

## SABBATH THOUGHT 2025-09-20—FREEDOM OF RELIGION

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

Article I of the US Bill of Rights says, "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*"

There are six distinct points in Article I; the first being religion. In those times, "respect" means to have regard or consideration, whether for OR against. Article I forbids any laws that *accept* or *reject*, *recognize* or *deny* religion and the *application* or *keeping* of it. Note that they did NOT say religions plural—the Founders referred only to one particular religion whose God they named four times in the Declaration of Independence—"Nature's God," "Creator," "Supreme Judge," and "Providence". Article I REQUIRES understanding what religion meant to the Founders.

In days when the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights were penned, there was ONE religion and it was based upon the Bible. Religion in those days had a real and palpable objective meaning—it was not rooted in the subjective opinions or interpretations of individuals. Nor was it synonymous with a morality or conscience. Religion, above all, was rooted in a relationship with the Creator of all life.<sup>1</sup>

Lest someone think their religion was an irrelevancy of Deism, the vast majority (all but one or two) of the 56 signers were Christians and half had the equivalency of college theology degrees. But this would be no surprise since belief in the God of the Bible was required by the 13 independent colonies—ALL of them mandated that officeholders (citizens as well in some) declare their faith and allegiance to the God of the Bible. Delaware, for example, required the oath "I, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Ghost."

The Religion of the Founders (indicated throughout by a capital 'R') was a humble relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law, which, for them, was absolute, inalienable, inviolate, and immutable. Religion for the Founders was a NECESSITY for life and the God of the Bible was beyond question or doubt. This is why the modern interpretation<sup>2</sup> of the "wall of separation"<sup>3</sup> that religion should not influence government is utter nonsense. For the Founders, all of life, especially a governing body, could never be separated from God.

Because Religion was integral to their existence, protecting it was the objective of the last four points of Article I. The primary concern for the Founders was ensuring that their Religion remained unrestrained, unencumbered, and disentangled from government. Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Press, Freedom of Assembly, and

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<sup>1</sup> [A Historical, Philosophical, and Etymological Study of the Word "Religion" as Used in the First Amendment: Coming to a Textually-Based Definition.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Everson v. Board of Education \(1947\).](#)

<sup>3</sup> Penned by Thomas Jefferson in a letter discussing the Article I establishment clause.

Right to Petition for Grievances ensured Freedom of RELIGION. Religion was the MOTIVE for the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

God and His Law were so integral to the Founders that they did not include crimes in the Constitution or Bill of Rights. Nowhere do they mention murder, adultery, theft, false testimony, or any other crimes and, yet, these will destroy any society or country if they go unchecked. Why the omission? The Law of God contained the criminal statutes and judgments:

DEUTERONOMY 4:5-6, 8 “Surely I [*Moses*] have **taught you statutes and judgments**, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to *them* in the land which you go to possess. 6 “Therefore be careful to observe *them*; for this *is* **your wisdom and your understanding** in the sight of the peoples who will hear **all these statutes**, and say, ‘Surely **this great nation is a wise and understanding people.**’ ... 8 “And what great nation *is there* that has *such* **statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law** which I set before you this day?”

The Law of God completely satisfied the need for criminal codes in the Constitution or Bill of Rights; therefore, they created a form of government to uphold the supremacy of the Law of God. The Constitution established a framework that distributed power among the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. The Bill of Rights, on the other hand, guaranteed rights of the citizenry that could not be impugned or tampered with by the government. Above all, the purpose of these documents was to safeguard Freedom of Religion—a humble relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law. Notice what the Founders proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence:

“... [I]t is necessary for one people ... to assume among the powers [*nations, governments*] of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them ... 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 ...”

The Founders declared that the Law of God was “separate and equal” to laws of all civil *governments* and “unalienable” (inviolable) for all *people*. In effect, they stated that the Law of God trumped all manmade laws. Why? They believed that God “gave them [His] statutes and showed them [His] judgments, which, **if a man does, he shall live by them.**”<sup>4</sup> Experience had proven that only the Law of God produced maximum benefits of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” The Founders were in universal agreement on this. They might debate the pro forma of Religion but none denied the immutability and benefits of the Law of God.

But religion today is not even a shadow of the Religion of the Founders. It can be realistically described as a variety of organized corporate businesses with differing doctrines wrapped around an uncertain and not-so-real God. And that is why the USA is doomed. The government of the Founders is completely incompatible with a nation that has rejected the Religion upon which it was purposed. The sole reason

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<sup>4</sup> Ezek. 20:11.

for government is to protect the interests of its citizens. The Constitution and Bill of Rights were designed for a nation whose Religion was a relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law. But this lasted a mere two or three generations before citizens began to reject God as the Authority in their lives and abandon the Religion that the government was designed to defend.

Nowadays, Article I freedoms are abused and violated but people want to restore them by ironically demanding MORE laws and accountability (whatever that means). They utterly fail to accept the real problem. There is no possibility of, or purpose for, Freedom of Speech or any other Article I rights without the Religion of the Founders. In rejecting God, the people subsequently lost all of them.

Think about it. Without Religion, what exactly IS Freedom of Speech? A common belief is it is the right to say whatever comes to mind without regard for the cost to others or an expectation of personal consequences. But is that even rational? Is the pornography of Larry Flynn Freedom of Speech? Are demands for abortion Freedom of Speech? Is teaching children sexual perversions and transgenderism Freedom of Speech? Are threats against others Freedom of Speech? Is maligning others Freedom of Speech? Is burning the flag Freedom of Speech? Are calls for the destruction of Christians and the USA Freedom of Speech? Is cursing God Freedom of Speech? The modern permissiveness under Freedom of Speech invokes all of these. Until recent times, there were laws that prohibited perjury, slander, libel, threats, and moral allegiance to any other nation. Violations incurred serious punishments. Today, perpetrators are called victims according to nihilistic judges (unless the defendant is a political enemy).

If Freedom of Speech was never intended to allow every kind of speech, then what determines the limits? Religion. Instead of being independent, Freedom of Speech was protection for Freedom of Religion and, in turn, Freedom of Religion defined limits on Freedom of Speech. The Law of God codifies false testimony, perjury, slander, libel, verbal threats, lying, gossip, corrupt speech, cursing, abusive language, or evil speaking against man or God<sup>5</sup> as crimes (sins). Prohibiting these is TRUE Freedom of Speech. Freedom and Rights are enjoyed only by a people who are self-governed in accordance with God and His Law.

But do not think that this is simply a civil matter. Many church organizations have denied their members the freedoms in Article I in the name of a religion that is completely contrary to the Founder's Religion. Ask yourself, do they allow open discussion of doctrines (beliefs)? Do they allow public expression of personal thoughts and ideas that contradict theirs? Do they allow free assembly with members of different organizations? When there is disagreement, do they sincerely address those grievances? If you answer 'yes' to ALL these questions, then you *might* have Freedom of Religion. If you answered 'no' to ANY of these questions, then you do NOT have Freedom of Religion. Instead, the organization makes their own "law respecting an establishment of religion" (they establish rules that violate the Law of God) and are "prohibiting the free exercise of religion" (they determine acceptable doctrines and beliefs).

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<sup>5</sup> Exod 20:16; Prov. 6:16-19; Matt. 5:22; Eph. 4:29, 31.

Those in a humble relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law—Religion with a capital 'R'—have been "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21). Freedom of Religion is abiding in the liberty of God, not the tyranny of men:

PSALMS 119:41-46 Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD— **Your salvation according to Your word.** 42 **So shall I have an answer** for him who reproaches me, for **I trust in Your word.** 43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for **I have hoped in Your ordinances.** 44 So **shall I keep Your law** continually, forever and ever. 45 And **I will walk at liberty,** for **I seek Your precepts.** 46 **I will speak of Your testimonies** also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

The first person singular points to an individual and personal relationship with God and His Law—called Freedom of Religion by the Founders—that was written into the Bill of Rights. But churches today present a false religion that suppresses Speech, Press, Assembly, and Petition of Grievances by their dictates that stifle the liberty of a direct and personal relationship with God in accordance with His Law. The Bible never gave any minister RULERSHIP<sup>6</sup> over anyone—this was the sole responsibility of the citizenry; the *ekklesia*<sup>7</sup> of God. But churches usurp God's authority and become despots and tyrants like King George III.

The Founders immigrated to escape religious persecution. They fought and died so they and their children could have Religion—a relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights only function for a Religion based upon the God of the Bible:

GALATIANS 2:19-20 "For **I [Paul] through the law died to the law that I might live to God.** 20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,** who loved me and gave Himself for me.

It could be said that the rebellion against England was wrapped in civil disputes, as detailed in the 27 Facts submitted in the Declaration of Independence. While true, these 27 Facts were all rooted in repressing Religion; specifically, the preeminence of the Law of God. The Founders wrote that the abuses of England "*evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism*" and that the "*King of Great Britain [has] a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny.*" Despotism and tyranny are the exercise of absolute power with utter disregard for the supremacy of the Law of God. King George III, simply speaking, "regarded [God's] **law as void**"<sup>8</sup> as the 27 Facts proved. The Founders held tightly to a relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law that the King attempted to supplant. There is no question that the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights were all designed to protect Freedom of Religion.

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<sup>6</sup> Matt. 20:26; Mark 9:35; 10:43; 1 Pet. 5:3.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. 91:13.

Ignorance of the importance Religion played in the founding of this country is heard constantly from public voices in their desperate cries to counter the unprecedented levels of anger, hatred, malice, violence, murders, and rioting that continue to rise. The solution, according to liberals, conservatives, public officials, judges, and media talking heads, is a return to family values, tolerance, kindness, more laws, etc. But, “professing to be wise, they became fools”<sup>9</sup> in the eyes of God:

**JEREMIAH 4:22 “For *My [the LORD’s]* people are foolish, they have not known Me. They are silly children, and they have no understanding. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.”**

Nothing will be solved in this country because the people REJECTED Religion—any relationship with the Creator God in accordance with of His Law. Once this occurs, history shows there is no recovery. The reasoning behind all the proposed solutions is the same that created the problems; they reject God for the same reasons they will never turn back to Him—they are rebellious and refuse to repent. The leaders in government, industry, media, AND churches failed the people and all will soon see the fruits of the godlessness that they demanded:

**PROVERBS 29:2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but *when a wicked man rules, the people groan.***

**ISAIAH 9:16 For *the leaders of this people cause them to err, and those who are led by them are destroyed.***

**HOSEA 4:6 *My [the LORD’s] people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge,* I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because *you have forgotten the law of your God,* I also will forget your children.**

Regardless of the obstacles, the Founders never stopped fighting for the freedom to have a relationship with the Creator God in accordance with His Law—even if they paid with their lives. In the end, Article I was lost. However, there is coming a New Government that will forever establish Freedom of Religion:

**PSALMS 47:1-2 ... Shout to God with the voice of triumph! 2 For *the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.***

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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<sup>9</sup> Rom. 1:22. Also Ps. 94:3-8; Jer. 5:21.