



Religion and Politics Don't Mix?

"The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time." --Thomas Jefferson

For all of our nation's history, there have been tactical battles between opposing political ideologies -- liberals (leftists) who want to liberate us from constitutional rule of law, and conservatives who strive to conserve rule of law. Great political capital has been, and continues to be, expended by the Left in order to offend our Constitution, and by the Right in order to defend it.

Amid the din and rhetoric of the current lineup of tactical contests, I ask that you venture up to the strategic level and consider a primal issue that transcends all the political noise.

How many times have you heard the rejoinder, "Religion and politics don't mix"?

Most Americans have, for generations now, been inculcated (read: "dumbed down") by the spurious "wall of separation" metaphor and believe that it is a legitimate barrier between government and religion. So effective has been this false indoctrination that even some otherwise erudite conservatives fail to recall that religion and politics not only mix, *but are inseparable*.

Recall that our Founders affirmed in the Declaration of Independence "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."

In other words, our Creator bestowed the rights enumerated in our Declaration and, by extension, as codified in its subordinate guidance, our Constitution. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are natural rights; they are not gifts from government.

To that end, Alexander Hamilton wrote, "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole volume of

human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

But the Left has, for many decades, made its primary objective the eradication of God from every public quarter, and routinely relied on judicial activism to undermine constitutional rule of law and, thus, the natural rights of man.

The intended consequence of this artificial barrier between church and state is to remove knowledge of our Creator from all public forums and, thus, over time, to disabuse belief in a sovereign God and the natural rights He has endowed.

This erosion of knowledge about the origin of our rights has dire implications for the future of liberty.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "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 the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever."

As the author of our Declaration of Independence makes clear, we should all tremble that man has adulterated the gifts of God.

Ironically, it was Jefferson who penned the words "wall of separation between church and state" in an 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association.

Jefferson was responding to a letter the Association wrote to him objecting to Connecticut's establishment of Congregationalism as its state church. Jefferson responded that the First Amendment prohibited the national (federal) government from establishing a "national church."

After all, the controlling language (Amendment I) reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." Jefferson concluded rightly that the Constitution's 10th Amendment federalism pro-

vision prohibited the national government from interfering with matters of state governments -- a "wall of separation," if you will, between the *federal government and state governments*.

Among all our Founders, Jefferson was most adamant in his objection to the construct of the Judicial Branch of government in the proposed Constitution, writing, "The Constitution [would become] a mere thing of wax in the hands of the judiciary which they may twist and shape into any form they please."

Jefferson warned: "The opinion which gives to the judges the right to decide what laws are constitutional and what not, not only for themselves in their own sphere of action but for the Legislature and Executive also in their spheres, would make the Judiciary a despotic branch. ... It has long been my opinion ... that the germ of dissolution of our federal government is in the constitution of the federal judiciary; working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little today and a little tomorrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be usurped."

Alexander Hamilton wrote in Federalist No. 81, "[T]here is not a syllable in the [Constitution] which directly empowers the national courts to construe the laws according to the spirit of the Constitution."

But Jefferson was correct in his apprehension about our Constitution being treated as "a mere thing of wax" by what he called the "despotic branch," who would do the bidding of their special-interest constituencies rather than interpret the plain language of the Constitution.

In 1947, Justice Hugo Black perverted Jefferson's words when Black speciously opined in the majority opinion of *Everson v. Board of Education* that the First Amendment created a "wall of separation" between religion and government, thus opening the floodgates for subsequent opinions abolishing religious education and expression in all public forums.

John Adams wrote, "If men through fear, fraud or mistake, should in terms renounce and give up any essential natural right, the eternal law of reason and the great end of society, would absolutely vacate such renunciation; the right to freedom being the gift of God Almighty, it is not in the power of Man to alienate this gift, and voluntarily become a slave."

It may not be in the power of man to alienate the gift of liberty, but it will certainly take the power of men, guided by our Creator, to defend it. To that end, religion and politics *are* inseparable.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis!

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Quote of the Week

"Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged. When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never intended to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself. ... To those who cite the First Amendment as reason for excluding God from more and more of our institutions every day, I say: The First Amendment of the Constitution was not written to protect the people of this country from religious values; it was written to protect religious values from government tyranny." --Ronald Reagan

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(Please pray for our Patriot Armed Forces standing in harm's way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)

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