

125.1 A Constitutional Quandary

Today I want to begin this podcast with the words of a commencement address to students over 200 years ago. I will tell you the speaker's name at the end. This is a bit long, but please hear these words.

You this day ... by the favor of Providence and the attention of friends, received a public education, the purpose whereof hath been to qualifying you the better to serve your Creator and your country. ... Your first great duties, ... are those you owe Heaven, to your Creator and Redeemer. Let these be ever present to your minds and exemplified in your lives and conduct. Imprint deep upon your minds the principles of piety towards God and a reverence and fear of His holy name. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" [Proverbs 9:10] and its consummation [practice] is everlasting felicity [happiness]. ... Remember that it is in God "you live and move and have your being" [Acts 17:28] – that in the language of David, "He is about your bed and about your path and Spieth out all your ways, that there is not a thought in your hearts, nor a word upon your tongues, but lo! He knoweth them altogether" [Psalm 139:1-4], and that He will one day call you into account for all your conduct in this mortal life [Romans 14:12]. Remember too, that you are "the redeemed of the LORD" [Psalm 107:2], that "you are bought with a price [1 Corinthians 6:20], even ... the "precious blood of the Son of God" [1 Peter 1:19]. Adore Jehovah therefore, as your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Acquaint yourselves with Him in His Word and holy ordinances ... Go forth into the world firmly resolved ... to "run with patience and perseverance" [Hebrews 12:1], ... Finally ... "Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things and do them, and the God of peace shall be with you" [Philippians 4:8-9] – to Whose most gracious protection I now commend you, ... that He will be your guardian and guide, your protector and the rock of your defense, your Savior and your God."

What would happen if someone made this commencement address to a modern graduating class? How would the ACLU or other Marxist organizations respond? How many court appearances would that person have to make?

William Samuel Johnson delivered that commencement address many years ago. If you are like me, you have no idea the significance of this man. Years ago, our students would have easily recognized his name, but we have lost much of our knowledge of our Founders and Framers. Johnson was an American Founding Father and statesman. He was a well-known Anglican clergyman and founding president of King's (Columbia) College. Among his political exploits, he was a member of the **Continental Congress** 1785-1787, a delegate to the Federal **Constitutional Convention** in Philadelphia in 1787, and one of the signers of the **Constitution**.

Our media, education system, and political leaders have brainwashed us into flipping the **First Amendment** on its head. The amendment reads in part:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, ...

Instead of limiting the government from interfering with Christians, we have turned it to saying that Christian Americans cannot engage the government. What part of "make no law" do we not get? Since we have the freedom of speech and religion, we have the inalienable and Constitutional right to speak our minds, including using scripture and the name of the Lord.

Pastor Johnson knew the document he signed and understood the amendments. He publicly addressed the graduates with direction from the word of God. He quotes at least nine scripture passages in this portion of his speech affirming the place of God in the students' public education.

Some time ago, **General Michael Flynn** guided us in determining what actions to take in our nation's crisis. He said we should ask three questions. "Is it biblical? Is it Constitutional? And, Is it logical?" Those are appropriate landmarks to check our positions.

Jesus challenged the Ephesian church in **Revelation 2:5** (NKJV) with this exhortation, "⁵**Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.**" How similar this sounds to the condition of America and most American churches. Instead of knowing and following our Constitution, we generally allow the government to silence freedoms of speech and religion.

On January 1, 1802, **President Thomas Jefferson** alleviated the Danbury, Connecticut Baptist Association's fears of persecution in a letter addressing their concerns. In that letter, he wrote:

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.

I am sure you noticed that Jefferson understood that the Great Wall of Separation was to keep the government out of the churches' business, not vice-versa. Throughout his career, the president was a proponent of Christianity and used the government to advance it. He called for legislation regarding days of fasting and prayer and using the US Capitol to host church services and at the War and Treasury Departments. He attended worship services in the Capitol regardless of weather conditions. As he stated, "No nation has ever yet existed or been governed without religion – nor can be. The Christian religion is the best religion that has been given to man and I, as Chief Magistrate of this nation, am bound to give it the sanction of my example."

In 1801, Jefferson wrote to **Gouverneur Morris** (a signer of the Constitution) describing America as a Christian nation. We cannot be a Christian nation if we exclude God from its workings; currently, we are not.

Since 1947, American courts have misinterpreted Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Connecticut Baptist Association. Jefferson did not repress public expressions of Christian faith. Instead, he reiterated the Constitution's limits on government interference, which we have allowed to go by the wayside. We have to look no further than the COVID Plan-demic to see that the government is too ready to dictate what churches should and should not do by labeling them "non-essential." American courts, in case after case, have struck down our God-given rights to publicly worship and freely speak about our God.

Louisiana has passed legislation to restore the Ten Commandments to their public school classrooms. The OK Education Superintendent Ryan Walters wants to do the same. We kicked God out of our schools in the 1960s, and we must return His presence to our education centers.

Things would change if American Christians woke from their slumber and decided to support the Constitution as our ancestors did. Our politicians would do more than lip service to their constituents and find ways to reengage the nation with God. We will not solve our political, economic, and educational dilemmas until we invite God back into America.

Keep The Light of Rising from Where We Have Fallen Burning!

GodNAmerica.com

GodNAmerica@gmail.com

405.361.3123