

THE PULPIT AND THE PATRIOTS – THE INFLUENCE CALVIN,
THE PURITANS, AND THE PULPIT HAD ON THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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When the question is given, ‘whose political writings most influenced the Founding Fathers’, the usual names are to be expected: The Enlightenment thinkers Voltaire and Hume, the Social Contract theorists Locke, Hobbes and Rousseau, or perhaps the classics of political thought, Plato and Aristotle. Having studied at a secular public university, and having focused in political theory, I would be tempted to respond in a similar fashion.¹ In an effort to find an answer to this question, it would make sense to look to whom the Fathers themselves cited most, and conclude these individuals would have been most influential. It then came to me as an utter shock to find out that professors Donald S. Lutz and Charles S. Hyneman, after reviewing over 15,000 items with explicitly political content, identified 3,154 references to other sources, and concluded that “The source most often cited by the founding fathers was the Bible, which accounted for 34 percent of all citations.”² Not only did that produce some serious interest, but I also came to discover that the most cited thinker regarding explicitly political material was none other than Paul the Apostle!³ As for the individuals whom I thought would be most influential, Locke was ranked fourth with 2.9% of the citations, Hobbes ranked thirteenth with 1.0%, Rousseau ranked sixteenth with 0.9%, Plato ranked twenty-sixth with 0.5%, and Machiavelli

¹ Special focus during my Undergraduate (B.A., Political Science) work in political theory was focused on the person of Locke, and his influence on the Founding Fathers. A paper I wrote, “Lockean Liberalism and the Declaration of Independence,” hints towards how I would have responded two years ago. It can be accessed at: <http://leonardooh.wordpress.com/2008/02/18/lockean-liberalism-and-the-declaration-of-independence/>

² See *Table 1*, Donald S. Lutz, “The Relative Importance of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought,” *American Political Science Review* 189 (1984), 189-97.

³ See *Table 2*

ranked twenty-ninth with 0.5%. This produced within me some serious questions, namely, why was I never taught this before? Why had this influence been so fully ignored?

Perhaps it was the simple fact that I had attended a secular university, and both a fear of what composes a separation of church and state in a public university, and a society quick to file lawsuits. From my memory, the American Revolution had been a rather secular affair, and the only real mention of religion it received was on the influence of Deism.⁴ How then could the distinguished German historian, Leopold von Ranke, claim "John Calvin was the virtual founder of America"?⁵ I had studied Calvin and other Christian thinkers, as well as their musings on political theory, but the connection was never drawn for me. Nor had any connection been drawn between the influence of the Puritans and the American Revolution. They were simply the guys who burned witches. This prompted me to engage in research on the subject, and the results were surprising. From the nation's founding documents, to its Founding Fathers, there exists an observable and significant influence in the form of Calvin, the Puritans, and the Pulpit.⁶ This paper shall recognize this influence by examining key Calvinist and Puritan contributions to the American Revolution, as well as the role six pulpit patriots served in both the nation's independence and its governmental formation.

⁴ See Table 3 for a listing of the Founding Father's religious affiliations. Of note is the fact that only two were clearly Deists, and even then both progressed later in life to views of a personal God involved in the affairs of man.

⁵ Leopold von Ranke, Quoted by E. W. Smith, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972: p. 389.

⁶ See Appendix 1, 7 and 8 for a comparison and parallel of Biblical Principles and the Nation's founding documents.

Calvin and His Influence

In an effort to survey both the role and influence made by American preachers at the pulpit, one must first go about tracing substantial influences that shaped both the conflict and its revolutionary response.⁷ Given that much academic attention has nearly been exclusively fixed upon the secular influences of the time, this paper will move towards observing two key streams of Christian thought that had heavy influence. As Page Smith notes in his work, *Religious Origins of the American Revolution*, "The American Revolution ... received a substantial part of its theological and philosophical underpinnings from John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and much of its social theory from the Puritan Revolution of 1640-1660"⁸ Of these two influences, Calvinism and Puritanism, attention will be placed on specific contributions that would both influence key Revolutionary thinkers, and blossom into the tone and actions of various Revolutionary Preachers. Such a treatment must begin with the most influential; given there would be no Puritanism without a Calvin. Of him, historians are not shy in expressing the essential influence he had on American society.

The historian E. W. Smith would argue, "these revolutionary principles of republican liberty and self-government, taught and embodied in the system of Calvin, were brought to America ... The vital relation of Calvin and Calvinism to the founding of the free institutions of America ... is recognized and affirmed by historians of all lands and creeds."⁹ George Bancroft,

⁷ Regarding impartiality, may it be noted that I do not describe myself as a Calvinist, and express no special favorability to both Calvin and the Puritans. As such, this investigation has been one taken from the position of my training as a student of political sciences and religion. Focus was placed on: (1) Discovering the worldview in which developed 18th century America, (2) Major figures who applied this worldview at the pulpit and public office, and (3) Factual and first-testimonial evidence of the influence such persons has upon the Founders and their documents.

⁸ Page Smith. *Religious Origins of the American Revolution*. Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976: 2.

⁹ E. W. Smith, Quoted by Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972: 389.

a leading historian of the 19th century, confirms their sentiment, stating that "He who will not honor the memory and respect the influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American liberty."¹⁰ Various honored historians and scholars continue to affirm the admissions of Smith and Bancroft regarding Calvin's influential role. As Dr. Loraine Boettner notes, putting this claimed influence into numbers, there were 3,000,000 Americans during the American Revolution, including about "two-thirds of the colonial population [who] had been trained in the school of Calvin."¹¹

Calvin's Key Contributions: Total Depravity and Human Nature

The question before us remains: with such grand statements of influence made, what exactly were these contributions by Calvin? Clearly we can see how a political document, such as Locke's *Second Treatise*, can have a direct influence on the *Constitution* and its prior Revolution, but what of the systematic theology of Calvin? In him we inherit a worldview, which pervaded the minds and writings of Americans, as hinted by the earlier mentioned statistic. We will observe three elements of this worldview, which contributed greatly to the American experience: Calvin's view of human nature, covenant theology, and limited government. One must not, in analyzing the role Christianity played in the revolution, deny the real existence of a worldview. How such a worldview perceives human nature is essential to the construction of a political system. Given the importance of worldview in regards to human nature, and the response then given by the form of government, we begin with this essential element. Page Smith, in *Religious Origins of the American Revolution*, explains Calvin's influence regarding

¹⁰ George Bancroft, Quoted by Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972: 389.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 382

man's natural depravity:

Calvin's conception of human depravity ... underlay the thinking of most of those Americans responsible for framing the Federal Constitution and establishing a new nation as well as the thinking of their constituents. The rationale of the theorists of the French Revolution for popular government, on the other hand, was based on the idea of the natural goodness of man uncorrupted by decadent institutions and a superstitious church.¹²

It then follows that, given Calvin's admission of man's wicked and fallen status, that he would desire a government which provided a check against both individual and groups. On the contrary, the French revolution provided full authority within the hands of the people, on the assumption of the goodness presented in such political theorists as Rousseau.¹³ John Eidsmoe confirms this influence, arguing, "The founders of this nation held this view of human nature and were not interested in the utopian schemes of the French freethinkers ... They designed a government with this human nature in mind."¹⁴ As we will later acknowledge, this was seen in both the restraints placed upon the passions of the mob, and the checks upon rulers against tyranny.¹⁵

Calvin's Key Contributions: Covenant Theology

In addition to the influence human depravity had pertaining the American worldview, a second major contribution of Calvin was his view regarding Covenant Theology. This is the view that God established two covenants with man, one regarding law and the other regarding grace. "The covenant of law consists of God's revelation of the Old Testament law, the Ten Commandments, and man's promise to obey it; the covenant of grace is God's promise of

¹² Page Smith. *Religious Origins of the American Revolution*: 12.

¹³ *Ibid.* 12

¹⁴ John Eidsmoe. *Christianity and the Constitution*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987: 21.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 21: "Given the sinful nature of mankind, how should the government's power be allocated to give the government sufficient power to serve and restrain the masses effectively without giving it so much power that it becomes tyrannical and oppressive? Their solution to this problem showed a Calvinistic background."

redemption through man's faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross."¹⁶ We see the influence this doctrine held with the Calvinist attempts to apply these covenant concepts to their civil government. One such case with an impressive line of influence is Rev. Samuel Rutherford. Working upon covenant theory, Rutherford argued in his classic, *Lex, Rex*,

That rulers derive authority from God, as declared in Romans 13:1-4 and other passages of Scripture. But God gives this authority to rulers through the people. The people establish a form of government and choose a particular man to be their ruler, [and] the ruler then acts under the direction of God.¹⁷

Rutherford argues the point upon passages contained in II Samuel 16:18, Judges 8:22, Judges 9:6, II Kings 14:21, I Samuel 12:1 and II Chronicles 23:3. The Calvinist idea of Covenant Theology can then be traced through Rutherford into more recognizable and secular influences. In Locke we find a social contract where man, in his natural state, forms a government to avoid the sin of aggressors in the state of nature. As Eidsmoe points out, "Locke, a Puritan by background, based his political theories on Rutherford's *Lex Rex*."¹⁸ In addition, we can find a direct expression in the Constitution's preamble: "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union ... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."¹⁹ As will be later noted, Covenant Theology was quite influential in the Covenant pacts of the Puritans, as well as the preaching of the 18th century.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 24

¹⁷ Samuel Rutherford. *Lex, Rex: Or, The Law and the Prince: a Dispute for the Just Prerogative of King and People; Containing the Reasons and Causes of the Most Necessary Defensive Wars of the Kingdom of Scotland.* Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1982: 1, 6-7.

¹⁸ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution: 25.*

¹⁹ The Constitution of the United States

Calvin's Key Influences: Limited Government

One final and major area, which influenced the justification of revolution, is found within Calvin's treatment on the limitations of government. The concept of limited government, along with those of the earlier mentioned contract and separation of powers, is essential to American Constitutionalism and revolution justification. As stated earlier, Calvinist teaching heavily influenced American society. As such, most in positions of power would be quite familiar with Romans 13, and its treatment on the subject of Christians and rebelling against the government. This brings about the dilemma of addressing the Christians role upon the rise of a tyrannical government. Is the Christian not to rebel, and continue honoring the tyrant? It is here Calvin provided a major intellectual gift regarding how the founding fathers were to approach the yoke of British tyranny. Calvin provides various examples of God raising up "open avengers from among his servants,"²⁰ arming them "with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity."²¹ Such examples include the work of Moses to remove Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh in Exodus 3:7-10, and the work of Othniel to rescue them from the violence of the Syrian king Chusan in Judges 3:9.

For the first king of men, when they had been sent by God's lawful calling to carry out such acts, in taking up arms against kings, did not violate that majesty which implanted in kings by God's ordination; but, armed from heaven, they subdued the lesser power with the greater, just as it is lawful for kings to punish their subordinates.²²

Calvin continues:

I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce

²⁰ John Calvin. "Civil Government, Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. by John T McNeill and trans. by Ford Lewis Battles, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960, Book IV, Chapter XX, Section 30.

²¹ *Ibid.* 30

²² *Ibid.* 31

licentiousness of kings, that, if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by God's ordinance.²³

In addition to the issues of total depravity, covenant theology, and limited government, Calvin had offered many other important contributions, which, in the effort of brevity, are not included in this paper. However several of these will come to surface while analyzing the influence of the Puritans. It is to the puritans and their contributions we now turn. Much can be said regarding the other major protestant traditions and their influence, however in the effort to remain focused on the major worldview persisting at the time, it would make most sense to continue to follow the stream initiated by Calvin. With the Puritans arrive the American workings and customization of Calvinism. Acknowledging that Puritans prescribed to the above-mentioned contributions of Calvin, this paper will focus on two contributions by American Puritans that contributed to both the worldview of Americans at the founding, as well as to themes that would encourage Christians and the Pulpit to actively participate in the American Revolution.

Puritan's Key Influences: Postmillennialism

The first contribution to be discussed is the Puritan perspective of postmillennialism. This view on eschatology argued that there would be a golden reign of the kingdom of God that would last upon the earth for about 1,000 years. The Puritans believed that "God was working to bring about conditions conducive to Christ's return,"²⁴ and that "God was using New England to lead the revival which would bring about the millennium."²⁵ This is an interesting divergence

²³ *Ibid.* 31

²⁴ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 34.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 34

from Calvin, given he supported a view more amillennial in nature. In his work, "The Latter-Day Glory Is Probably to Begin in America," Jonathan Edwards expresses this postmillennial view:

And if we may suppose that this glorious work of God shall begin in any part of America, I think, if we could consider the circumstances of the settlement of New England, it must needs appear the most likely, of all American colonies, to be the place whence this work shall principally take its rise.²⁶

Jonathan Edwards hints towards the influence this Puritan adaption would have regarding the Pulpit and the Revolution: Namely, that the view of New England's status in relation to the postmillennial kingdom would add meaning to current historical and political events, such as the tyranny of Parliament and a need to overcome such evil forces. This notion of a privileged status, seen in the pulpit language of comparisons to being a 'new Israel', would be ignited by the conditions of revolution, thus motivating the people into action.

Puritan's Key Influences: The Fear of Power

A second major theme to have been adopted by the Puritans from their Calvinist heritage, and having contributed widely to the early American experience, is the perspective Puritans had regarding power. Building upon their understanding of human depravity, Puritans believed "Power had a corrupting influence and could be used to oppress others. For this reason, the authority of their rulers was carefully monitored."²⁷ John Eliot expresses this point in *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, where he argues that, "It is necessary therefore, that all power that is on earth be limited ... it is counted a matter of danger to the State to limit

²⁶ Conrad Cherry. "The Latter-Day Glory Is Probably to Begin in America." *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998: 55-59.

²⁷ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 34.

Prerogatives; but it is a further danger, not to have them limited."²⁸ This fear of power, as made evident in the organization of power among Puritans, naturally led to a distrust of democratic majorities. Clearly here is seen the earlier mentioned depravity of man, as well as a foreseeable powder keg regarding the situation of an oppressive English Parliament. The combined influence of postmillennialism and the fear of power among puritans would lead to a passionate and purpose-minded activity in opposition to British aggression. However there is one final observation to be made regarding Puritanism and its relation to prepping the revolutionary spirit.

Puritanism and Republicanism

Although secular forces behind the revolution will mostly remain absent in this paper, one is worth mentioning for its openness and similarity to Puritanism. The force of republicanism leading up to the revolution was quite influential among both English and American experiences. Republicanism is defined as "the conviction that power defined the political process and that unchecked power led to corruption even as corruption fostered unchecked power."²⁹ Immediately we see a similarity between republicanism and the Calvinist tradition of man's depravity and the Puritan's fear of power. In his work on the correlation between religion and American history, *One Nation Under God?*, Mark Noll makes the following observation: "Republicanism was critical for the relation of religion and politics in the Revolutionary era, because the beliefs of American Christians paralleled republican principles in

²⁸ John Elliot. *Massachusetts Historical Collections* 3d ser., Quoted by Wright, Benjamin Fletcher. *American Interpretations of Natural Law, A Study in the History of Political Thought*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962.: 19-21

²⁹ Mark Noll. *One Nation Under God? Christian Faith and Political Action in America*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988: 41.

many particulars."³⁰ Where Puritan's worried of the depraved tendency to act in accordance to one's passions as based upon Adam's fall, republicans spoke of the danger of man's natural tendency to abuse the powers of authority.³¹ In addition to depravity and abuse of power, "Puritans and republicans also defined virtue, freedom, and social well-being in very similar terms ... With their similar views on virtue, freedom, and social well-being, it is not surprising that republican and Christian points of view began to merge during the Revolution."³²

Puritanism and Society

In charting some major contributions to the American Christian worldview through the stream of Calvinist tradition, as seen in Calvin's teachings on man's depravity, covenant theology, and limited government, an influential force is seen which will later directly and indirectly influence the Revolution and its Founding Fathers. In addition to acknowledging major influences Calvinism offered to the American worldview, this paper has overviewed two contributions by Puritans, which will later motivate preachers and laity alike to patriotically participate in the revolution. In addition various similarities between Puritanism and Republicanism were noted, wedding the two alongside one another as they both approach the problem confronting the revolutionaries: unchecked tyrannical power. The theological and philosophical focus of Calvin has thus given way to the more practical experience of the Puritans, and it is from then we arrive at our geographical area of interest: New England. It is here where most of the activity in support of American independence, as proclaimed from the pulpit, occurs. With the Calvinist tradition and its contributions established, a bridge is now

³⁰ *Ibid.* 41

³¹ *Ibid.* 41

³² *Ibid.* 41

made towards analyzing and understanding the forces behind the Pulpit and its preaching, and it is in this direction we turn:

Puritanism created the center out of which New England society lived ... As history unfolded, New Englanders gradually brought these peripheral elements under heavy attack from the center itself so that Crown and Parliament were viewed as detrimental to the central values of covenant, consent, the rule of fundamental law, the structure of New England's organic society, and the liberties of its inhabitants. Thus Puritanism was a major force in engendering a revolution in attitude toward Crown and Parliament.³³

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Major Themes

Regarding the role the Pulpit played during the Revolution; we can find wide acknowledgment among scholars. Hinting earlier the central role the New England Pulpit would have, Mark Noll argues in his work, *One Nation Under God?* that,

As war approached many of them [New England Preachers] cast the conflict with Great Britain in cosmic terms. God has called his people to religious and political freedom in the New World; certainly he would now sustain them as they fought off the tyrannical effort by Parliament to destroy it.³⁴

These New England pastors played a diverse role. Some were seen preaching sermons to militias before heading off to war. Others served as chaplains, and others still joined "informal committees of correspondence that preceded the formation of the new state governments."³⁵ Alice Baldwin, whose family produced a lineage of such New England Congregationalist preachers, after a lengthy analysis of the time and its ministers, concludes that they were essential to dispersing a constitutional mind-frame regarding God and His natural laws among

³³ Jerald Brauer, Sidney E. Mead and Robert N. Bellah. *Religion and the American Revolution*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976: 26-27.

³⁴ Mark Noll, *One Nation Under God?* 43.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 43

the People, that "God ruled over men by a divine constitution."³⁶ She then concludes:

The alliance of the ministers with the leaders of the agitation against England was one reason for its success ... No clever lawyer, no radical mechanic gave more warmth and color to the cause than did some of these reverend divines ... Resistance thus became a sacred duty to a people who still were, on the whole, a religious people.³⁷

Summarizing the influence Christianity and its members had upon the Revolution, historian

Patricia Bonomi states:

Religious doctrine and rhetoric, then, contributed in a fundamental way to the coming of the American Revolution and to its final success. In an age of political moderation, when many colonials hesitated at the brink of civil war, patriotic clergymen told their congregations that failure to oppose British tyranny would be an offense in the sight of Heaven. Where political theory advised caution, religious doctrine demanded action. By turning Colonial resistance into a righteous cause, and by crying the message to all ranks in all parts of the colonies, ministers did the work of secular radicalism and did it better: they resolved doubts, overcame inertia, fired the heart, and exalted the soul.³⁸

The call in the Pulpits to resist English tyranny became a primary factor in mobilizing the masses against passiveness and neutrality, and into action. The theological themes of Calvin shaped these Revolutionaries' worldviews, while the earlier mentioned Puritan contributions of postmillennialism and a fear of power gave divine reasons to promote a spiritual justification for Revolution, painting England and the struggle in cosmic terms. The battle was shaped at the Pulpit in vocabulary biblically familiar: as the Israelites were rescued from the tyranny of the Pharaoh, so now would God rescue New England.³⁹ Preaching such imagery would become

³⁶ Alice M Baldwin. *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1928: 168.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 171

³⁸ Patricia Updegraff Bonomi. *Under the Cope of Heaven Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003: 216.

³⁹ Robert R. Mathisen. *Critical Issues in American Religious History*. Waco, Tex: Baylor University Press, 2006: 135. "Little did John Winthrop know that his reference to Puritan New England as 'a city upon a hill' would set into motion forces that would eventually contribute to the birth of a new nation. 'The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us as His own people [as He did among Israel],' he opined, 'and will command a blessing

widespread and naturally a product of the postmillennial view from the Puritans. It would also directly inspire scores of congregants to passionately join the Revolution with a perceived divine mandate.⁴⁰ The question now left: What did they say? It is to the Pulpit and its Preachers we now turn.

In exploring the Pulpit's role during the Revolution, three traditions in particular stand as the primary agitators. In his work *Religion, Awakening and Revolution*, Martin Marty explains the story of Joseph Galloway, a loyalist, who testifying before Parliament after leaving the States, regarded the Crown's opponents as: "'Congregationalists, Presbyterians and smugglers [Baptists].'"⁴¹ The majority of congregations active in the war were of this nature, and "In 1780 there were over 1900 congregations of Congregational-Presbyterian-Baptist persuasion, whence much Revolutionary talk and Action came."⁴² It is to some of these characters we now turn.

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766)

Jonathan Mayhew is one such example of these Pulpit Patriots.⁴³ Robert Treat Pain, a signer of the Declaration and former attorney general, spoke of Mayhew as "The Father of Civil

upon us in all our ways, so that we shall see much more of His wisdom, power, goodness, and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with."

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 135: "According to Charles Chauncy of Boston on the eve of the American Revolution, as the founding fathers of New England had been rescued by God from tyrannical England many years after God had saved his people from Egypt and delivered them to their Promised Land, so now New England had been relieved from the oppressive Stamp Act, even as the Jews had been protected from the destruction of Ahasuerus. To reassure his audience of this in 1770, he contended that 'perhaps, there are no people, now dwelling on the face of the earth, who may, with greater pertinency, adopt the language of king David, and say, 'our fathers trusted in these; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.'"

⁴¹ Martin E. Marty. *Religion, Awakening and Revolution*. Wilmington: Consortium, 1977: 123.

⁴² *Ibid.* 120. "Compared to a mere 624 Reformed-Lutheran-Catholic local churches, many of them very small."

⁴³ See *Figure 1* for portraits of the six Pulpit Patriots.

and Religious Liberty in Massachusetts and America."⁴⁴ John Adams also ranked him on par with Otis and Samuel Adams, and stated, "To draw the character of Mayhew would be to describe a dozen volumes."⁴⁵ In addition, according to Frederick L. Weis, Mayhew was regarded as the top New England preacher.⁴⁶ Born 1720 as the son of Rev. Experience and Remember Mayhew, missionaries amongst the Indians, Mayhew was the son of distinction. He graduated from Harvard with honors at age 24, speaking of the influence as having been extensive on studying the "doctrines of civil liberty ... as they were taught by, Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero. Sydney and Milton, Locke and Hoadley. And having learnt from the Holy Scriptures that wise, brave virtuous men were always friends of liberty. This made me conclude freedom was a great blessing."⁴⁷

Mayhew's most famous and widely read sermon, *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers*, is a case in point regarding the influence and atmosphere of New England preaching.⁴⁸ Given at the West Church in Boston, on January 30th 1750, Mayhew outlined a case of the People's right to resist. It should also be noted that such a sermon, written twenty-six years prior to Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence*, contains many of the various themes used to justify and exhort rebellion.⁴⁹ Nearly a quarter

⁴⁴ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 26.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 26

⁴⁶ Frederick Lewis Weis. *The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England*. Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co, 1977.

⁴⁷ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 26-28.

⁴⁸ A second sermon worthy of mention is his thanksgiving discourse entitled *The Snare Broken*. "Occasioned by Parliaments repeal of the Stamp Act, the sermon conveys a warning to William Pitt and other English readers that taking self-government into private hands in some circumstances must surely proceed from 'self-preservation, being a great and primary law of nature.'" Sandoz *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era: 1730-1805*, 2 vols, 2nd ed. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1998.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 1

century before revolt broke, “Mayhew argued it was unreasonable for any people to grant unlimited submission to a civil authority.”⁵⁰ For this sermon, Mayhew was known as the "Morning Gun of the American Revolution," and made it evident that before the work of Jefferson and others, congregants were already actively hearing "declarations of independence," and sermons focused on "natural rights of life, liberty, and property," long before their secular counterparts.⁵¹ This role of the Pulpit, as seen in Mayhew's work, was essential in prepping the mindset of divine-sanctioned liberty.⁵²

His influence is further seen in his relationship with James Otis, John Adams and Samuel Adams, where upon Mayhew's suggestion in a letter dated June 8th 1766 to Otis, led to the eventual addition of Committees of Correspondence.⁵³ These are but few examples of the power of both the Pulpit in setting the public's mind on liberty, as well as the influence role such preachers played in the atmosphere and leadership of the American Revolution.

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Samuel Cooper (1725-1783)

A second minister worthy of mention is Samuel Cooper, Pastor of Brattle Street Church in Boston. Born March 28, 1727, Cooper was the third child of Rev. William Cooper and Judith, the daughter of the Chief Justice of the province.⁵⁴ A graduate of Harvard in 1743 alongside James Otis, Cooper is known both for his fiery preaching and writing. Arguably one of the most influential Bostonians of the conflict, his popularity is seen through the abuse set upon him by

⁵⁰ Robert R. Mathisen, *Critical Issues in American Religious History*, 136

⁵¹ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 33.

⁵² *Ibid.* 33

⁵³ *Ibid.* 33

⁵⁴ Lutz, Donald S. "The Relative Importance of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought." *American Political Science Review*, 1984.

British officers, who responding to his protests, altered his church into a British barrack.⁵⁵

In regards to the central focus of this paper, the Pulpit, Samuel Cooper does not disappoint. Perhaps his best includes an artillery election sermon he wrote at the young age of twenty-six, entitled *A Sermon on the Day of Commencement of the Constitution*.⁵⁶ In it we find what Ellis Sandoz states to be “regarded as the model of a patriotic sermon.”⁵⁷ Several of the earlier mentioned Puritan themes are readily observable. In it he discusses Jeremiah 20 and 21, where he draws comparisons to the Israelites in a fashion defining America as “a nation chosen by God a theatre for the display of some of the most astonishing dispensations of his providence.”⁵⁸ The earlier postmillennial theme is first noted, given the privileged and near-anointed state America is treated with throughout the letter. As the letter continues, we may also observe the above-mentioned theme of the Puritan's fear of power, whereas Cooper orates:

Their sufferings, when they fell under the power of this haughty tyrant, as they are represented to us in sacred history, must harrow a bosom softened with the least degree of humanity. They give us a frightful picture of the effects of despotic power, guided and inflamed by those lusts of the human heart with which it is seldom unaccompanied.⁵⁹

Cooper also expresses ideas which solidified and fueled the Revolutionary passions, speaking of “constitution,” “civil and religious liberty,” and “that no man has a natural claim of dominion over his neighbors.”⁶⁰ Justification is further given to the American cause, where Cooper argues that “these states are innocent of the blood that hath been shed ... we have stood upon the ground

⁵⁵ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 35.

⁵⁶ For an explanation on political sermons, including and ‘artillery election sermon’, see *Appendix 3*.

⁵⁷ Ellis Sandoz, quoting Samuel Cooper. “A Sermon On the Day of the Commencement of the Constitution.” *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era: 1730-1805*: Vol. 1 Chapter: 21: Samuel Cooper. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 21

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 21

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 21

of justice, honor and liberty, and acted merely a defensive part."⁶¹ The role this would play in society, both in its response to and after the Revolution, cannot be ignored. Pulpits such as Cooper's provided the spark and cohesion that issues forth a 'divine-mandate' of providence to act against tyranny and in favor of God-given liberty. An underestimation of such influences would be a mistake.

Samuel Cooper was also well known and influential among various important Revolution figures.⁶² Besides being a regular contributor who opposed such issues as the Stamp Act in the *Boston Gazette*, Samuel Cooper was a friend of founders Benjamin Franklin, John and Samuel Adams. In addition, one of his church members was none other than John Hancock.⁶³ Various letters between these figures are available, and some preserve positive explanations of Cooper. Of him, Franklin wrote: "Your candid, clear, and well written Letters, be assured, are of great use."⁶⁴

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Jonas Clark (1730-1805)

Another Patriot Preacher of interest is Jonas Clark of Lexington. A graduate of Harvard College in 1752, Clark took on a pastorate for fifty years.⁶⁵ Clark's influence may be seen in the

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 21

⁶² His influence can be seen in the detailing of his days within his Diary: "July 5, 1775: Went in my horse and chaise with Mrs. Cooper to Cambridge. I waited on General Washington, Major Miffling, Reed, etc." "July 6: Called at the Room of Committee of Safety, and conversed with them. Met at Major Johonnet's Quarters, Col. Bowers and Lady. Called at Congress. Received letters from John and Sam Adams and Mr. Cushing bro't by General Washington.", "July 7: I wrote Letters to Messrs. Adams, Hancock, Cushing, Dr. Franklin, Madam Hancock." *The American historical review*, Volume 6 By John Franklin Jameson, Henry Eldridge Bourne, Robert Livingston Schuyler.

⁶³ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 36.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 38.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 29: An interesting note regarding Clark: He had worked also as a farmer. Such a second job was perhaps necessary given the size of his family. Every morning Clark would stand at the staircase and call the family role: "Polly, Betsey, Lucy, Liddy, Patty, Sally, Thomas, Jonas, William, Peter, Bowen, Harry -- Get up! Woe to the delinquent!"

role he played within his town. As Franklin P. Cole details, Clark "instructed the Lexington delegates to the Stamp Act Congress. Throughout that stormy period he was the most influential politician as well as churchman in the Lexington-Concord area."⁶⁶ In addition, Clark adheres to a pattern that is beginning to become visible: influence and interaction with key patriot leaders. "On the very night of April 18 1775, John Hancock and Samuel Adams were being entertained by Jonas Clark."⁶⁷ An interesting note of history was Paul Revere's arrival to warn them of Gage's expedition, which sought to capture the Boston patriots. When asked if Clark's Lexington men were prepared to fight, he responded by telling them "I have trained them for this very hour".⁶⁸

As for influential sermons, Clark provided an important historical contribution with *The Fate of Blood-thirsty Oppressors*. This sermon, delivered on the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, described in detail stages of the battle, and remains a treasure to Civil War historians.⁶⁹ One final fact worth mentioning regarding Clark's role in the Nation's beginnings is his appointment in 1799 as the Lexington delegate to the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention, where he actively participated in several keen committees, showing that not only were these preachers engaged with the public at the Pulpit, but also directly in governmental affairs.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 39

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 39

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 39

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 40

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 40

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Charles Chauncy (1705-1787)

A fourth preacher who very much deserves mentioning is Charles Chauncy, also considered by John Adams as one of the six of the most influential Revolutionary leaders in Massachusetts.⁷¹ Regarding Chauncy's influence, Ellis Sandoz describes the man as "The most influential clergyman in the Boston of his time and—apart from Jonathan Edwards the elder—in all New England."⁷² Another graduate from Harvard, Chauncy served fifty years as the minister for the First Church in Boston from 1727 to 1787.⁷³ Chauncy was widely recognized not necessarily for his close relationships with key Revolutionary leaders, but for his tremendous pamphleteering skills. Understanding that pamphlets were essential towards generating public opinion, Chauncy's influence can be seen in that "his sermons, newspaper articles, and pamphlets were more widely distributed in Europe than those of any propagandist for the American cause."⁷⁴ In addition, Chauncy played an essential role between 1762 and 1771 in opposing the British efforts to establish an Anglican bishop over America. This issue was major in rallying "Congregationalists across New England in the period leading to the Revolution."⁷⁵

One of the major contributions at the Pulpit that Chauncy offered the Revolution came in his *Thanksgiving Sermon on the Repeal of the Stamp Act*, which "bristle[d] with arguments in

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 40.

⁷² Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991: Foreword.

⁷³ It is worth noting, perhaps for personal reflection, the dedication these pulpit-patriots offered their churches: Samuel Cooper (nearly forty years, Brattle Street Church), Jonas Clark (fifty years, Lexington), and Charles Chauncy (sixty years, First Church in Boston). Perhaps there is a lesson here for modern-day pastors who have a tendency to move from one pastorate to the next.

⁷⁴ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 40.

⁷⁵ Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: Foreword.

favor of resistance against British tyranny."⁷⁶ A second noteworthy sermon was delivered by Chauncy in Boston, 1747, entitled *Civil Magistrates Must be Just, Ruling in the Fear of God*. In this sermon, Chauncy focused on II Samuel 23:3, concluding from the passage two central principles: "I. There is a certain order among mankind, according to which some are entrusted with power to rule over others," and "II. Those who rule over others must be just, ruling in the fear of God."⁷⁷ The Puritan and Calvinist themes of total depravity and a fear of power are also evident in his work:

The present circumstances of the human race are therefore such, by means of sin, that 'tis necessary they should, for their mutual defense and safety, combine together in distinct societies, lodging as much power in the hands of a few, as may be sufficient to restrain the irregularities of the rest, and keep them within the bounds of a just decorum.

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: Isaac Backus (1730-1788)

Isaac Backus was born in Connecticut, in 1724, and was a conversion from the Great Awakening preaching of Eleazer Wheelock. After pastoring a church in Middleborough Massachusetts for about a decade, Backus later became pastor of Middleborough First Baptist Church.⁷⁸ According to William G. McLoughlin, Backus "was the most forceful and effective writer America produced on behalf of the pietistic or evangelical theory of separation of church and state."⁷⁹ Backus's main contributions to American thought and development consist of two ideas: that religion was between individuals and God, and that "the Baptist church, and the

⁷⁶ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 40.

⁷⁷ Ellis Sandoz, quoting Charles Chauncy. "Civil Magistrates Must Be Just, Ruling in the Fear of God." *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era: 1730-1805*: Vol. 1 Chapter: 5: Charles Chauncy. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991.

⁷⁸ Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: 11.

⁷⁹ William G. McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism: Pamphlets, 1754-1789*. Cambridge, 1968: 1.

religious sphere generally, as outside the jurisdiction of civil magistracy."⁸⁰ Beyond being a widely recognized statesman, Backus was quite the evangelist, having made 918 trips greater than ten miles, traveling a total of 68,800 miles on horseback between 1748 and 1802.⁸¹

In 1773, Backus presented *An Appeal to the Public*, in which we find the themes of charter and divine rights. Backus is a clear example of direct Calvinist influence, and we note within his work a caution regarding the total depravity of man and Lockean natural rights.⁸² Given his Baptist identity, there is much in the work regarding problems between the State and Church, specifically in the realm of religious freedom from established religion.⁸³ Such a respect of the two powers, within their spheres of authority, are noted where he states, "All acts of executive power in the civil state, are to be performed in the name of the king or state they belong to; while all our religious acts are to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus; and so are to be performed heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men."⁸⁴

Similar to a modern day lobbyist, Backus petitioned delegates of the First Continental Congress in 1774 on behalf of the Warren Association. At the time Baptists had to attain a license to preach, which lead to several receiving imprisonment in the colonies, which still consisted of established state churches. Along with Leland, Backus contributed heavily to the

⁸⁰ Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: 11.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 11

⁸² *Ibid.* 11. An example of the influence of total depravity in his sermon: "Yet all this did not remove the dreadful distemper from man's nature, for the great Ruler of the universe directly after the flood, gave this as one reason why he would not bring such another while the earth remains, namely, For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

⁸³ *Ibid.* 11. On religious liberty: "Whereas in ecclesiastical affairs we are most solemnly warned not to be subject to ordinances, after the doctrines and commandments of men. Col. 2. 20, 22. And it is evident that he who is the only worthy object of worship, has always claimed it as his sole prerogative, to determine by express laws, what his worship shall be, who shall minister in it, and how they shall be supported."

⁸⁴ Ellis Sandoz, quoting Isaac Backus. "An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty." *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era: 1730-1805*: Vol. 1 Chapter: 11: Isaac Backus. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991

issue of religious liberty, and later served "as a delegate from Middleborough to the Massachusetts convention that ratified the federal Constitution in 1788."⁸⁵ Continuing his zeal for evangelism, Backus also actively participated in the Second Awakening along the frontier, and spent his final days promoting revival in New England.

The Pulpit and the American Revolution: John Leland (1754-1841)

A sixth and final Pulpit patriot to be presented is a second Baptist, John Leland. Although having been formally educated only in elementary school, Leland is regarded as highly influential in developing the Revolution's concept of religious freedom. Leland had initially planned to campaign against the ratification of the Constitution out of fear that experiences he and other Baptists had had regarding established state churches would be expanded at a federal level.⁸⁶ Given his influence, this spelled trouble for the ratification, since Baptists held significant political sway within Virginia, North Carolina, and other such states. Due to the impact such opposition could have, James Madison met with Leland, and the two came to an agreement. Leland would remove his opposition in exchange for a protection as given in the First Amendment. With Madison coming up on his end, Leland was to become a fiery supporter of the Constitution. Also, not to be outdone by the Baptist Backus, Leland's zeal for evangelism was first and foremost, as noted by performing 1,515 baptisms.⁸⁷

Besides exerting direct personal influence upon the Founders, Leland's sermons were influential and widely read. One in particular that continues the Baptist focus of religious and

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 11

⁸⁶ Richard Land's essay on "Religious Liberty in the Founding and Development of America", as found in *First Freedom, The Baptist Perspective on Religious Liberty*. Ed. T. White, J. G. Duesing, M. B. Yarnell III: 105-108.

⁸⁷ Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: 39.

civil liberty is entitled *The Rights of Conscience Inalienable* and delivered in 1791.⁸⁸ Within the sermon, Leland argues in favor of the following observations:

1. That the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the disobedient ... 2. That righteous men have to part with a little of their liberty and property to preserve the rest ... 3. That all power is vested in and consequently derived from the people ... 4. That the law should rule over rulers, and not rulers over the law ... 5. That government is founded on compact ... 6. That every law made by the legislators inconsistent with the compact, modernly called a constitution, is usurpive in the legislators and not binding on the people. ... 7. That whenever government is found inadequate to preserve the liberty and property of the people they have an indubitable right to alter it so as to answer those purposes ... 8. That legislators in their legislative capacity cannot alter the constitution, for they are hired servants of the people to act within the limits of the constitution.⁸⁹

From these observations, Leland then proposes to answer the question: "Are the rights of conscience alienable, or inalienable?"⁹⁰ After arguing for them being inalienable, he then speaks to the error of established churches, of which he provides five arguments.⁹¹

Leland also had a tremendous personal influence on James Madison. It was primarily at his and other Baptists petitions that James Madison would later propose the adoption of a Bill of Rights, perhaps explaining the initiating role religious liberty has within the first amendment. Leland was also to have direct influence in the affairs of the State, serving as both a delegate to the Virginia Convention to ratify the Federal Constitution in 1788, and as an elected Republican to the Massachusetts legislature in 1811.⁹² Besides his influence with Madison, and his direct

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 37. On religious liberty, Leland parallels Backus, "religion is a matter between God and individuals, religious opinions of men not being the objects of civil government nor any ways under its control."

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 37

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 37

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 37. "1. Uninspired fallible men make their own opinions tests of orthodoxy, and use their own systems," "2. Such establishments not only wean and alienate the affections of one from another on account of the different usages they receive in their religious sentiments, but are also very impolitic," "3. These establishments metamorphose the church into a creature, and religion into a principle of state," "4. There are no two kingdoms or states that establish the same creed or formularies of faith" and "5. The nature of such establishments, further, is to keep from civil office the best of men."

⁹² *Ibid.* 37

involvement in the Constitutional Convention and the legislature, historians recognize Leland's influence. Of Leland, his biographer L. F. Greene stated,

Through a long life, Elder Leland sustained, with uniform consistency, the two-fold character of the patriot and the Christian. For his religious creed he acknowledged no directory but the Bible. He loved the pure, unadulterated word of truth, His political creed was based upon the 'sufficient truths' of equality, and of inherent and inalienable rights, recognized by the master spirits of the Revolution.⁹³

Lyman H. Butterfield describes Leland as "a representative American of his time. Self-reliant to the point of eccentricity and a tireless fighter for principle, he was without arrogance, and the reminiscences of those who knew him speak most often of his humor, his gentleness, and his humility," and that "John Leland therefore has a place in our history as well as in our folklore."⁹⁴

Closing Remarks Regarding the Pulpit Patriots

It shall here be noted that this survey only reviewed six such preachers. By simply observing both the influence of their efforts and the substance of their writing, one can begin to paint the picture of wedding the congregant to the cause. To then imagine that this recap contained only single samples of their preaching among thousands and over decades seems to belittle their influence. Compound upon this the number of pastors engaging in such efforts, and it then becomes eye opening. We must remember that this survey was restricted to six preachers and their churches. These Pulpit Patriots were six of over 1,900 Congregational, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, containing pastors preaching similar political sermons for over a century.⁹⁵

With the additional understanding that over two-thirds of the colonial population were the

⁹³ John Leland, and L. F. Greene. *The Writings of the Late Elder John Leland Including Some Events in His Life*. New York: Printed by G.W. Wood, 1845: 50–51.

⁹⁴ Lyman H. Butterfield. "Elder John Leland, Jeffersonian Itinerant," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*. Worcester, Mass: American Antiquarian Society, 1843.

⁹⁵ "In 1780 there were over 1900 congregations of Congregational-Presbyterian-Baptist persuasion, whence much Revolutionary talk and Action came." Martin Marty, *Religion, Awakening and Revolution*: 120.

influenced by-products of Calvinism, a world-view, which set the tone of their preaching, is understood.⁹⁶ Franklin P. Cole is not in error when he concludes, regarding these preachers and their influence on the American Reformation, that, “There is probably no group of men in history, living in a particular area at a given time, who can speak as forcibly on the subject of Liberty as the Congregational ministers of New England between 1750 and 1785.”⁹⁷ Nor is Ellis Sandoz, when she summarizes in the forward of her work containing in its entirety sermons of New England Preachers, that

Although they present a range of viewpoints on many different problems over a period of seventy-five years, all our writers agree that political liberty and religious truth are vitally intertwined. And while the role of the clergy as the philosophers of the American founding has not received great attention from students of political theory, it was abundantly clear to contemporaries.⁹⁸

William Gordan, a contemporary of the American Patriots, discusses the role of the ministers of New England during the American Revolution:

The clergy of this colony are as virtuous, sensible and learned a set of men, as will probably be found in any part of the globe of equal size and equally populous ... [I]t is certainly a duty of the clergy to accommodate their discourses to the times; to preach against such sins as are most prevalent, and to recommend such virtues as are most wanted ... You have frequently remarked that though the partisans of arbitrary power will freely censure that preacher, who speaks boldly for the liberties of the people, they will admire as an excellent divine, the parson whose discourse is wholly in the opposite, and teaches, that magistrates have a divine right for doing wrong, and are to be implicitly obeyed; men professing Christianity, as if the religion of the blessed Jesus bound them tamely to part with their natural and social rights, and slavishly to bow their neck to any tyrant...⁹⁹

In short, we should conclude that, on the basis a sampling of six out of 1,000+ patriots

⁹⁶ George Bancroft, Quoted by Loraine Boettner. *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co, 1932: 389.

⁹⁷ Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 40.

⁹⁸ Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: Foreword.

⁹⁹ William Gordon. *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America*. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1969: 273–74.

and the roles their Pulpits played in the American Revolution, we are reasonable to acknowledge that there existed real contributions from the Pulpit. This is seen in various earlier noted historical realities: (1) Their close and privileged relationships with key founding figures were, by the words of such founders, influential,¹⁰⁰ (2) The wide popularity, readership, and audience of both their pamphlets and their political sermons, (3) The clearly discernable idea, preceding various secular Revolutionaries, as seen in Mayhew and Jefferson, that liberty can be approached as an issue of divine relevance, thus consisting of specific mandates regarding man and his response to tyranny, and (4) That their roles as pastors, discipling the sheep of America, should be undeniably influential in a Revolution regarding ‘We the People.’¹⁰¹ In the 18th century, the minister was the educated man of his era, displaying a diverse variety of learning. Although this spot would later be filled, post-Constitution, by the Lawyer, the theologian carried the weight of progressing both theological and civil ideas. It should then come to no surprise that, when called to engage with an issue rooted in both tyranny and liberty, the Pulpit would rise to play its influential role. Should we be surprised? Should it be ignored? What greater force in society

¹⁰⁰ The words of John Adams in 1818 acknowledge the influential role such pulpit patriots had, placing them on par with the likes of James Otis and Samuel Adams: "The most ardent and influential in the revival of American principles and feelings from 1760 to 1766 were, first and foremost, before all and above all, James Otis; next to him was Oxenbridge Thacher; next to him, Samuel Adams ; next to him, John Hancock ; then Dr. Mayhew; then Dr. Cooper and his brother." Franklin Paul Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 40.

¹⁰¹ These pastors must also be known for not simply preaching men into action, but engaging directly as patriots. Baldwin explains such direct involvement: "When the news of Lexington and Bunker Hill arrived, parson after parson left his parish and marched hastily toward Boston. Before daylight on the morning of April 30, 1775, Stephen Farrar, of New Ipswich, New Hampshire, left with ninety-seven of his parishioners. Joseph Willard, of Beverly, marched with two companies from his town, raised in no small part through his own exertion. David Avery, of Windsor, Vermont, after hearing the news of Lexington, preached a farewell sermon, then, outside the meeting-house door, called his people to arms, and marched with twenty men. On his way he served as captain, preached, and collected more troops. David Grosvenor, of Grafton, left his pulpit and, musket in hand, joined the minute-men who marched to Cambridge. Phillips Payson, of Chelsea, is given credit for leading a group of his parishioners to attach a band of English soldiery that nineteenth day of April. Benjamin Balch, of Danvers, Lieutenant of the third-alarm list of his town, was present at Lexington and later, as chaplain in army and navy, won the title of the ‘fighting parson.’ Jonathan French, of Andover, Massachusetts, left his pulpit on the Sabbath morning, when the news of Bunker Hill arrived, and with surgical case in one hand and musket in the other started for Boston." Alice Baldwin, *New England Clergy and the American Revolution*.

could exist, to motivate man to act passionately upon defending the gift of liberty, then the Church and its Pulpit? With this, firm agreement is found with Ellis Sandoz, who in summarizing her view on the matter, rightly states:

To permit the religious perspective concerning the rise of American nationhood to have representative expression is important because a steady attention to the Pulpit from 1730 to 1805 unveils a distinctive rhetoric of political discourse: Preachers interpreted pragmatic events in terms of a political theology imbued with philosophical and revelatory learning. Their sermons also demonstrate the existence and effectiveness of a popular political culture that constantly assimilated the currently urgent political and constitutional issues to the profound insights of the Western spiritual and philosophical traditions. That culture's political theorizing within the compass of ultimate historical and metaphysical concerns gave clear contours to secular events in the minds of Americans of this vital era.¹⁰²

Concluding Remarks and Modern Reflections

With this work coming to a close, it has become apparent that the force of the Christian religion in both shaping the People's worldview, and prompting them into action during the American Revolution, was significant.

Little did John Winthrop know that his reference to Puritan New England as 'a city upon a hill' would set into motion forces that would eventually contribute to the birth of a new nation. "The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us as His own people [as He did among Israel],' he opined, 'and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways, so that we shall see much more of His wisdom, power, goodness, and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with.'¹⁰³

The forces of the worldview, as shaped by Calvinist Christianity, have been made evident. It is traceable not only to the messages preached on political subjects in churches all over the colonies, but also observable in the presumptions of man's nature and the question of responding to it in the form of the American government. We can conclude that a mentioning of such persons who preached such views on liberty and freedom, even decades before being penned by

¹⁰² Ellis Sandoz. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*: 1.

¹⁰³ Robert R. Mathisen, *Critical Issues in American Religious History*, 135.

Jefferson and others, are worthy of a reference and lecture on the subject of the Revolution. Also worthy of mentioning are the influential intellectual forces of Calvinism and its byproduct, Puritanism. However, what relevance does all this hold for today? To that we turn and conclude.

It is observable that several principles the Founders grounded the structure of their American experiment on are under attack. The view of man's depravity is being replaced by a post-modernist update to socialist theory that perceives man as essentially good and in need of various forms of state-sponsored aid. In addition, government grows at a rate unimaginable, whereas spending has tripled in comparison to the former presidency, and the nation's debt stands at over \$13,000,000,000,000.00. The rapid growth in the size of government is no myth, nor is it unfair to contrast the reality of its growth with the centrality of the principle of limited government within the Founding Fathers.¹⁰⁴ Regarding a growth in government, various branches have increased in power over the 20th century, bringing with it the challenges to the principle of checks and balances. Also of concern is the increase of a post-modernism that rejects objective truths in favor of a relativistic understanding of what is best for individuals, focusing more on one's experience than a reality of absolute timeless principles.¹⁰⁵ This is maximized further, and made evident, by the rise of various social ills and a breakdown of the family.¹⁰⁶ The central

¹⁰⁴ 1789, federal government had 350 federal civilian employees for a population of three million. Today, there are over three million civil service employees for a population of 218 million. Total of civil service employees has increased 8,571 times since 1789. Total ratio of civil service employees to private citizens was 1:8,500 in 1789, to 1:70 today. John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 389.

¹⁰⁵ For the post-modernist mentality, how does one possibly understand where these 'unalienable rights' come from? If being 'true to yourself' is key, then how do 'rights' not fluctuate in definitions between persons and generations? How can one possibly approach the Constitution, and not be in error?

¹⁰⁶ "The United States Census in 2000 showed that two-parent families now represent less than 25 percent of all households in America, down from 45 percent as recently as 1960. Over the same forty-year period, the percentage of single-parent families tripled, the divorce rate doubled, the percentage of people getting married dropped lower than ever before, cohabitation increased 1000 percent," "and the rate of illegitimacy (births to unmarried women) rose by more than 500 percent." Daniel Heimbach, *True Sexual Morality*: 30-31.

pillars of the Founder's experiment seem to be under attack: limited government, liberty from financial restraint, presumption of human depravity the need for checks and balances, objective unalienable rights as the source of law, and a healthy society rooted in strong families and True Religion. How do we approach these modern day challenges with the words of John Adams, who said, "Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."¹⁰⁷ Can our political system survive upon the foundations of a form of government structured on essential societal and intellectual assumptions no longer held by our society? The prospect seems grim.

It is difficult to imagine that a society rejecting the foundational premises of its political structure would not experience some serious complications. Perhaps the tremendous national debt serves as a warning. Perhaps social attitudes as reflected in the breakdown of the family multiply the warnings.¹⁰⁸ Regardless, there does appear to exist a noticeable difference between the philosophies of the Founders and the attitudes of today. If such a threat were real, then what can the experience of our Pulpit Patriots teach us? With their essential role in promoting the ideas of civil and religious liberty in which both society and government benefited, is the same needed of modern day pastors? Surely there is a genuine concern regarding pastors preaching politics, but if they served such an essential role in society preaching biblical unalienable truths, then would not a fear of political correctness do more harm than good? This is not to say that we

¹⁰⁷ John Adams, 1789; quoted in *War on Religious Freedom*. Virginia Beach, Virginia: Freedom Council 1984: 1.

¹⁰⁸ Convincing work on the correlation between increased sexual immorality, familial corrosion, and societal breakdown have been made evident in the work of sociologists J.D. Unwin's *Sex and Culture* and Carl Zimmerman's *Family and Civilization*. Both trace historical evidence concluding that a breakdown in traditional family structure and a libertine approach to sexual morality correlate to a breakdown in government and society. Interesting enough, America is heading down the same path recognized by the work of these sociologists.

should have pastors at the Pulpit telling us which politician we are to vote for.¹⁰⁹ Rather, this is to say that: if the Pulpit was essential to promoting the objective nature of rights, the exclusive character of truth, and the Divine source in which all laws are judged, pastors serve an essential societal function. They are the glue that wed essential attitudes to the American governmental model. Some deem it popular to exclude from the Pulpit and the role of minister anything having to do with the ‘world’ and its politics. However, if the church is called to be the light and salt of the world, and our political system is build upon the very principles cherished and wedded to the Church, is it responsible, or even possible, to ignore preaching these realities? Can a system, which presupposes “Laws of Nature, “Nature’s God,” and “unalienable Rights” “endowed by their Creator,” survive when those entrusted through the revelation of Scripture remain silent on the character of this Creator, and the revealed source of the Gospel and Law? Thomas Jefferson, having penned those very words in the *Declaration of Independence*, had this to say on the proposed concern: “God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed their only sure basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that those liberties are the gift of God?”¹¹⁰ By the example of the Pulpit Patriots, and the essential role they played in this Nation’s founding, we can responsibly answer Jefferson with a ‘No, they cannot’. If the Pulpit will not again serve its role in promoting a biblical understanding of man, his God-given liberties, and the source of all unalienable rights and virtue, then who?

¹⁰⁹ This paper does not argue for a fusion between Church and State. I am in agreement with historic Baptists such as Leland and Backus who taught a necessary separation. What I am in favor of are pastors simply preaching the reality of biblical principles relevant to political and societal organization, which are then foundational to the American governmental model.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Jefferson. *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Federal Edition (New York and London, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1904-5). Vol. 4. Query XXVIII.

Table 1: Frequency of Citation by American Founders

Source: Lutz, Donald S. "The Relative Importance of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought." *American Political Science Review* (1984): 189-97.

Two professors, Donald S. Lutz and Charles S. Hyneman, have reviewed an estimated 15,000 items, and closely read 2,200 books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and monographs with explicitly political content printed between 1760 and 1805. They reduced this to 916 items, about one-third of all public political writings longer than 2,000 words. From these items, Lutz and Hyneman identified 3,154 references to other sources. The source most often cited by the founding fathers was *the Bible*, which accounted for 34 percent of all citations.¹¹¹

Alexis de Tocqueville hints this importance in his *Democracy in America*, where he states:

Religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but it must be regarded as the first of their political institutions; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it. Indeed, it is in this same point of view that the inhabitants of the United States themselves look upon religious belief. I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion—for who can search the human heart?—but I am certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of their political institutions.¹¹²

	1760s	1770s	1780s	1790s	1800-05	Percent of Total Number
Bible	24	44	34	29	38	34
Enlightenment	32	18	24	21	18	22
Whig	10	20	19	17	15	18
Common Law	12	4	9	14	20	11
Classical	8	11	10	11	2	9
Peers	6	2	3	6	5	4
Others	8	1	1	2	2	2
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	216	544	1306	674	414	3154

¹¹¹ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 52.

¹¹² Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: I:316.

Table 2: Frequency of Citations by Thinkers, 1760-1805

Source: Lutz, Donald S. "The Relative Importance of European Writers on Late Eighteenth Century American Political Thought." *American Political Science Review* (1984): 189-97.

"The most cited thinkers were not deists and philosophies, but conservative legal and political thinkers who often were also Christians."¹¹³

Also of note: The primary rank St. Paul receives as the most cited thinker among the Founders.

Table 2: Frequency of Citations by Thinkers, 1760-1805					
Rank	Author	Percentage	Rank	Author	Percentage
1	St. Paul (Biblical)	9.00%	20	Shakespeare	0.80%
2	Montesquieu (Enlightenment)	8.30%	21	Livy (Classical)	0.80%
3	Sir William Blackstone (Common Law)	7.90%	22	Alexander Pope (Enlight.)	0.70%
4	John Locke (Whig)	2.90%	23	John Milton (Puritan)	0.70%
5	David Hume (Enlightenment)	2.70%	24	Tactitus (Classical)	0.60%
6	Plutarch (Classical)	1.50%	25	Coxe (Whig)	0.60%
7	Cesar Beccaria (Enlightenment)	1.50%	26	Plato (Classical)	0.50%
8	Trenchard & Gordon (Whig)	1.40%	27	Abbe Raynal (Enlight.)	0.50%
9	De Lolme (Enlightenment)	1.40%	28	Mably (Enlight.)	0.50%
10	Baron Pufendorf (17th Century Protestant Political Theorist)	1.30%	29	Machiavelli	0.50%
11	Sir Edward Coke (Puritan/Common Law)	1.30%	30	Vattel (Enlightenment)	0.50%
12	Cicero (Classical)	1.20%	31	Petyt	0.50%
13	Thomas Hobbes (17th Century Political Theorist)	1.00%	32	Voltaire (Enlightenment)	0.50%
14	Robertson (Enlightenment)	0.90%	33	Robinson	0.50%
15	Hugo Grotius (17th Century Protestant Political Theorist)	0.90%	34	Algernon Sydney (Whig)	0.50%
16	Rousseau (Enlightenment)	0.90%	35	Somers (Whig)	0.50%
17	Bolingbroke (Whig)	0.90%	36	Harrington (Whig)	0.50%
18	Francis Bacon (Puritan)	0.80%	37	Rapin (Whig)	0.50
19	Price (Whig)	0.80%			

¹¹³ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 52.

Table 3: Faith of the Founders

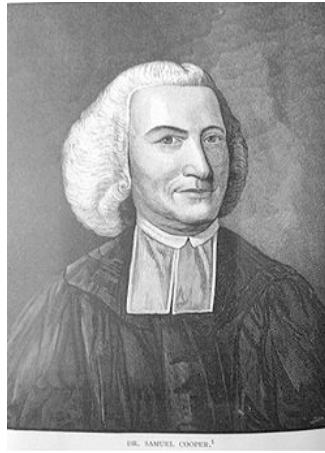
Source: Ferris, Robert G. *Signers of the Constitution: Historic Places Commemorating the Signing of the Constitution*. Washington D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976: 138.

Religious Affiliation of U.S. Founding Fathers	# of Founding Fathers	% of Founding Fathers
Episcopalian/Anglican	88	54.7%
Presbyterian	30	18.6%
Congregationalist	27	16.8%
Quaker	7	4.3%
Dutch Reformed/German Reformed	6	3.7%
Lutheran	5	3.1%
Catholic	3	1.9%
Huguenot	3	1.9%
Unitarian	3	1.9%
Methodist	2	1.2%
Calvinist	1	0.6%
TOTAL	204	100%

Figure 1: Portraits of the Pulpit Patriots



Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766)



Samuel Cooper (1725-1783)



Charles Chauncy (1705-1787)



Isaac Backus (1745-1806)



John Leland (1754-1841)

Appendix 1: *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers and the Declaration of Independence*

Source: Cole, Franklin Paul. *They Preached Liberty*. Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1977

“The sermon was widely read and quoted throughout the colonies and in Great Britain. It doubtless won for him his degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Aberdeen in 1751.”¹¹⁴

Thomas Jefferson: *The Declaration of Independence*

Jonathan Mayhew: *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers*

Jefferson's Declaration: That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the governed.”

Mayhew's Sermon: "The only reason for the institution of civil government, and the only rational ground for submission to it, is the common safety and utility."

Jefferson's Declaration: "Prudence, indeed will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light or transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

Mayhew's Sermon: "Now, as all men are fallible, it cannot be supposed that the public affairs of any state should be always administered in the best manner possible, even by persons of the greatest wisdom and integrity. Nor is it sufficient to legitimate disobedience to the higher powers that they are not so administered, or that they are in some instances very ill-managed; for upon this principle it is scarcely supposable that any government at all could be supported."

Jefferson's Declaration: "But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such a government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Mayhew's Sermons, 1750: "Those in authority may abuse their trust and power to such a degree that neither the law of reason nor of religion requires that any obedience or submission be paid to them; but on the contrary that they should be totally discarded and the authority which they were before vested with transferred to others, who may exercise more to those good purposes for which it is given."

Jefferson's Declaration: "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."

Mayhew's Sermon, 26 years prior: "Nothing can well be imagined more directly contrary to common sense than to suppose that millions of people should be subjected to the arbitrary, precarious pleasure of a single man... so that their estates and everything that is valuable in life, and even their lives also, shall be absolutely at his disposal, if he happens to be wanton and capricious enough to demand them."

¹¹⁴ Franklin Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 28, 29-33.

Appendix 2: Political Sermons

Source: Sandoz, Ellis. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991.

“Few words may now be said about the sermon as a rhetorical and symbolic form, particularly the political sermon. It was the axiom of one of the leading figures of the New Light movement and the educator of preachers, Nathanael Emmons, “Have something to say; say it.” The suggestion of terseness is misleading, however, since eighteenth-century preachers had a great deal to say. The Sunday service might typically open with a prayer that lasted an hour as measured by a glass on the Pulpit; it would then be turned twice during the course of the sermon. A short break for lunch would be taken, and then the preaching would continue in the afternoon. The form of Puritan sermons followed a model taught by William Perkins’s *Arte of Prophesying* (1592, translated in 1607). The principle basic to his approach was, following Augustine and Calvin, that the Bible is reflexive in the sense of providing its own explanation of its meaning in a consistent whole. This literal meaning is to be found through use of the three methods of circumstance, collation, and application. Thus, it is the task of the preacher as interpreter to place any scriptural text into its circumstances and context, collating that text with similar texts elsewhere in the scriptures, to find consistent meaning, and then to finish by conforming his preaching to the “analogue of faith.” This means that any statement made had to be in harmony with or contained in the Apostles’ Creed. The key to finding the unity of the Bible, according to William Perkins, was to begin by first mastering Paul’s Letter to the Romans; then, and only then, ought the student move to the remainder of the New Testament and subsequently to the Old Testament. The result of this, because of the emphases in Romans, will be a stress on justification, sanctification, and true faith.

The steps in writing and delivering the sermon begin with the reading of the divine text, considered as the holy Word of God and superior to or outside of the remainder of the presentation. The text is to be read aloud to the congregation by way of “opening” the Word, for (in the Calvinist conception, at least) it is the Word and the Word alone that is the proper province of preaching. The duty of the preacher, then, is merely to “open” the one clear and natural sense of scripture, so that the Holy Spirit can move through the preacher’s words into the hearers’ souls to effect spiritual transformation. Thus, in Perkins’s formal outline, the preacher ought:

- 1. To read the Text distinctly out of the canonical Scripture.
- 2. To give the sense and understanding of it being read by the Scripture itself.
- 3. To collect a few and profitable points of doctrine out of the natural sense.
- 4. To applied (if he have the gift) the doctrines rightly collected to the manners of men in a simple and plain speech.

This form is understood to embody the circumstances, collations, and analogies of faith previously mentioned. The format of Text, Doctrine, and Application remained typical of sermons, especially on such formal occasions as the political sermons reproduced here, and in the hands of the most accomplished preachers (such as Jonathan Edwards the Elder) the old form could be effective for “sustaining rigorous analysis and dramatizing the essential relationships among the Word, human intelligence, and conduct.” It is no surprise that a mastery of classical rhetoric is displayed in the sermons of the eighteenth century, since this was the “golden age of the classics” in America. Of the several vehicles for expounding political theology available to American ministers, the most venerable were the election sermons preached for 256 years in Massachusetts and 156 years in Connecticut. The practice began in Vermont in 1778 and in New Hampshire in 1784 in the sermon by Samuel McClintock (no. 26, herein). These were sermons preached annually to the governor and legislature after the election of officers. To be chosen for the task was an honor, and the sermons were published and distributed to each official with an extra copy or two for the ministers of the official’s home district. It is at least arguable that a published sermon is a mark of its excellence to begin with, whatever the occasion of its utterance.”

The Artillery Sermon

“Besides the election sermon, the artillery sermon was also an annual affair in Massachusetts and dealt with civic and military matters. The Thursday or Fifth-day Lecture was begun by the Reverend John Cotton in Boston in 1633 and was practiced for 200 years; it was a popular event and was combined with Market Day for gathering and discussing matters of social and political interest. Election sermons were sometimes then repeated for a different audience. The Lecture was no Boston or Congregationalist monopoly, as can be seen from Abraham Keteltas’s sermon preached during the evening Lecture in the First Presbyterian Church at Newburyport in 1777 (no. 19, herein). Convention sermons also were political in nature and grew out of election-day ceremonies.

Appendix 4: Key Political Sermons

Source: Sandoz, Ellis. *Political Sermons of the American Founding Era, 1730-1805*. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991: Table of Contents.

Sermons may be freely accessed from: www.tinyurl.com/PoliticalSermons

Chronology: 1688–1773

- 1: Benjamin Colman, Government the Pillar of the Earth
- 2: Joseph Sewall, Nineveh's Repentance and Deliverance
- 3: Elisha Williams, the Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants
- 4: George Whitefield, Britain's Mercies, and Britain's Duties
- 5: Charles Chauncy, Civil Magistrates Must Be Just, Ruling In the Fear of God
- 6: Samuel Davies, the Mediatorial Kingdom and Glories of Jesus Christ
- 7: Samuel Dunbar, the Presence of God With His People
- 8: Jonathan Mayhew, the Snare Broken
- 9: John Joachim Zubly, an Humble Enquiry
- 10: John Allen, an Oration Upon the Beauties of Liberty
- 11: Isaac Backus, an Appeal to the Public For Religious Liberty

Chronology: 1774–1781

- 12: Samuel Sherwood, Scriptural Instructions to Civil Rulers
- 13: John Wesley, a Calm Address to Our American Colonies
- 14: Anonymous, a Constitutional Answer to Wesley's Calm Address
- 15: Moses Mather, America's Appeal to the Impartial World
- 16: Samuel Sherwood, the Church's Flight Into the Wilderness: an Address On the Times
- 17: John Witherspoon, the Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men
- 18: John Fletcher, the Bible and the Sword
- 19: Abraham Keteltas, God Arising and Pleading His People's Cause
- 20: Jacob Cushing, Divine Judgments Upon Tyrants
- 21: Samuel Cooper, a Sermon On the Day of the Commencement of the Constitution
- 22: Henry Cumings, a Sermon Preached At Lexington On the 19 Th of April

Chronology: 1782–1788

- 23: Anonymous, a Dialogue Between the Devil, and George Iii, Tyrant of Britain
- 24: A Moderate Whig [stephen Case?], Defensive Arms Vindicated
- 25: George Duffield, a Sermon Preached On a Day of Thanksgiving
- 26: Samuel McClintock, a Sermon On Occasion of the Commencement of the New-hampshire Constitution
- 27: William Smith, a Sermon Preached Before a Convention of the Episcopal Church
- 28: Samuel Wales, the Dangers of Our National Prosperity; and the Way to Avoid Them
- 29: Joseph Lathrop, a Sermon On a Day Appointed For Publick Thanksgiving

- 30: Nathanael Emmons, the Dignity of Man
- 31: Elizur Goodrich, the Principles of Civil Union and Happiness Considered and Recommended
- 32: Samuel Langdon, the Republic of the Israelites an Example to the American States
- 33: Elhanan Winchester, a Century Sermon On the Glorious Revolution

Chronology: 1789–1794

- 34: Richard Price, a Discourse On the Love of Our Country
- 35: James Dana, the African Slave Trade
- 36: Israel Evans, a Sermon Delivered At the Annual Election
- 37: John Leland, the Rights of Conscience Inalienable
- 38: David Tappan, a Sermon For the Day of General Election
- 39: Peter Thacher, a Sermon Preached Before the Artillery Company
- 40: Samuel Miller, a Sermon On the Anniversary of the Independence of America
- 41: Enos Hitchcock, an Oration In Commemoration of the Independence of the United States of America
- 42: Jonathan Edwards, Jr., the Necessity of the Belief of Christianity
- 43: David Osgood, the Wonderful Works of God Are to Be Remembered
- 44: Noah Webster, the Revolution In France

Chronology: 1795–1805

- 45: Bishop James Madison, Manifestations of the Beneficence of Divine Providence Towards America
- 46: Stephen Peabody, Sermon Before the General Court of New Hampshire At the Annual Election
- 47: John Thayer, a Discourse, Delivered At the Roman Catholic Church In Boston
- 48: Timothy Dwight, the Duty of Americans, At the Present Crisis
- 49: Henry Holcombe, a Sermon Occasioned By the Death of Washington
- 50: John Smalley, On the Evils of a Weak Government
- 51: John Mitchell Mason, the Voice of Warning to Christians
- 52: Tunis Wortman, a Solemn Address to Christians and Patriots
- 53: Stanley Griswold, Overcoming Evil With Good
- 54: William Emerson, an Oration In Commemoration of the Anniversary of American Independence
- 55: John Hargrove, a Sermon, On the Second Coming of Christ

Appendix 5: Selection from Sermons

Source: Cole, Franklin Paul. *They Preached Liberty*. Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1977

Included are several selections from Franklin P. Cole's wider collection. The various quotations of New England ministers gives insight into what was preached to the public regarding several major political issues of their times. Within their sermons can be noted the Calvinist and Puritan influences of man's depravity and the fear of power. Also noticeable is a major focus on the issue of civil and religious liberty, in which we have already observed, played a role in influencing the development of the nation.

I. Divine Source of Liberty

"All power is originally from God, and civil government his institution, and is designed to advance the happiness of his creatures. Civil power ought therefore ever to be employed agreeable to the nature and will of the supreme Sovereign and Guardian of all our rights."

Benjamin Stevens, A.M., of Kittery; Mass. Election Sermon, 1761.

"Life, liberty, and property are the gifts of the Creator"

Daniel Shute, A.M., of Hingham; Mass. Election Sermon, 1768.

"Next to the gospel of peace, civil government bespeaks the great good-will of the Most High, to the children of men."

Eliphalet Williams, M.A., of Hartford; Conn. Election Sermon, 1769).

"The Scriptures cannot be rightfully expounded without explaining them in a manner friendly to the cause of freedom."

Charles Turner, A.M., of Duxbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1773).

"Unlimited submission and obedience is due to none but God alone. He has an absolute right to command; he alone has an uncontrollable sovereignty over us, because he alone is unchangeably good... And to suppose that he has given to any particular set of men a power to require obedience to that which is unreasonable, cruel, and unjust, is robbing the Deity of his justice and goodness."

Samuel West, A.M., of Dartmouth; Mass. Election Sermon, 1776)

"But, depend upon it, *no government is God's ordinance but that which is for the good of mankind.*"

Samuel Webster, A.M., of Salisbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1777.

II. Heritage and Nature of Liberty

"No man denies but that *originally* all were equally free. Men did not purchase their freedom, nor was it the grant of kinds, no from charter, covenant, or compact, nor in any proper sense from man: But from God. They were born free."

Samuel Webster, A.M., of Salisbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1777.

"Where the magistrates and people are generally virtuous, the people may be tolerably happy under almost any constitution, or indeed without any. Yet as the world is, a *good constitution* is by no means to be disregarded; but is the first foundation to be laid for the happiness of the people; and of great importance."

Samuel Webster, A.M., of Salisbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1777.

III. Balance of Power and Constitution

“A good constitution of government, such as one that secures the mutual dependence of the sovereign or ruling powers, and the people on each other, and which secures the rights of each, and the good of the whole society, is a great blessing to a people.”

Ebenezer Bridge, A.M., of Chelmsford; Mass. Election Sermon, 1767.

“Happy are those whose political plan allows such prerogative as is sufficient to the vigor, uniformity, and dispatch of public measures, but at the same time with such restrictions, that the liberties of the subject are safe... The balance of power in a mixed government is no empty theory. The destruction of it is terrible.”

Edward Barnard, A.M., of Haverhill; Mass. Election Sermon, 1776.

“But the British legislature, consisting of three branches; *to check, moderate, and temper each other*; it is imagined is preferable to any other we have the knowledge of.”

Samuel Lockwood, A.M., of Andover; Conn. Election Sermon, 1774.

“If laws, when made, exist only on paper and ink, what benefit can a people derive from them? The divine law is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; and surely his ministers ought to make the laws, which they execute, bear some resemblance to his.”

Moses Mather, Conn. Election Sermon, 1781.

IV. Tyranny and Human Nature

“Arrogant pretenses to infallibility in matters of state or religion, represent human nature in the most contemptible light.”

Samuel Cook, A.M., of Cambridge; Mass. Election Sermon, 1770.

“If we look over the prophets [of the Old Testament], we shall find that the rulers are peculiarly guilty: the princes were become mighty oppressors: and when foreign enemies attacked them, unnaturally joined and conspired their ruin! This was a crime of the highest nature. For nothing can be more aggravated than for the *shepherds* to *mislead* and *butcher* the flock they were set to *defend* and *feed*! And the *guardians* of the public interests, to turn *traitors* and *assassins* to them that raised them to their high places!”

Samuel Webster, A.M., of Salisbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1777

V. Obligations of Liberty

“ ‘Tis certain that the gospel, above all other religions, instructs mankind in the duties they owe unto their lawful rulers.”

Edward Dorr, A.M., of Hartford; Conn. Election Sermon, 1765.

“Is Christianity inconsistent with patriotism? God forbid that any should imagine such a thing. The true Christian is the best qualified to act the part of the patriot, if he hath other qualifications also which are requisite.”

Ebenezer Bridge, A.M., of Chelmsford; Mass. Election Sermon, 1767.

“Let us act as *free*! Let us stand for our just rights; but consider ourselves at the same time as servants of God, and submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake. Let us never use our liberty for a cloak of maliciousness.”

John Tucker, A.M., of Newbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1771.

VI. Civil Liberty

“Persecution and intolerance are not only unjust and criminal in the sight of God, but they also cramp, enfeeble, and diminish the state.”

Jonathan Mayhew, D.D., of Boston; Mass. Election Sermon, 1754.

“If the repeal of this [Stamp] Act should be the means of continuing our religious as well as civil liberties, and of transmitting pure and undefiled religion to future ages: Oh! What a resource will it be of perpetual and everlasting praises!”

Nathaniel Appleton, M.A., of Cambridge; Thanksgiving Sermon, 1766.

“Civil government among mankind is not a resignation of their natural privileges, but that method of securing them.”

Daniel Shute, A.M., of Hingham; Mass. Election Sermon, 1768.

VII. Religious Liberty

“On the free exercise of their natural religious rights the present as well as future happiness of mankind greatly depends.”

Daniel Shute, A.M., of Hingham; Mass. Election Sermon, 1768.

“Religious liberty is so blended with civil, that if one falls it is not to be expected that the other will continue.”

Charles Turner, A.M., of Duxbury; Mass. Election Sermon, 1773.

"Whereas in ecclesiastical affairs we are most solemnly warned not to be subject to ordinances, after the doctrines and commandments of men. Col. 2. 20, 22. And it is evident that he who is the only worthy object of worship, has always claimed it as his sole prerogative, to determine by express laws, what his worship shall be, who shall minister in it, and how they shall be supported."

Isaac Backus, Middleborough; Mass. *An Appeal to the Public*, 1773.

"All acts of executive power in the civil state, are to be performed in the name of the king or state they belong to; while all our religious acts are to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus; and so are to be performed heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Isaac Backus, Middleborough; Mass. *An Appeal to the Public*, 1773.

Appendix 6: Biblical Principles Found in the *Declaration of Independence*

Source: Eidsmoe, John. *Christianity and the Constitution*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.

The various similarities in thought can directly be seen in the 18th century political sermons of Pastors, who in developing theological responses to the political issues of their day, sought out the biblical principles here-in contained. It should then not be a wild observation that, given the distinguished role of pastors as the intellectuals of the early and mid 18th century, that such principles would develop a worldview and find itself in the documents of the Declaration and Constitution

A. Providence of God

Declaration of Independence	Biblical Principle
1. "A firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence."	"Providence, divine care and superintendence; prudence, frugality, foresight." ¹¹⁵
	Here is stressed God's active involvement in the "affairs of men." ¹¹⁶ The idea provides a visible contrast to the role of Deist influence, given the deistic God was one whose hand was not continually active in the affairs of men.
	Providence played a substantial role in the religious thought of Calvinists, as seen in arguments given above.

B. The Law of God

Declaration of Independence	Biblical Principle
1. "The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God"	"This phrase, from the Declaration, which both Blackstone and Locke used previously, reflects the universal belief in some form of higher law to which man's law should conform and by which man's law will be judged." ¹¹⁷
	Here is seen a clear distinction to the natural law of Hobbes and others, as implied by the objective nature of the Law's author: God.
	According to Romans 2:14-15, this higher law is revealed to men in Scripture, nature and human conscience.

¹¹⁵ Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), 150.

¹¹⁶ Benjamin Franklin, June 28, 1787; quoted by Smyth, *Writings*, IX: 600-1

¹¹⁷ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 363.

For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them. (Romans 2:14-15)

2. “That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it.”

Thus, man and his laws must conform to a higher law, God’s law. When these laws no longer conform, the Declaration thus justifies the right to alter and abolish.¹¹⁸

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the LORD!
Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,
who seek him with their whole heart,
who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways! (Psalm 119:1-3)

C. The Equality of Man

Declaration of Independence

1. “Self-evident” that “all men are created equal.”

Note: Man is ‘created’ equal. There is no evolutionary element to allow the argument of superiority. He is equal on the basis of his created status.

Biblical Principle

“So Peter opened his mouth and said: ‘Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,’ ” (Acts 10:34)

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)

D. God-Given Human Rights

Declaration of Independence

1. “All men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men.”

Note: The rights of man are endowed from the source of the Creator, God. They are not the product of a humaneness majority agreement for the sake of convenience. They are directly gifts from God. As such, one understands the temper of preaching on the subject of liberty, given they extend beyond a government

Biblical Principle

It is made in the image of God that warrant’s one special status and dignity among God’s created order:

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1:26-27)

Being made in God’s image produces a unique dignity

¹¹⁸ “If laws, when made, exist only on paper and ink, what benefit can a people derive from them? The divine law is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; ad surely his ministers ought to make the laws, which they execute, bear some resemblance to his.” Moses Mather, Conn. Election Sermon, 1781 as quoted in Franklin Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 81.

¹¹⁹ Jefferson as quoted in John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 367.

authority (in this case English Parliament and the King), and instead become an issue of divine significance: God given liberty versus the idolatry of man-imposed rule.

Jefferson's words as engraved on the Jefferson Memorial: "God who gave us life, have us liberty at the same time. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed their only sure basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that those liberties are the gift of God?"¹¹⁹

2. "Life"

3. "Liberty"

4. "Pursuit of happiness," or as Locke originally termed it, "property".

Note: This is not to be mistaken as a right to live hedonistically. Originally in Locke's word, in which Jefferson is quoting, the word originally stressed the right to own property.

E. Government by Consent of the Governed

Declaration of Independence

1. "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

which then comes with specific unalienable rights:

"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image." (Genesis 9:6)

"God also confers certain positive rights through the negative commands of Scripture. The commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill' (Exod 20:13), confers a right to life. The command not to kidnap or enslave confers a right to liberty (Exod 21:16; Deut. 24:7). The command, 'Thou shalt not steal' (Exod 20:15) confers a right to property. These three rights of life, liberty, and property mentioned by Locke come from the Bible."¹²⁰

The Right to life: "You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)

Also seen in Genesis 9:6

The Right to Liberty: "Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death." (Exodus 21:16)

"If a man is found stealing one of his brothers of the people of Israel, and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die. So you shall purge the evil from your midst." (Deuteronomy 24:7)

The Right to Property: "You shall not steal." (Exodus 20:15)

Biblical Principle

"The concept of 'consent of the governed' has its roots in John Locke's social compact, which is in turn rooted in the Calvinist concept of the covenant, by which men, in the presence of God, join themselves together into a body politic."

Biblical examples of governments by the consent of the governed:

- The people plead for a King, and God grants their desire. (1 Sam 8, Deut. 17:14-20)
- "The men of Israel said to Gideon, Rule thou

¹²⁰ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 367.

- over us.” (Judg. 8:22)
- “The men of Shechem... made Abimelech king.” (Judg. 9:6:)
 - “Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the Lord, and this people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I side.” (2 Sam. 16:18)
 - “The people... took Azariah... and made him king.” (2 Kings 14:21)

This is also clearly seen through the direction to the Israelites to choose judges. Note how the Israelites are to appoint their leaders:

“You shall appoint judges and officers in all your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment.” (Deut. 16:18)

Appendix 7: Biblical Principles Found in the Constitution of the United States

Source: Eidsmoe, John. *Christianity and the Constitution*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.

A good constitution of government, such as one that secures the mutual dependence of the sovereign or ruling powers, and the people on each other, and which secures the rights of each, and the good of the whole society, is a great blessing to a people.
Ebenezer Bridge, A.M., of Chelmsford; Mass. Election Sermon, 1767¹²¹

A. The Law of Nations

Constitution of the United States	Biblical Principle
1. Article I, Section 8, Clause 10: "To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences, against the Law of Nations."	The idea of the "Law of Nations" is borrow from Grotius, Pufendorf and Vattel, which was developed from an extension of the earlier mentioned natural God-given law. Here is implied a law in which all nations are subjected to. Who then, contained an authority and power higher then men? "The fact a law exists which supersedes the legislative enactments of various nations, implies a power and authority higher than man. The United States established war tribunals to bring foreign officials to trial for atrocities committed in violation of the Law of Nations." ¹²²

B. The Equality of Man

Constitution of the United States	Biblical Principle
1. Article I, Section 9, Paragraph 8: "No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States,"	"So Peter opened his mouth and said: 'Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,' " (Acts 10:34) "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)
2. Fourteenth Amendment: "equal protection of the law"	"You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit." (Exodus 23:6)

C. God-Given Human Rights

Constitution of the United States	Biblical Principle
1. Article I, Section 9: "Protects human rights by prohibiting Congress from doing certain things. It	These human rights are established in Scripture. Earlier references to Gen. 1:26-27, 9:6, Exo. 20:13, 21:16,

¹²¹ As quoted in Franklin Cole, *They Preached Liberty*: 71.

¹²² John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 364.

protects the right to petition for writ of habeas corpus and the right not to be prosecuted ex post facto.”¹²³

Note: Government exists not to establish and legitimize, but to secure rights. This is seen in the preamble, where it states, that the purpose of government is to “secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.”

20:15, and Deut. 24:7 are such examples.

See the Declaration section for details.

D. Government by Consent of the People

Constitution of the United States

1. Preamble: “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union,”

Biblical Principle

See the Appendix 7 E. 1. section for details

E. The Sinful Nature of Man

Constitution of the United States

1. Through the Constitution, various limitations are set upon mob majorities, branches of government, and various powers. We term this the ‘Checks and Balances,’ which has been a major contribution by America to political theory. This finds its fruition in the form of a written document, containing laws in which the government and its people are subjected to (termed ‘Higher Law’). This also, has been a major contribution by America to political theory (as evident in the number of current Constitutional Republics).

Biblical Principle

“None is righteous, no, not one.” (Romans 3:10)

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” (Eph. 2:1-3)

“But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary... In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the greatest difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself.”¹²⁴

Every political theory and government begins on the assumption of a worldview. Perhaps this is why we see such a great difference in the French and American Revolution. One begins with a utopian theory presuming the goodness of man (socialism and communism). The other begins with a view of man’s depravity and corruption by power (products of the earlier argued Calvinist and Puritan concepts of Total Depravity and Fear of Power, as well as the wedded Republican ideas).¹²⁵ Both produced radical alternative histories.

¹²³ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 366.

¹²⁴ James Madison, *The Federalist* No. 51.

¹²⁵ “All power tends to corrupt, Absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Acton, John Emerick Edward Dalberg. Quoted in the *World Book Encyclopedia*, 1985.

Given the argument of this paper, it is clear to see that, given the profound number and impact Calvinist had upon America in the 18th century, the Founders were working with a worldview assuming the sinful nature of man. Thus both government and the people were checked against one another (as seen in the choice of a Republic, which checks the people, over a Democracy, which can lead to mob rule).

Clearly, the entire American concept of a checks and balances implies a view of human nature inline with that presented in scripture by Calvin and the Puritans.

F. Limited, Delegated Powers

Constitution of the United States

1. Tenth Amendment: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Powers were both delegated and limited to the Federal government by the Constitution. This was the primary principle of limited government, which was essential to the Founder's political philosophy. Although the Tenth Amendment is ignored by our growing government, "its principle is the cornerstone of limited government... the federal government has no powers other than those which the people have delegated to it, expressed or implied, in the Constitution. If this limitation is ignored, a basic barrier to tyranny is removed."¹²⁶

Biblical Principle

Several events in scripture express the danger of a tyrannical and abusive struggle between the ruler and the ruled. Surely, these were found popular within the Pulpit surrounding the Revolution.

Conflict between abusive rulers and the governed can be observed in 1 Kings 12:16-19 (Confrontation between Rehoboam and the elders of Judah):

"And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David." So Israel went to their tents. But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah. Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death with stones. And King Rehoboam hurried to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day."

A limit of governing authority is implied in such passages as Deut. 17:14-20:

"When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,'¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose... that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the

¹²⁶ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 373.

commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.”

G. Rights of Criminal Defendants

Constitution of the United States

1. Amendment VIII: “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.”

Further rights of the accused are granted in Amendments V, VI, VII and IX.

“The founding fathers knew that punishment is necessary to deter crime. But they also recognized that an orderly process of justice is necessary to distinguish between the guilty and innocent. And in a free society which values human dignity, a defendant is presumed innocent until proved guilty. For this reason the Constitution provides numerous protections for the rights of accused persons.”¹²⁷

2. Amendment VI: “In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury.”

3. Amendment V: “nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.”

Biblical Principle

“In giving rights to the accused, the Jewish system of justice was one of the most advanced in the world.”

Observations regarding the topic are made by Eidsmoe, which in turn no doubt influenced the Puritan and Common Law traditions that later influenced the Founders (as factually evident in the frequent citation of Deuteronomy by the Founders).¹²⁸

“Extra biblical Jewish law went further than our current legal system in protecting the rights of the accused. The reason was the emphasis on man being created in the image of God, and that human life and dignity were to be greatly valued.”¹²⁹

Moses even functioned as a Supreme Court (Exod. 18:13-16; Deut. 1:16-17, 19:15-21).

Judges are commanded to show honesty, refuse bribery, and reject favoritism (Exod. 23:1-8).

Implied in Deut. 17:6 is the concept of ‘innocent until proven guilty,’ as evident in the necessity of multiple witnesses:

“On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.” (Deut. 17:6)

H. Property Rights

Constitution of the United States

1. Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments: “life liberty and property,” “nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.”

Biblical Principle

“You shall not steal.” (Exodus 20:15)

“You shall not covet.” (Exodus 20:17)

Both imply rights of property, with a moral component attached against coveting the objects and persons of a

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* 373

¹²⁸ The heavy citations from Deuteronomy among the Founders can be found in the work of Lutz and Hyneman, as in *Table 1*.

¹²⁹ John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution*: 374.

neighbor (stressing ownership).

I. The Sanctity of Contract

Constitution of the United States

1. Article I, Section 10: States are forbidden to pass “Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts.”

Biblical Principle

Covenant Theology clearly has much to say about this subject, however we’ve discussed it in depth. The sacredness of an oath can be seen in Psalm 15:1, 4:

“O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent?
Who shall dwell on your holy hill? ... in
whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honors those who fear the LORD;
who swears to his own hurt and does not
change;” (Ps 15:1, 4)

J. Two Witnesses

Constitution of the United States

1. Article III, Section 3, Paragraph 1: “No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.”

Biblical Principle

“On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.” (Deut. 17:6)

“If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses. But no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness.” (Num. 35:50)

2. Amendment V: “nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself.”

“Jewish law not only did not require a person to incriminate himself; it also did not *allow* him to do so because self-incrimination was to participate in one’s own destruction which was suicide.”¹³⁰

K. Corruption of Blood

Constitution of the United States

1. Article III, Section 3, Paragraph 2: “no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attained.”

Biblical Principle

“Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.” (Deut 24:16)

“If a parent was convicted of treason, this did not affect the civil rights of his children. This is unlike the practice in many pagan nations of executing the convicted criminal and also his entire family (see Dan. 6:24).”¹³¹

L. Sundays Excepted

Constitution of the United States

1. Article I, Section 7, Paragraph 2: Regarding

Biblical Principle

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* 375

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 375

presidential veto power. “If any bills shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it.”

M. Separation of Church and State

Constitution of the United States

1. Amendment I: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.” (Exo. 20:8-10)

Biblical Principle

“King Saul was severely punished when he tried to usurp the function of the priesthood by offering sacrifices himself—his line was cut off from the kingship of Israel forever (1 Sam. 13). When King Uzziah tried to burn incense on the holy alter, God smote him with leprosy, and he remained a leper the rest of his life (2 Chron. 26:16-21). God seemed to be telling the civil rulers in these passages, keep your hands off the church.”¹³²

“He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Luke 20:25)

¹³² *Ibid.* 376

Appendix 8: First Prayer of Congress, 1774

I. The Environment Explained by John Adams:

“The subjoined extract of a characteristic letter from John Adams describing a scene in the first Congress in Philadelphia in 1774 shows very clearly on what Power the mighty men of old rested their cause Mr Adams thus wrote to a friend at the time When Congress met: ‘Mr Gushing made a motion that it should be opened with prayer It was opposed by Mr Jay of New York and Mr Rutledge of South Carolina because we were so divided in religious sentiments some Episcopalians some Quakers some Anabaptists some Presbyterians and some Congregationalists that we could not join in the same act of worship Mr Samuel Adams rose and said that he was no bigot and could hear a prayer from any good man of piety and virtue who was at the same time a friend to his country He was a stranger in Philadelphia but had heard that Mr Duche Dushay they pronounced it deserved that character and therefore he moved that Mr Duche an Episcopal clergyman might be desired to read prayers to the Congress to morrow morning This motion was seconded and passed in the affirmative Mr Randolph our President waited on Mr Duche and received for answer that if his health would permit he certainly would Accordingly next morning lie appeared with his clerk in his pontificals and read several prayers in the established form and he then read the collect for the seventh dify of September which was the thirty fifth Psalm You must remember this was the next morning after we had heard the rumour of the horrible cannonade of Boston It seemed as if Heaven had ordained that Psalm to be read on that morning After this Mr Duche unexpectedly to everybody struck out into an extemporary prayer which filled the bosom of every man present I must confess I never heard a better prayer or one so well pronounced Episcopalian as he is Dr Cooper himself never prayed with such fervour such ardour such correctness and pathos and in language so elegant and sublime for America for Congress for the province of the Massachusetts Bay especially the town of Boston It has had an excellent effect upon everybody here I must beg you to read that Psalm If there is any faith in the sortes Virgilianae or sortes Homericæ or especially the sortes Biblicæ it would be thought providential Here was a scene worthy of the painter's art It was in Carpenter's Hall Carpenter's Court between Third and Fourth streets Philadelphia a building which still survives in its original condition though now converted into an auction mart the forty four individuals met to whom this service was read Washington was kneeling there and Henry and Randolph and Rutledge and Lee and Jay and by their side there stood bowed down in reverence the Puritan Patriots of New Eng laud who at that moment had reason to believe that an armed soldiery was wasting their humble

households It was believed that Boston had been bombarded and destroyed They prayed fervently for America for the Congress for the province of Massachusetts Bay and especially for the town of Boston and who can realize the emotions with which they turned imploringly to heaven for divine interposition and aid It was enough says Mr Adams to melt a heart of stone I saw the tears gush into the eyes of the old grave pacific Quakers of Philadelphia.”¹³³

II. The First Prayer of Congress:

"O Lord Our Heavenly Father high and mighty King of Kings and Lord of Lords Who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers of the earth and reignest with power supreme and uncontrollable over the kingdoms empires and governments look down in mercy we beseech Thee on these American States who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on Thy gracious protection desiring to be henceforth only dependent on Thee to Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause to Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give Take them therefore Heavenly Father under Thy nurturing care give them wisdom in council and valor in the field Defeat the malicious designs of our adversaries convince them of the unrighteousness of their cause and if they still persist in their sanguinary purpose Oh let the Voice of Thy unerring justice sounding in their hearts constrain them to drop the weapons of war in their unnerved hands in the day of battle Be thou present O God of wisdom and direct the councils of this honorable assembly enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundation that the scene of blood may be speedily closed that order harmony and peace may be restored and truth and justice religion and piety prevail and flourish among the people Preserve the health of their bodies and the vigor of their minds shower down on them and the millions they here represent such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ Thy Son our Saviour amen."¹³⁴

¹³³ Frost, John. *Stories of the American Revolution: Comprising a Complete Anecdotic History of That Great National Event*. Philadelphia: E. Ferrett & Co, 1845: 145.

¹³⁴ Thatcher, James. "Military Journal." *A Magazine of Record and Review* Vol XXVIII New York: Current Literature Publishing, 1900.: 79-82.

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