

AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE—PART 3

1/29/2017

Today we continue our study of America's Christian Heritage. Our heritage is Christian in spite of the opposition to this truth!

I. THE FOUNDERS RECOGNIZED GOD AS THE SOURCE OF LIBERTY AND LAW

- A. Former chaplain to the United States Senate Peter Marshall stated; "The Constitution of the United States has a path of descent that you can trace directly back to Puritan New England."
- B. When the Puritans came ashore they quickly established laws governed by the Truth of Scriptures.
 - 1. In 1639 they adopted the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut.
 - 2. This was the first governing constitution among the colonies.
 - 3. George Washington thought Connecticut's Constitution was so brilliant that he ordered every delegate at the Constitutional Convention to have a copy.
 - 4. The preamble of this Constitution declared; "The Word of God requires that to maintain the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God..."
 - 5. It also stipulated that all governing officials were bound to rule according to established laws and where those were lacking, they should govern "according to the Rule of the Word of God."
 - 6. The Puritans adopted Article I of their new constitution by unanimous vote, affirming, "The Scriptures do hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men in all duties which they are to perform to God and men."

7. Connecticut still bears the nickname: the "Constitution State."

C. The Puritans believed that the Scriptures offered "a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men..."

D. President John Kennedy stated; "The rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God."

E. Puritans looked to God alone for their rights:

1. John Dickinson, signer of the Constitution from Delaware stated: "Kings or parliaments could not give the rights essential to happiness....We claim them, from, a higher source—from the King of Kings, and Lord of all the earth. They are not annexed to us by parchments, and seals. They are created in us by the decrees of Providence, which establish the laws of our nature.

2. From the beginning the Puritans sought to embrace a government with Scriptures as its foundational principle.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF SCRIPTURES IN LATER DOCUMENTS AND STATEMENTS.

A. The Declaration of Independence states:

1. "The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God."

2. "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

3. "Appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World "

4. "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence."

B. Thomas Jefferson feared skeptics would attempt to remove God as the Author of Liberty: " God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only

firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the Gift of God?...Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.”

- C. Eighteenth century legal commentator William Blackstone stated: “The law of nature...dictated by God, Himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times. No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this.”
- D. Rufus King signer of the Constitution from Massachusetts: “The law established by the Creator extends over the whole globe, is everywhere and at all times binding upon mankind.”
- E. In his first inaugural address George Washington stated: “The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained.

III. STATEMENTS IN STATE CONSTITUTIONS PRIOR TO 1787 ARE CHRISTIAN

A. Five states required public office holders to be Christian.

- 1. Pennsylvania
- 2. New Jersey
- 3. Maryland
- 4. Delaware
- 5. North Carolina

B. Seven states required office holders to believe in God.

- 1. Pennsylvania
- 2. Massachusetts
- 3. New Hampshire
- 4. Connecticut

5. North Carolina

6. South Carolina

7. Georgia

- C. North Carolina's Constitution of 1776 Stated; "No person who shall deny the being of God, or the truth of the Protestant religion, or the divine authority of either the Old or New Testaments, or who shall hold religious principles incompatible with the freedom and safety of the State shall be capable of holding any place of trust or profit, in the civil department, within this State"

IV. FOUNDERS STATEMENTS ACKNOWLEDGE GOD IN OUR COUNTRY

- A. George Washington wrote a prayer in 1752 which stated; "O Most Glorious God, in Jesus Christ, my merciful and loving father, I acknowledge and confess my guilt in the weak and imperfect performance of the duties of this day." He closed this same prayer by saying; "I humbly beseech Thee to be merciful to me in the free pardon of my sins for the sake of thy dear Son and only Savior Jesus Christ who came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Thou gavest Thy Son to die for me."
- B. Benjamin Franklin; "History will also afford frequent opportunities of showing...the excellency of the Christian religion above all others, ancient or modern."
- C. Benjamin Rush; "The only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue."
- D. John Adams; "Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

V. THE PROOF IS CONCLUSIVE

- A. America was founded as a Christian nation!
- B. Our belief in the One True God has honored us for 241 years!