environment in which all religions and ideologies could be embraced and "celebrated." They believe that the real strength of America lies in "diversity"—the amalgamation, acceptance, and promotion of conflicting cultural, linguistic, and religious beliefs and practices. To them, America is intended to be a haven of security and affirmation for everyone—from the atheist to the homosexual—regardless of religious or moral viewpoint. Such thinking is a perverse and outrageous misrepresentation of the Founders.

Still others have come to believe that the real foundation of America's freedom is to be found in the federal government's intrusive effort to achieve

economic equality for all Americans (i.e., socialism). They believe that the essential purpose of government is to extract money from the wealthiest citizens and redistribute those funds to the needy and the poor. They believe the government should take care of its citizens, by guaranteeing them a job, sending them a monthly check, providing them with such services as health care, etc. The Founders would be horrified at this perspective as well.

Here is the truth of the matter. On October 20, 1779, the Continental Congress—an entity that represents a host of the Founders of the country—issued a proclamation to the entire nation that contains the quintessential answer to the question: "On what was American independence founded?" Please read it closely:

Whereas it becomes us humbly to approach the throne of Almighty God, with gratitude and praise for the wonders which his goodness has wrought in conducting our forefathers to this western world; for his protection to them and to their posterity amid difficulties and dangers; for raising us, their children, from deep distress to be numbered among the nations of the earth; ...and above all, that he hath diffused the glorious light of the gospel, whereby, through the merits of **our gracious Redeemer**, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory: therefore, Resolved, That it be recommended to the several states, to appoint Thursday, the 9th of December next, to be a day of public and solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God for his mercies, and of prayer for the continuance of his favor and protection to these United States; ...that he would grant to **his church** the plentiful effusions of divine grace, and **pour out his holy spirit on all ministers of the gospel**; that he would bless and prosper the means of education, and **spread the light of Christian knowledge through the remotest corners of the earth**; ...that he would in mercy look down upon us, pardon our sins and receive us into his favor, and finally, **that he**

Reason & Revelation is published monthly by Apologetics Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, AL. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **Reason & Revelation**, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117; **ISSN:**[1542-0922] **USPS#** 023415.

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Editor:

Dave Miller, Ph.D.*
(*Communication, Southern Illinois University)

Associate Editor:

Kyle Butt, M.A.*
(*New Testament, Freed-Hardeman University)

Annual Subscription Rates:

\$10.00	Domestic
\$ 8.00	Domestic Bulk (5+ to same address)
\$16.00	Canada & Overseas Airmail

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Discovery—Scripture & Science for Kids is a sister publication for children. For more information, please contact our offices or visit the Discovery Web site at:

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AUGUST 2010 REASON & REVELATION 30(8):58

would establish the independence of these United States upon the basis of religion and virtue, and support and protect them in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety as long as the sun and moon shall endure, until time shall be no more. Done in Congress, the 20th day of October, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine, and in the 4th year of the independence of the United States of America.

Samuel Huntington, President.

Attest, Charles Thomson, Secretary
(*Journals of...*, 1904-1937, 15:1191-1193, emp. added).

Establish the independence of the United States on religion and virtue? In view of such remarkable assertions by quintessential Founders of America, it is evident that a vast number of Americans have no clue regarding the **foundation** of the Republic. They are completely oblivious to **the key** to genuine freedom. Hence, they are unfamiliar with what is necessary to perpetuate the Republic (Deuteronomy 28:1 ff.). If the average American does not even understand (let alone promote) the basis on which our independence was established, how can we hope to sustain that freedom? Sadly, we cannot.

ABOUT THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Imagine asking the six billion plus people on the planet, “What would make you happy?” The majority would undoubtedly respond by referring to physical things or conditions that they believe would make them content—everything from cars, houses, clothes, food, and electronic gadgets, to financial security and business success, to exemption from sickness, suffering, heartache, aging, and adversity. In other words, most people believe that their happiness is directly tied to their physical and emotional status in life.

In contrast, the Bible teaches that, as a matter of fact, we humans do not really know what will make us

happy (Jeremiah 10:23). We think we do—but we actually do not. We recognize this phenomenon in children. Think of the boy who is so very certain that if he could just have the latest, popular toy, he would be truly fulfilled and never ask for anything else. Or the girl who is absolutely convinced that if she could just have a certain boy as her boyfriend, she would find complete happiness. So we adults have a list in our minds of those things or accomplishments that we think would bring us into a state of ultimate fulfillment and satisfied contentment.

Yet the Bible articulates clearly that the alluring, beckoning baubles of this world cannot provide any meaningful, ultimate happiness. Instead, it teaches that true contentment resides in one’s submission to the will of God—living a spiritual life rather than relying on the temporary stimulation of fleshly appetites that are short-lived (Hebrews 11:25). The psalmist explains: “Blessed [i.e., happy—DM] is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you” (128:1-2). “Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!” (Psalm 144:15). “Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God” (Psalm 146:5). “He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he” (Proverbs 16:20). “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law” (Proverbs 29:18). The Bible clearly teaches that genuine happiness may be achieved in only one way: obeying God’s directives—found only in the Bible. As John Quincy Adams reminded his son:

[G]reat is my veneration for the Bible, and so strong my belief, that when duly read and meditated on, it is of all books in the world, that which

contributes more to make men good, wise, and happy.... I call it **the source of all human virtue and happiness....** [Man] must hold his **felicity** and virtue on the condition of obedience to [God’s] will (1850, pp. 9,27-28).

This pursuit is, in fact, the entirety of human existence (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

It should come as no surprise that the Founders of American civilization understood this principle and wove it into their official utterances. After all, since they were setting up a government and launching a new nation, they were extremely sensitive to the factors that would ensure the success of such a venture. Take, for example, two proclamations formulated by the Continental Congress to the entire country about a year before the close of the Revolutionary War, the first issued on March 19, 1782:

The goodness of the Supreme Being to all his rational creatures, demands their acknowledgments of gratitude and love; his absolute government of this world dictates, that it is the interest of every nation and people ardently to supplicate his favor and implore his protection.... The United States in Congress assembled, therefore, taking into consideration our present situation, our multiplied transgressions of **the holy laws of our God**, and his past acts of kindness and goodness towards us, which we ought to record with the liveliest gratitude, think it their indispensable duty to call upon the several states, to set apart the last Thursday in April next, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, that our joint supplications may then ascend to the throne of the Ruler of the Universe, beseeching Him to diffuse a spirit of universal reformation among all ranks and degrees of our citizens; **and make us a holy, that so we may be an happy people** (*Journals of...*, 22:137-138, emp. added).

How did the architects of American civilization believe Americans could achieve happiness? By being holy—by being submissive to “the holy laws of our God.” They believed that human



happiness is integrally linked to the **spiritual** condition of the people—and that spirituality is tied to God and His Word.

Seven months later, on October 11, 1782, Congress issued another proclamation:

It being the indispensable duty of all nations, not only to offer up their supplications to Almighty God, the giver of all good, for his gracious assistance in a time of distress, but also in a solemn and public manner to give him praise for his goodness in general, and especially for great and signal interpositions of his Providence in their behalf; therefore, the United States in Congress assembled...do hereby recommend it to the inhabitants of these states in general, to observe, and request the several states to interpose their authority in appointing and commanding the observation of Thursday, the twenty-eighth day of November next, as a day of solemn thanksgiving to God for all his mercies: and they do further recommend to all ranks, to testify their gratitude to God for his goodness, **by a cheerful obedience to his laws**, and by promoting, each in his station, and by his influence, the practice of true and undefiled religion, **which is the great foundation of public prosperity and national happiness** (*Journals of...*, 23:647, emp. added).

The practice of “true and undefiled religion,” i.e., Christianity, is “the great foundation of...national happiness”? But we are being told that the happiness of a people depends on a strong economy, health care for every citizen, a monthly check from the government, ready access to abortion, same-sex marriage, and amnesty for illegal aliens. **Not according to the Founders!** The entire nation’s happiness depends on a majority of its citizens pursuing the Christian religion.

If these pronouncements were not enough, consider one made by the Father of our country, George Washington. After serving as the

Commander-in-Chief of the American revolutionary forces, and then serving two terms as the nation’s first president, George Washington delivered his “Farewell Address” to the nation before retiring to private life. In that speech, he pinpointed the critical foundation for the survival of the nation:

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. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with **private and public felicity** (1796, emp. added).

The Christian religion, and the standard of morality it provides, are the “great pillars of human happiness” that are intricately woven into the fabric of human civilization to enable “private and public felicity [happiness—DM]”? Indeed. The wild pursuit of happiness ongoing in America via entertainment, lust, and immorality is doomed to complete failure. The outcome will inevitably end in national tragedy. As Moses informed the Israelites concerning their occupation of the Promised Land:

Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. For it is not a futile thing for you, because **it is your life**, and by this word **you shall prolong your days in the land** (Deuteronomy 32:46-47, emp. added).

ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT

The Founders were very specific in articulating the purpose and role of government. While there were certainly disagreements among them regarding the extent to which a central-

ized government should involve itself in public affairs, most of them would be aghast at the extent to which the federal government now intrudes into the lives of citizens. They would also be astounded to see the extent to which religion, specifically Christianity, has been banned from the political sphere. They would be shocked at the prevailing mentality that insists that the nation as a whole, and its elected representatives in particular, should refrain from expressing publicly any connection to Christianity. It is, in fact, difficult for the average American today to conceive that the Founders would have given their official sanction to Christianity and encouraged its practice for the good of the nation. Yet, **that is precisely what the Founders believed en masse**. They believed that government had a prominent role to play in the promotion of Christianity throughout the nation and the world.

On March 16, 1776, four months before declaring independence, the Continental Congress issued a proclamation to the entire nation. Observe their implied understanding of the role of government by the specific appeals they made, particularly regarding the critical importance of Christianity:

In times of impending calamity and distress; when the liberties of America are imminently endangered by the secret machinations and open assaults of an insidious and vindictive administration, it becomes the indispensable duty of these hitherto free and happy colonies, with true penitence of heart, and the most reverent devotion, **publicly to acknowledge the overruling providence of God**; to confess and deplore our offences against him; and **to supplicate his interposition** for averting the threatened danger, and prospering our strenuous efforts in the cause of freedom, virtue, and posterity.

The Congress, therefore...do earnestly recommend, that Friday, the Seventeenth day of May next, be



Evolution, Textbooks, and Homeschooling

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Day after day, week after week, year after year, an estimated 55 million U.S. public school students open their science textbooks to learn about Big Bang theory, spontaneous generation, and man's alleged evolution from toads ("Back to School...", 2009). Although various scientific laws defy the General Theory of Evolution (e.g., the Law of Biogenesis, the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics; see *The Scientific Case...*, 2004), and even though nearly half of Americans still believe God created humans in our present form (cf. "Poll: Creationism...", 2004; see also Gallup and Lindsay, 1999, pp. 36-37), multiplied millions of tax-payer-funded textbooks espouse man's alleged animal ancestry as fact. Christians might hold out hope for their public-schooled children having teachers who do not believe in evolution, however, the odds are stacked against them. A 2007 nationwide survey revealed that only "16% of US science teachers are creationists" (Holmes, 2008). [NOTE: Similar to how atheists are annoyed that "only" 85% of the members of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences are atheists (see Brooks, 2006, p. 10), many militant evolutionists are bothered because "only" 84% of U.S. science teachers are evolutionists; see "Comments," 2008].

Hundreds of thousands of creationists in the U.S. have chosen to homeschool their children partly because they do not want their most precious God-given gifts (Psalm 127:3) sitting year after year at the feet of evolutionists, reading evolutionary textbooks, especially without critical analysis. These homeschooling parents still provide their children with training in Earth science, biology, chemistry, etc. In fact, many religiously motivated homeschoolers (which comprise at least 83% of homeschooling families in the U.S.; see Lovan, 2010) provide countless more hands-on, operational science experiences for their children than a lot of young people receive in public schools (where funding is limited and where classrooms are often shared with 20-30 other students). Some individuals, however, are extremely critical of the various textbooks many homeschoolers use.

Associated Press writer Dylan Lovan recently penned an article wherein he interviewed three non-religious homeschooling families

and two evolutionary scientists, all who expressed disappointment over the available homeschooling science textbooks. After reviewing two of the best-selling biology textbooks homeschoolers frequently use, Virginia Tech biology professor Duncan Porter said "he would give the books an F" (Lovan, 2010). Ecology and evolutionary professor Jerry Coyne of the University of Chicago stated: "If this is the way kids are home-schooled then they're being short-changed, both rationally and in terms of biology" (as quoted in Lovan). "These books are promulgating lies to kids," said Dr. Coyne (as quoted in Lovan), and allegedly are not scientifically credible. What is so terrible about the science books produced by Apologia, Bob Jones, and other publishers that frequently sell to homeschooling families? The textbooks "dispute Charles Darwin's theory" of evolution (Lovan, 2010).

And why shouldn't the theory of evolution be disputed? Why shouldn't it be assessed critically and debated? Why shouldn't students learn that all evolutionary dating methods are based upon various assumptions (see Butt and Lyons, 2009, pp. 94-100; see also DeYoung, 2005)? Why shouldn't they be taught scientific laws that contradict evolution? Why shouldn't they be allowed to explore the scientific case for Creation and ask whether non-intelligence can reasonably explain complex, functional design, like that in a living, human cell? As Dr. Jay Wile, textbook writer for Apologia, said: "We definitely do not lie to the students. We tell them the facts that people like Dr. Coyne would prefer to cover up." In truth, it is evolutionists like Jerry Coyne who feel "compelled to lie in order to prop up a failing hypothesis (evolution)" (as quoted in Lovan).

Furthermore, regarding Coyne and Porter's concerns that homeschoolers are being "shortchanged, both rationally and in terms of biology" because of their use of science textbooks that do not blindly embrace Darwinian evolution, consider how well the average homeschool student scores in standardized science tests. Two different studies (from 1998 and 2009), which included a total of more than 30,000 homeschool students from all 50 states, revealed that, on average, homeschoolers



score 30 to 36 percentile points higher than the average student on standardized science tests (see Slatter, 2009). What's more, many of these same homeschoolers go on to attend universities around the country where they **excel** in science classes, rather than being hindered because of their religious homeschooling heritage.

The facts speak for themselves: (1) Evolution is not a proven fact (so why should it be the only theory of origins presented to students?); (2) Studies show that, on average, homeschoolers outperform public school students by a wide margin on standardized tests, including science tests, despite most homeschoolers being taught that life on Earth was created and designed by an intelligent, infinite, eternal Mind. Evolutionists may give creationist homeschooling families an "F" on their choice of science curriculum, but in reality, it is the theory of evolution that deserves the "F."

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IN THE NEWS

The YMCA has announced a name change, omitting the word "Christian" from its long-time designation "Young Men's Christian Association" as founded in England in 1844 and in America in 1851 (Muhlstein, 2010). Likewise, the charitable organization that has long raised funds to aid poverty-stricken children around the world, Christian Children's Fund, has eliminated "Christian" to become simply "Child Fund" (Price, 2010). The usual politically correct claptrap of sensitivity to "diversity" and "inclusion" accompanied these announcements.

A fundamental sense of shame ought to accompany the foolish desire to distance oneself from anything Christian—a view certainly not shared by Paul (Romans 1:16), nor the Founders of the American Republic. For example, signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, President of the Continental Congress, and Governor of Connecticut, Samuel Huntington, issued a proclamation to his home state in which he announced:

It becomes a people **publicly to acknowledge** the over-ruling hand of Divine Providence...and with becoming humility and sincere repentance to supplicate the pardon that we may obtain forgiveness through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (1791).

Jesus said: "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory" (Luke 9:26).

Dave Miller

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observed by the said colonies as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer;... That he would be graciously pleased to bless all his people in these colonies with health and plenty, and grant that a spirit of incorruptible patriotism, and of **pure undefiled religion, may universally prevail**;.... And it is recommended to **Christians of all denominations, to assemble for public worship**, and abstain from servile labour on the said day (*Journals of the...*, 4:208-209, emp. added).

To the Founders, patriotism and Christianity go hand in hand. The fate of the new nation was dependent on the extent to which Americans devoted themselves to practicing the precepts of Christianity. The Congress included as part of their official governmental role to promote the universal spread of Christianity.

On November 1, 1777, they directed additional remarks to the country:

It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive Powers of these UNITED STATES to set apart THURSDAY, the eighteenth Day of December next, for SOLEMN THANKSGIVING and PRAISE:... That it may please him...**to prosper the Means of Religion, for the promotion and enlargement of that Kingdom, which consisteth “in Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost”** (*Journals of...*, 9:854-851, emp. added).

The quoted phrase at the end of their proclamation is from Romans 14:17 and refers to the Christian religion.

On March 20, 1779, their proclamation to the nation included the following:

RESOLVED, THAT it be recommended to the several States to appoint the First Thursday in May next to be a Day of Fasting, Humiliation, and Prayer to Almighty God...that he will diffuse useful knowledge, **extend the influence of true religion**, and give us that peace of mind, which the world cannot give (*Journals of...*, 13:343-344, emp. added).

Again, the Continental Congress conceptualized their role to include urging citizens to request God to spread Christianity. The peace of mind which “the world cannot give” is an allusion to the words of Jesus and Paul taken from John 14:27 and Philippians 4:7.

On March 19, 1782, they proclaimed:

The United States in Congress assembled, therefore...think it their indispensable duty to call upon the several states,...beseeching Him...that He would incline the hearts of all men to peace, and fill them with universal charity and benevolence, and **that the religion of our Divine Redeemer, with all its benign influences, may cover the earth as the waters cover the seas** (*Journals of...*, 22:137-138, emp. added).

On October 11, 1782, their proclamation included these words:

[T]he United States in Congress assembled...recommend to all ranks, to testify their gratitude to God for his goodness, by a cheerful obedience to his laws, and by **promoting, each in his station, and by his influence, the practice of true and undefiled religion** (*Journals of...*, 23:647, emp. added).

“True and undefiled religion,” a paraphrase of James 1:27, is yet another reference to the religion of Christ. Who, today, considers such admonitions to fall within the purview of elected officials?

One of the Fathers of American Jurisprudence, Joseph Story, summarized the attitude of the Founders and most Americans in his monumental work *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*. His lucid, cogent clarification of the interpenetration of religion and government is desperately needed today:

How far any government has a right to interfere in matters touching religion, has been a subject much discussed by writers upon public and political law.... [T]he right of a society or government to interfere in matters of religion will hardly be contested by any persons, who believe that **piety, religion, and morality are intimately connected with the well being of the state, and indispensable to the administration of civil justice**. The promulgation of the great doctrines of religion, the being, and attributes, and providence of one Almighty God; the responsibility to him for all our actions, founded upon moral freedom and accountability; a future state of rewards and punishments; the cultivation of all the personal, social, and benevolent virtues; **these never can be a matter of indifference in any well ordered community. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive, how any civilized society can well exist without them**. And at all events, it is impossible for those, who believe in the truth of Christianity, as a divine revelation, to

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

August 18	Florence, AL	(256) 764-0104
August 27-31	Sevierville, TN	(256) 435-9656

Eric Lyons

August 6-8	Olathe, KS	(913) 829-5596
August 11	Gulf Shores, AL	(251) 968-7769
August 18	Valdosta, GA	(229) 242-2174
August 27-31	Sevierville, TN	(256) 435-9656

Dave Miller

August 8	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
August 13-15	Collierville, TN	(901) 853-9827
August 18	Montgomery, AL	(334) 272-2561
August 25	Andalusia, AL	(334) 222-3651



doubt, that **it is the especial duty of government to foster, and encourage it among all the citizens and subjects.** This is a point wholly distinct from that of the right of private judgment in matters of religion, and of the freedom of public worship according to the dictates of one's conscience. The real difficulty lies in ascertaining the limits, to which government may rightfully go in fostering and encouraging religion.... Now, **there will probably be found few persons in this, or any other Christian country, who would deliberately contend, that it was unreasonable, or unjust to foster and encourage the Christian religion generally, as a matter of sound policy, as well as of revealed truth.** In fact, every American colony, from its foundation down to the revolution...did openly, by the whole course of its laws and institutions, support and sustain, in some form, the Christian religion; and almost invariably gave a peculiar sanction to some of its fundamental doctrines. And this has continued to be the case in some of the states down to the present period, **without the slightest suspicion, that it was against the principles of public law, or republican liberty. Indeed, in a republic, there would seem to be a peculiar propriety in viewing the Christian religion, as the great, basis, on which it must rest for its support and permanence,** if it be, what it has ever been deemed by its truest friends to be, **the religion of liberty....** Probably at the time of the adoption of the constitution, and of the amendment to it, now under consideration, **the general, if not the universal, sentiment in America was, that Christianity ought to receive encouragement from the state,** so far as was not incompatible with the private rights of conscience, and the freedom of religious worship. **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** (1833, Vol. III, Ch. 44, Paragraphs 1865-1868).

American history is replete with the application of this principle. American government was founded on **Christian** principles—and its perpetuation **depends** on the continuation of those principles by a substantial portion of its citizenry. In complete harmony with the spirit of the Founders, consider the words of a 20th century President, Calvin Coolidge, who expressed the prevailing sentiments of the nation on Wednesday, March 4, 1925, when he commenced his presidency with the following words:

Here stands our country, an example of tranquility at home, a patron of tranquility abroad. Here stands its Government, aware of its might but obedient to its conscience. Here it will continue to stand, seeking peace and prosperity,...attentive to the intuitive counsel of womanhood, encouraging education, **desiring the advancement of religion,** supporting the cause of justice and honor among the nations. America seeks no earthly empire built on blood and force. No ambition, no temptation, lures her to thought of foreign dominions. The legions which she sends forth are armed, not with the sword, but with **the cross.** The higher state **to which she seeks the allegiance of all mankind** is not of human, but of **divine origin. She cherishes no purpose save to merit the favor of Almighty God** (1925, emp. added).

Whatever varied functions and activities the government is to involve itself in, according to the original design of the Republic, according to the Founders themselves, America actually has only **one purpose:** to merit the favor of God. When the government and Americans at large lose sight of that singular, all-encompassing principle, the foundations of the Republic have been significantly compromised. God help us to return to our moorings.

ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF SCHOOLS

American public schools, especially the university, have become counterproductive to the continuation of the American way of life. In his book *Freefall of the American University*, Jim Nelson Black describes the decline of the American educational process:

Grade inflation, the proliferation of junk courses, and the loss of a core curriculum,...historical revisionism, moral relativism, and an emphasis on the flawed ideologies of race and gender continue virtually unchallenged.... The crisis in higher education is not only the risk of indoctrination through the vagaries of pluralism, tolerance, and diversity but also the fact that “value-neutral” socialization and radical sexual indoctrination are robbing many young Americans of their future.... The university campus is no longer a center of higher learning but a socialist conspiracy that feeds on itself, fueled by fear-mongering on the Left and apathy on the Right (2004, pp. ix,xi,xiv).

Marlin Maddoux also provides an eye-opening assessment of American schools:

While America wasn't looking, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic was largely replaced by Moral Relativism and Secular Humanism in our kindergartens, grade schools, and universities.... In fact, the public school system has done more to undermine the basic principles of freedom, free enterprise, patriotism, and Christianity than any other single institution (2006, inside flap, p. 76).

What an unbelievable turnaround from the intention of those who established the Republic. Their viewpoint regarding public education was articulated many times during the course of the founding of America. One such declaration came in a proclamation to the nation by the Continental Congress on November 1, 1777:

It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive Powers of these UNITED STATES to set apart



THURSDAY, the eighteenth Day of December next, for SOLEMN THANKSGIVING and PRAISE: That at one Time and with one Voice, the good People may express the grateful Feelings of their Hearts, and consecrate themselves to the Service of their Divine Benefactor;...That it may please him...[t]o **take Schools and Seminaries of Education, so necessary for cultivating the Principles of true Liberty, Virtue and Piety,** under his nurturing Hand (*Journals of...*, 9:854-851, emp. added).

Another affirmation of the role of schools was made by the Congress in a national proclamation issued on March 19, 1782:

The United States in Congress assembled, therefore, taking into consideration our present situation, our multiplied transgressions of the holy laws of our God, and his past acts of kindness and goodness towards us, which we ought to record with the liveliest gratitude, think it their indispensable duty to call upon the several states, to set apart the last Thursday in April next, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, that our joint supplications may then ascend to the throne of the Ruler of the Universe, beseeching Him to diffuse a spirit of universal reformation among all ranks and degrees of our citizens;...that He would grant success to all engaged in lawful trade and commerce, and **take under his guardianship all schools and seminaries of learning, and make them nurseries of virtue and piety** (*Journals of...*, 22:137-138, emp. added).

Declaration signer and physician, Dr. Benjamin Rush, explained the mode of education to be adopted “so as to secure to the state all the advantages to be derived from the proper instruction of youth”:

[T]he only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in Religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments.... [T]he religion I mean to

recommend in this place, is that of the New Testament.... [A]ll its doctrines and precepts are calculated to promote the happiness of society, and the safety and well being of civil government. A Christian cannot fail of being a republican...for every precept of the Gospel inculcates those degrees of humility, self-denial, and brotherly kindness, which are directly opposed to the pride of monarchy and the pageantry of a court. A Christian cannot fail of being useful to the republic, for his religion teacheth him, that no man “liveth to himself” (1804, pp. 8-9).

I lament, that we waste so much time and money in punishing crimes, and take so little pains to prevent them. We profess to be republicans, and yet we neglect the only means of establishing and perpetuating our republican forms of government, that is, **the universal education of our youth in the principles of Christianity, by means of the Bible;** for this divine Book, above all others, favours that equality among mankind, that respect for just laws, and all those sober and frugal virtues, which constitute the soul of republicanism (1804, pp. 112-113, emp. added).

It is evident that whatever benefits might be received from education, according to the Founders of American civilization, the central role of schools of learning in a Republic is to instill within children Christian virtue and piety, which undergird the principles of true freedom. No wonder the school textbooks that characterized education from the very beginning of the country right up to WW2 were saturated with allusions to God, the Bible, and Christianity (e.g., the *New England Primer*; *McGuffey's Readers*; the “*Blue Back Speller*”; cf. Miller, 2008, pp. 53-68). The only hope for the survival of the Republic is for education to return to the teaching of Christian principles. In the words of Jesus Christ: “Take My yoke upon you and **learn from Me**, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find

rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29, emp. added).

[to be continued]

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

APOLOGETICS
PRESS, INC.

MORE KIDS' TV PROGRAM EPISODES

We are pleased that our children's television program continues to receive positive reactions. We are confident that this program will enjoy a prolonged impact, providing spiritual nourishment to youngsters for years to come. The seventh volume of *Digger Doug's Underground* is now available and ready for shipping. Like its predecessors, Volume 7 is packaged in an attractive and colorful DVD box and contains two episodes—Episode 13 titled Broken Bones, Broken Theory and Episode 14 titled Humans and Dinosaurs.

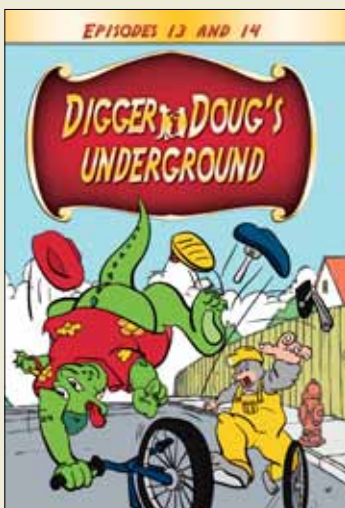
In addition to airing regularly on the Gospel Broadcasting Network (www.gbntv.org), we continue to transfer episodes to DVD. The previous six volumes (12 episodes), already on the market, contain some outstanding information under the follow episode titles: What About the Big Bang?, After Their Kind, Dinosaurs and Artifacts, Dinosaurs and Natural History, Days of Creation, Biomimicry, Vestigial Organs, Cause and Effect, Similar Things,

Evolutionary Hoaxes, The Age of the Earth, and Creation Scientists.

In addition to providing children with a masterful blending of scientific and biblical information, the episodes include original songs written specifically for the program.

I cannot adequately express my conviction that this television program has the potential to influence children in such a way that they can be permanently protected from the evil influence of godless evolution. If you are a parent or grandparent, I know you will be delighted with these episodes if you will take the time to preview them. Why not pop some popcorn, and sit down and watch them with your little ones?

Dave Miller



*See the Center Spread
for More Details*

