

## CHAPTER 7

### The Church and the State

What is the church's relationship to the government? What is the government's relationship to the church?

In this chapter we want to carefully think about the relationship between the CHURCH and the STATE. When we use the word "STATE" in this chapter, we are not referring to an individual state such as Connecticut or New York or California. Instead we are using the word "STATE" to refer to whatever GOVERNMENT is in power, whether it be the Roman Emperor or a King or, as in our country today, the **President-Congress-Supreme Court** (our government is made up of three parts).

### The Church in the Roman Empire

During the first 300 years of church history, the STATE **persecuted** the CHURCH. Ten Roman Emperors, from Nero to Diocletian, took part in this persecution. The Roman STATE was the enemy of the CHURCH. Believers often had to flee and hide. Christianity was illegal and anyone who boldly claimed to be a believer was an OUTLAW. The STATE waged a war against the CHURCH. Pagans enjoyed the freedom to worship their false gods, but believers were condemned by the STATE for worshipping the true God.

In the days of Constantine (see Chapter 6), the STATE protected the CHURCH. The Edict of Milan made Christianity a legal and lawful religion. Christians were no longer outlaws. The STATE was no longer the foe of the CHURCH; it was now the FRIEND of the church. All Roman citizens enjoyed full religious freedom. Each person could choose whatever religion he preferred. He could choose to worship the SUN or he could choose to worship SELF or he could choose to worship the SAVIOUR, the Lord Jesus Christ. Regardless of the choice that he made, he would not be persecuted.

Religious freedom in the Roman Empire did not last long. In the days of Constantine all religions were tolerated and allowed and protected, but soon this would change. Soon the situation would be different and ONLY CHRISTIANITY would be tolerated and allowed and protected and all other religions would be outlawed! The Roman rulers who at one time waged war on all the Christians later waged war on all who were not Christians. How did such a change come about? What caused such a problem?

A serious problem arises whenever the STATE becomes too closely related to the CHURCH. Constantine, as a Roman emperor, was the first emperor who was a friend of the CHURCH. He put a stop to the persecution. He gave the believers religious liberty and freedom. He granted many favors to the Christians. In return for all that he did for the CHURCH, Constantine thought that as the Roman emperor he should have a good deal to say about the affairs of the CHURCH. This is a very dangerous trend. Whenever the STATE starts to meddle with the internal affairs of the CHURCH you will have serious problems. The emperor may be the Head of the Roman Empire, but does this mean that he is the Head of the Church? \_\_\_\_\_ Who is the HEAD of the Church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23)? \_\_\_\_\_

The son of Constantine, CONSTANTIUS, was also a ruler in the Roman empire. He stepped

further away from the principles of religious freedom. Constantius abandoned his father's wise policy of toleration and of allowing people to choose whatever religion they wished. Instead Constantius started to wage war on those who were not Christians. He destroyed many heathen temples. He made laws against heathen worship. He was against the heathen sacrifices and the worship of images. He even attacked other Christians with whom he did not agree. Constantius was a follower of Arius which means he believed many of the things that modern Jehovah's Witnesses believe today, including their false teaching that Jesus Christ is not God. He even persecuted Athanasius, a man who strongly taught that Jesus Christ was God (see John 1:1).

Later in the 4th century religious freedom came to an end. In 380 A.D. emperor Theodosius I issued an edict that made Christianity the **EXCLUSIVE** (one and only) religion of the **STATE**. Christianity became the **STATE RELIGION**. Any who would dare to hold to any other form of worship were considered heretics and would suffer punishment from the state. By 393 A.D. Christianity was recognized as the official and **ONLY** religion of the Roman **STATE**. In other words, if you were not a Christian you were an **OUTLAW!** If you were a Christian the **STATE** was your friend. If you were not a Christian then the **STATE** was your enemy. Is this religious freedom?

Suppose you were one of the persecuted Christians who lived in the first three centuries. The expression of your heart might be something like this: "Why are we being persecuted for our faith? Why can't the Roman government allow each person to worship as he wants? Why can't there be freedom of religion in this empire? Why can't the Roman rulers be tolerant even towards those who hold different beliefs than they do? I wish the believers could have freedom to exercise their faith without the fear of being persecuted by the **STATE**." But then not too many years later people who called themselves Christians became the great persecutors. Heretics and pagans were under the fierce wrath of Christians (though whether they were really "born again" believers is very doubtful). The church was once persecuted but now it had become the persecutor. The **STATE** joined up with the **CHURCH** and said, "Now that we are a **"CHRISTIAN STATE"** we are going to punish all those who refuse to be Christians." There was no religious liberty except for those who were Christians.

Suppose your government were to say, "If you do not become a Christian you will be punished and persecuted." Is this a good way to get people to come to know the Lord? Will people become Christians for the right reasons? Will they accept Christianity in order to be saved from their sins (Matt. 1:21) or to be saved from their government?

Instead of preaching the gospel to the heathen people (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20), the Church waged war against the heathen. Some so-called Christians turned to the Bible to justify their persecution of pagans. For example, they would take a passage such as Deuteronomy 7:1-5 and argue like this: "See, God told the nation Israel to fight against the heathen and destroy their altars and have nothing to do with their religion. They were not to tolerate their false religion at all." What is wrong with this argument? Is there a difference between **ISRAEL** and the **CHURCH**? What is this difference? Should believers go out today and destroy all those who practice false religions? If a Jehovah's Witness comes to the door should we shoot him? Should we burn down every Mormon Temple? Is this what God has told the Church to do?

According to the Bible, how should believers deal with those who are false teachers? How should we deal with them according to 2 John 9-11? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Titus 3:10? \_\_\_\_\_ According to Romans 16:17? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ According to 2 Timothy 3:5? \_\_\_\_\_

## God Does Not Force People to Believe

God gives to every person the right to believe. God also gives to every person the right **not to believe**. God commands people to be saved (Acts 16:31; 17:30), but God does not force people to be saved. God wants all men to be saved and TO COME to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim.2:4) but God does not force people to come. He invites them but He does not coerce them (compel them to choose).

God is a very tolerant God. He allows men to believe all kinds of things. God gives people the right to believe the "stupidest" things! People have the right to worship grasshoppers if they choose to do so. Can you think of some crazy things that people believe today (such as the theory of evolution, etc.)?

God gives every person the right not to believe, but God also holds every person responsible for his (or her) unbelief (see John 3:18 and 3:36). God gives men the freedom to reject His son and to reject the Saviour, but men must pay the consequences of this rejection (compare 2 Thess. 2:10-12). As Christians we do not need to punish those who do not believe in Christ. They have an eternal punishment that is awaiting them. God will take care of unbelievers; the CHURCH does not need to do this, and the STATE does not need to do this.

## Freedom in the Home?

How much freedom does a young person have in the home? Can parents force their children to believe in Christ? What are some things that parents **can** do in order to bring their children to a saving knowledge of Christ? Can parents force and require their children to go to church? Do parents have the right to do this? Do parents have the responsibility to do this? Should parents allow their children to live and act any way the children please? Are parents responsible to bring up their children in a certain way (Ephesians 6:4)?

A father once gave this message to his son: "As long as you live in this house you will follow the rules. When you have your own house, you can make your own rules. In this house we do not have a democracy. I did not campaign to be your father. You did not vote for me. We are father and son by the grace of God, and I accept that privilege and awesome responsibility. In accepting it I have an obligation to perform the role of a father. I am not your 'pal.' Our ages are too different. We can share many things, but we are not pals. I am your father. This is 100 times more than what a pal is. I am also your friend, but we are on entirely different levels. You will do, in this house, as I say and whatever I ask you to do is motivated by love. This will be hard for you to understand until you have a son of your own. Until then, trust me." What do you think of this message from father to son?

## The Purpose of Government

God has established the STATE and God has established the CHURCH. What then is the purpose of the STATE? What is God's purpose for human government? Carefully read Romans 13:1-6. According to this passage, what important service does the STATE perform? Why do we have and why do we need human government? What would society be like without police, judges, jails, soldiers, etc.?

The CHURCH should recognize the STATE as a necessary, temporary, fallible (not perfect) authority which exists in order to accomplish God's purpose for government. A government

should:

1. Protect its people from outside invaders and enemies. Just as an individual has a right to try to protect himself from attack, so also a nation has a right to protect itself from enemies. Thus the need for the army, navy, etc.
2. Punish evildoers and reward or encourage those who do good. This is clearly taught in Romans 13:1-6. The punishment might even involve the DEATH PENALTY (Romans 13:4 and Genesis 9:6).

The STATE also has certain limitations. A government should **not**:

1. Inhibit human freedom on the part of those who do good. The STATE **should** help to protect and preserve man's freedoms (although many governments in our world do **not** do this).
2. Allow freedom for evildoers to do evil (Rom. 13:3).
3. Prevent its individual citizens from worshipping and serving God (see Acts 5:29).
4. Prevent people from bearing the consequences from immoral acts, violence, sloth (laziness) or crimes. Moral responsibility is one of the first principles in God's universe (see Acts 25:11).

What is the CHURCH'S relationship to the STATE? Consider the following:

1. Christians must pray for those in authority over them with the expected result of living "a quiet and peaceable life" (1 Tim. 2:1-2).
2. Christians must be subject to the STATE when the STATE operates on the basis of its purposes and limitations which we have already mentioned (Rom. 13:1-3).
3. Christians must render what is due (pay taxes) to the State, knowing that some things are Caesar's and some are God's (Luke 20:25 and **Romans 13:6**).
4. Christians must live their lives in **relative** subjection and obedience to the STATE and in **absolute** subjection and obedience to God (see Acts 5:29). Final obedience belongs to God rather than man. If what the government demands is in conflict with what God demands, then WHO should be obeyed? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The United States of America**

Let us consider one example of a STATE – our own country. Our founding fathers seemed to have a good understanding of the real purpose of government. These are the words found in our Declaration of Independence:

"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"

What then is the purpose of our government? In the same Declaration we read this: (it is) "to secure these rights that governments are instituted among men." The purpose of our government is to secure and protect these basic rights.

Can people enjoy their right to LIFE if murderers are allowed to run on the loose?

Can Americans enjoy their right to LIBERTY if our nation allows radical Islamic terrorists to overtake our country and take away our freedoms?

Can Americans really PURSUE HAPPINESS if they are constantly threatened by crime and lawlessness?

God intended government to provide the right kind of environment so that people could choose God and come to know Him and find the true LIFE AND LIBERTY AND HAPPINESS that is found only in Christ Jesus.

### **The First Amendment**

The United States government saw the importance of providing religious freedom for all of its citizens. This is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States (which is part of the "Bill of Rights").

The First Amendment states this: "CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECTING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION, OR PROHIBIT THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF."

The founding fathers of our country understood this to mean the following: "that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, nor compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience." This means that men are free to worship God in any manner they choose according to their conscience and that the government must not interfere with this freedom and tell men how they **must** worship. For example, a law must never be made which says, "Every American citizen must be a Catholic and anyone who refuses to be a Catholic will be punished by law." This would be religious freedom only for Catholics. The first amendment states that men must be allowed the "FREE EXERCISE" of their religious beliefs.

Do you think a person living in this country should be free to be a Buddhist if he (or she) so desires? Do you think Jews should be able to worship as they please in the United States? Do you think an American citizen should have the right to be an atheist? Should such a person be allowed to talk to other people and convince them to be atheists also?

Are there times when the government must interfere with certain religions? Suppose that the religious ritual of certain "Satan Worshippers" demanded that a person murder another person and use the dead person's heart and liver to charm the evil spirits. Should this religion be allowed and tolerated? Why not? People are given religious freedom as long as they do not trample on the freedom and rights of others. People have a right to Life and Liberty and all religions must respect this. If religious practices get "out of hand" then the government must step in and protect its people.

Suppose a religious group believed that the government of the United States should be overthrown and they were actively working toward this end. Should the government allow them the freedom to do this? Should they be given the freedom to destroy the very government which allows them to have religious liberty? Remember, freedom does not mean liberty to do anything at all.

Those who enjoy religious freedom must also respect the rights of others to believe and worship as they please. We may disagree strongly with what they believe and even tell them so, but we

respect their God-given right to believe what they choose to believe.

The intent of the First Amendment and the words and actions of our Founding Fathers, including Thomas Jefferson, clearly demonstrate how the words "the separation of church and state" were originally understood. These words were never intended to remove God from government; rather they were intended to keep government from controlling and manipulating religious practices. --Attorney David C. Gibbs, Jr. "The Truth About Separation of Church and State."

Herein lies the true meaning of separation of church and state as the concept was understood by Jefferson and the other founding fathers: Government may never dictate one's form of worship or articles of faith. Not all public worship of God must be halted; on the contrary, freedom to engage in such worship was the very reason for creating a doctrine of separation between church and state...The doctrine of separation between church and state has been abused, twisted and taken out of context in recent court decisions in order to prevent the public worship and acknowledgment of God...We must not be silent while every vestige of God is removed from our public life and while every public display of faith is annihilated. The time has come to recover the valiant courage of our forefathers, who understood that faith and freedom are inseparable and that they are worth fighting for. --Roy S. Moore, chief justice, Alabama Supreme Court

Congress must never prohibit the free exercise of religion.

Almost all Americans have heard the phrase "separation of church and state." It has been used as something of a club to "beat down" and eliminate Christianity from public places. Where does the phrase "separation of church and state" come from? It is not a part of the original U.S. Constitution of 1787, as most people falsely believe, or in any of its amendments. In reality, the idea of a "wall of separation" between church and state came from a private letter from President Thomas Jefferson, and it has sadly been misused to slowly, but surely, eliminate Christianity from the public sector—and replace it with an anti-God religion.

The Establishment Clause in the First Amendment was intended to protect the church from the (federal) government, not the government from the church. Therefore, no "national" church or religion is allowed to be established by the federal government.

I will highlight key words of the First Amendment: "**Congress shall make no law** respecting an establishment of religion, or **prohibiting the free exercise thereof...**"

You can see that the "separation of church and state" phrase is nowhere in the Amendment (or the rest of the Constitution). The 1802 letter from Jefferson was sent to the Danbury Baptist Association in Connecticut in response to the group's letter to him. Jefferson was trying to assure the Baptists that the federal government would never be permitted to interfere with the church.

Today, secular scholars have lifted the Danbury letter out of its entire historical context and have turned the so-called "wall" metaphor completely on its head.

"Separation of church and state" is now used to protect the government from the influence of the church—establishing a policy of freedom "from" religion, which in reality has become "separation of Christianity and state." This would have been an entirely foreign and unintended concept to the Founding Fathers.

The above is taken from the Article, "Separation of Christianity and State," by Ken Ham, *Answers Update*, Volume 17, Issue 4, pages 1-2.

Please note that when Christianity is **removed** from public life, this does not result in a neutral situation. Christianity has been **replaced** by an godless, evolutionary world view. The state allows this godless religion to thrive in the secular media and in the classrooms of our land. The Bible has been expelled; secular humanism has been given full freedom to dominate our public institutions).

## Freedom of Religion or Freedom from Religion?

There are many today who believe that there should be a complete wall of separation between CHURCH and STATE and that God and the Bible should be ignored and left out and not even mentioned in any kind of public gathering (such as government meeting or public school, etc.). They wrongly think that freedom of religion means freedom **from** religion. They believe God should be expelled from the classroom and from the government.

This is certainly **not** what the founding fathers of our country intended. The First Amendment was never intended to build a "wall of separation" between religious observance and public life. Here are some examples from the history of our country which show this very clearly:

On the very day that the House of Representatives approved the language of the First Amendment (September 24, 1789), it also passed a resolution calling for a national day of prayer and thanksgiving, acknowledging "with grateful hearts, the many signal favors of Almighty God." They recognized and acknowledged God in a very real way. There have been well over 100 Presidential proclamations of Thanksgiving Day, in which the leaders of our nation have urged Americans to give thanks to God for His numerous blessings. Were all of these proclamations unconstitutional?

The Mayflower Compact spoke of "the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith."

In the Declaration of Independence there are four references to God. 1) In the first paragraph it mentions "*nature's God*." 2) In the second paragraph it states that all men "are endowed *by their Creator* with certain unalienable rights." In the final paragraph there are two more references to God: 3) "appealing to *the supreme Judge of the world* for the rectitude of our intentions"; 4) "with a firm reliance on the protection of *Divine Providence*." This last statement indicates that the Declaration of Independence was actually a Declaration of Dependence upon Almighty God.

The Liberty Bell, a symbol of our nation and of our nation's freedom, has inscribed on it a verse from **God's Word, the Bible** (Lev. 25:10).

George Washington, in his First Inaugural Address, clearly acknowledged Almighty God: "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore *the Invisible Hand* which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished *by some token of providential agency* . . . We ought to be no less persuaded that 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."

Benjamin Franklin addressed the members of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and these were his concluding words: "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 probably that an empire can rise without His aid?"

During the Civil War Abraham Lincoln called for a national day of prayer, humiliation and fasting and he urged that as Americans we "humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness." Lincoln did not want to banish God from public life. In his famous Gettysburg Address, Lincoln said, "That this nation, **under God**, shall have a new birth of freedom . . ." This was probably the most famous speech ever given on American soil. Was this speech unconstitutional?

Congress has and still does begin its sessions with prayer. Chaplains (of many different faiths) serve all branches of our military and are paid by the government for their services. Our government believes that even our soldiers have a right to worship God as they please and they have provided chaplains to help them do so.

Since 1865 our coins have carried the words "In God We Trust" and by an act of Congress in 1956 these words were officially made our national motto. Our national anthem has much to say about the need to trust in God, especially the third verse: "O thus be it ever when free men shall stand between their loved homes and the war's desolation! Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n rescued land praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation! Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just, and this be our motto: "In God is our trust!" (Francis Scott Key).

The words "In God We Trust" are inscribed in the House and Senate chambers. On the walls of the Capitol dome are found these words, "The New Testament according to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." On the walls of the Library of Congress are inscribed the words of Micah 6:8. Engraved on the metal cap on the top of the Washington Monument are the words "Praise be to God." Lining the walls of the stairwell are numerous verses from the Bible (John 5:19; Prov. 22:6, etc.). The crier who opens each session of the Supreme Court closes with the words, "God save the United State and the Honorable Court."

Each president takes his oath of office with his left hand placed on an open Bible and concludes the oath with the words, "So help me God."

In 1954 Congress added the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance which according to a House of Representatives report was intended to "recognize the guidance of God in our national affairs." In a message to Luke Hart, August 17, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower, in recognition of the initiative of the Knights of Columbus in originating and sponsoring the amendment to the Pledge of Allegiance, said these words:

We are particularly thankful to you for your part in the movement to have the words "**under God**" added to our Pledge of Allegiance. These words will remind Americans that despite our great physical strength we must remain humble. They will help us to keep constantly in our minds and hearts the spiritual and moral principles which alone give dignity to man, and upon which our way of life is founded.

Vigorous efforts are being made today to remove these words from our pledge. On January 14, 1969 entertainer Red Skelton, on the Red Skelton Hour, presented a heart-stirring explanation of the Pledge of Allegiance, explaining it phrase by phrase. In his conclusion, Red Skelton said this: "Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country, and two words have been added to the Pledge of Allegiance: **Under God**. Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said that it's a prayer, and it would be eliminated from schools, too?" Little did Skelton know how prophetic his statement would prove to be!

The same year that Congress added the words, "one nation under God," to the Pledge, both houses passed a resolution directing the Capitol architect to make available "a room, with facilities for prayer and meditation, for the use of members of the Senate and House of Representatives." This room features a stained glass window that shows George Washington kneeling in prayer and quotes from Psalm 16:1.

## Removing God from Public Life

In more recent years there has been a strong effort to remove God from public life and from our institutions. There has been a strong effort to discourage and hinder the free expression of religion. Here are some examples of this:

Kentucky once had a law requiring the posting of the Ten Commandments in the public schools. However the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed this, even though these same Ten Commandments are **engraved** on the walls of the Supreme Court chamber. Should the walls of the Supreme Court chamber be declared unconstitutional?

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court holds a Bible for the swearing in of the President, yet school teachers are forbidden by law to read the Bible in class (result of a 1963 Supreme Court ruling).

In Upstate New York a group of high school students desired permission to meet in a classroom, outside regular school hours, in order to have a voluntary prayer meeting. The school board denied them permission to meet and the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately upheld the school board.

Attempts have been made, though unsuccessful, to get the words "in God we trust" off our coins.

In California, crèches and crosses have been removed from downtown Christmas and Easter displays. In Kansas, city hall monuments featuring religious symbols have been torn down. In Rhode Island, high school graduation invocations and benedictions have been banned. In Alabama, students have been prohibited by federal court order from praying, from distributing religious materials, and from even discussing anything of a devotional or inspirational nature with their classmates and teachers. In other states, public displays of the Ten Commandments have been banned.

Every year the President designates a holiday for thanksgiving to God; yet, if school were held that day, would students be allowed to give thanks to God?

### **The Fifty States Reference God in their Constitutions**

\* Alabama 1901, Preamble. We the people of the State of Alabama, invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish the following Constitution....

\* Alaska 1956, Preamble. We, the people of Alaska, grateful to God and to those who founded our nation and pioneered this great land....

\* Arizona 1911, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Arizona, grateful to Almighty God for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution....

\* Arkansas 1874, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Arkansas, grateful to Almighty God for the privilege of choosing our own form of government....

\* California 1879, Preamble. We, the People of the State of California, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom....

\* Colorado 1876, Preamble. We, the people of Colorado, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe....

\* Connecticut 1818, Preamble. The People of Connecticut, acknowledging with gratitude the good Providence of God in permitting them to enjoy.... Connecticut also lays claim to the first written constitution, "The Fundamental Orders" (1639) which began, "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God...." (and containing many such references to God and even to "the gospel of our Lord Jesus").

\* Delaware 1897, Preamble. Through Divine Goodness all men have, by nature, the rights of worshipping and serving their Creator according to the dictates of their consciences....

\* Florida 1885, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Florida, grateful to Almighty God for our constitutional liberty, establish this Constitution....

\* Georgia 1777, Preamble. We, the people of Georgia, relying upon protection and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish this Constitution....

\* Hawaii 1959, Preamble. We, the people of Hawaii, Grateful for Divine Guidance...establish this Constitution....

\* Idaho 1889, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Idaho, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings....

- \* Illinois 1870, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Illinois, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors....
- \* Indiana 1851, Preamble. We, the People of the State of Indiana, grateful to Almighty God for the free exercise of the right to chose our form of government....
- \* Iowa 1857, Preamble. We, the People of the State of Iowa, grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of these blessings, establish this Constitution....
- \* Kansas 1859, Preamble. We, the people of Kansas, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious privileges, establish this Constitution....
- \* Kentucky 1891, Preamble. We, the people of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties....
- \* Louisiana 1921, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Louisiana, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties we enjoy....
- \* Maine 1820, Preamble. We, the People of Maine, acknowledging with grateful hearts the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity .. and imploring His aid and direction....
- \* Maryland 1776, Preamble. We, the people of the state of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty....
- \* Massachusetts 1780, Preamble. We...the people of Massachusetts, acknowledging with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Great Legislator of the Universe... in the course of His Providence, an opportunity and devoutly imploring His direction....
- \* Michigan 1908, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Michigan, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of freedom establish this Constitution....
- \* Minnesota 1857, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Minnesota, grateful to God for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings....
- \* Mississippi 1890, Preamble. We, the people of Mississippi in convention assembled, grateful to Almighty God, and invoking His blessing on our work....
- \* Missouri 1845 Preamble. We, the people of Missouri, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and grateful for His goodness establish this Constitution....
- \* Montana 1889, Preamble. We, the people of Montana, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty, establish this Constitution....
- \* Nebraska 1875, Preamble. We, the people, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom. establish this Constitution....
- \* Nevada 1864, Preamble. We the people of the State of Nevada, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom establish this Constitution....
- \* New Hampshire 1792, Part I.Art. I.Sec. V. Every individual has a natural and unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience....
- \* New Jersey 1844, Preamble. We, the people of the State of New Jersey, grateful to Almighty God for civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors....
- \* New Mexico 1911, Preamble. We, the People of New Mexico, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty....
- \* New York 1846, Preamble. We, the people of the State of New York, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, in order to secure its blessings....

- \* North Carolina 1868, Preamble. We the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for our civil, political, and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those....
- \* North Dakota 1889, Preamble. We, the people of North Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, do ordain....
- \* Ohio 1852, Preamble. We the people of the state of Ohio, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings and to promote our common....
- \* Oklahoma 1907, Preamble. Invoking the guidance of Almighty God, in order to secure and perpetuate the blessings of liberty, establish this....
- \* Oregon 1857, Bill of Rights, Article I. Section 2. All men shall be secure in the Natural right, to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their consciences....
- \* Pennsylvania 1776, Preamble. We, the people of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance....
- \* Rhode Island 1842, Preamble. We the People of the State of Rhode Island grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing....
- \* South Carolina 1778, Preamble. We, the people of he State of South Carolina, grateful to God for our liberties, do ordain and establish this Constitution....
- \* South Dakota 1889, Preamble. We, the people of South Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberties...establish this....
- \* Tennessee 1796, Art. XIII. That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience....
- \* Texas 1845, Preamble. We the People of the Republic of Texas, acknowledging, with gratitude, the grace and beneficence of God....
- \* Utah 1896, Preamble. Grateful to Almighty God for life and liberty, we establish this Constitution....
- \* Vermont 1777, Preamble. Whereas all government ought to .. enable the individuals who compose it to enjoy their natural rights, and other blessings which the Author of Existence has bestowed on man....
- \* Virginia 1776, Bill of Rights, XVI. Religion, or the Duty which we owe our Creator ... can be directed only by Reason and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian Forbearance, Love and Charity towards each other....
- \* Washington 1889, Preamble. We the People of the State of Washington grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution....
- \* West Virginia 1872, Preamble. Since through Divine Providence we enjoy the blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, we, the people of West Virginia reaffirm our faith in and constant reliance upon God....
- \* Wisconsin 1848, Preamble. We, the people of Wisconsin, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, domestic tranquility....
- \* Wyoming 1890, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Wyoming, grateful to God for our civil, political, and religious liberties establish this Constitution....

After reviewing acknowledgments of God from all 50 state constitutions, one is faced with the prospect that "separation of church and state" does not really mean what people today are trying to make it mean today.

***"Those people who will not be governed by God will be ruled by tyrants."*** -William Penn

### **It is indisputable that our nation had its foundation rooted in the Christian religion:**

THE COLONIAL CHARTERS of Virginia, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, Connecticut, Carolina, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and Georgia did acknowledge the Christian religion.

The settlers at Rhode Island subscribed to this compact: "We, whose names are underwritten, do hereby solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, incorporate ourselves into a body politic; and as he shall help, will submit our persons, lives, and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and to all those perfect and absolute laws of his, given us in his holy Word of truth, to be judged and guided thereby."

The fundamental orders of Connecticut (1638-39) contained these words, "to mayntayne and preserve the liberty and purity of the gospell of our Lord Jesus, which we now profess, as also the disciplyne of the churches, which according to the truth of the said gospell is now practiced amongst us."

Twelve of the thirteen original state constitutions contained explicit acknowledgments of God and Christianity. The exception, Virginia, revised its constitution's preamble in 1870, adding "invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God."

The 1776 Constitution of South Carolina even provided that no person should be eligible to the Senate or House of Representatives unless "he be of the Protestant religion."

Article 22 of the Constitution of Delaware (1776) required all officers to profess "faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed forevermore; and I do acknowledge the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration."

### **Educational Institutions**

Some of the finest universities of our land were originally founded with the main purpose of training men to know the Bible and to live lives that reflect the teachings of the Bible. Sadly, things have changed so much over the years that some of these same schools have become bastions of liberalism where the Bible is consistently mocked and Christianity is ridiculed.

Every Ivy League school (with the exception of Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania) was established primarily to train ministers of the gospel and to evangelize the eastern seaboard.

Harvard was founded only 18 years from the time the pilgrims landed. Its main intent was to train ministers of the gospel. Harvard's "Rules and Precepts" (1646) included the following requirements: "Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore lay Christ at the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning....Every one shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that they be ready to give an account of their proficiency therein." Fifty-two percent of the 17th century Harvard graduates became ministers!

Yale was founded in 1701. The goal of the founders was that "every student shall consider the main end of his study to...know God in Jesus Christ and answerably to lead a Godly, sober life." Yale was founded because many thought Harvard was too far away and too expensive, and they also observed that the spiritual climate at Harvard was not what it once had been.

Dartmouth College was founded primarily as a training institution for native Americans, especially to train them in the gospel of Jesus Christ so they could reach their own people for Christ. Its purpose was to also educate and Christianize English youth as well.

Princeton University's original motto, from 1748 to 1896, was VITAM MORTUIS REDDO [I restore life to the dead] which came from 2 Tim 1:10. In 1896 the motto was changed to DEI SUB NUMINE VIGET [under God's power she flourishes]. Ebenezer Pemberton, one of the four "originators" of the College of New Jersey, as Princeton was first called, said, "...our great intention was to erect a seminary for educating ministers of the gospel, yet we hope it will be useful in other learned professions." Princeton retained its Bible believing emphasis longer than any of the other Ivy League schools.

Columbia University (New York) was originally called "King's College" and its purpose was stated clearly: "The chief thing that is aimed at in this college is to teach and engage the children to know God in Jesus Christ and to love and serve Him in all sobriety, godliness, and righteousness of life, with perfect heart and a willing mind."

Brown University originated as the result of Baptist churches desiring a school to train ministers of the gospel. "Though the Ivy League schools eventually turned secular, they fed into the mainstream of society in those early days a great army of graduates who could claim Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and who left a strong impact on our nation.

In 1924 Trinity University was endowed as Duke University, and its bylaws stated, "The aims of Duke University are to assert a faith in the eternal union of knowledge and religion set forth in the teachings and character of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

These schools have long ago lost sight of their original mission. [I am indebted to the book, *America: God Shed His Grace on Thee* by Robert Flood (Moody Press) for much of the information on how Bible believing men launched the Ivy League]

### **Questions to Think About and Discuss**

1. Should the words "IN GOD WE TRUST" be on our coins? Does not this offend those who are atheists? Why is it reasonable for Americans to continue to use this motto?
2. If a group of students in a public school desire to meet together before or after school for prayer and/or Bible study, should they be allowed to do this? Should Jewish students also be allowed to meet together if they desire? Muslims?
3. Should there be voluntary prayer in the public schools? If not, why not? If so, how should this be done? Should there be a minute of silence so that each student can pray (or not pray) as they choose or should someone lead in prayer?
4. Should evolution be taught in public schools? Should creation be taught? Should they both be taught? How should this be done?