

## The Myths Taught Concerning The Separation Of Church And State

The phrase "separation of church and state" has been used so often by courts and other organizations that many believe it to be a part of the First Amendment of the Constitution. The phrase, however, is nowhere stated in the Constitution or other founding documents. The First Amendment was never intended to remove God from the government. The First Amendment does say, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . ."

The First Amendment is a constitutional prohibition of a government sponsored religion. The founders' purpose was to prevent the formation of a single denomination created and operated by the government as had occurred in Great Britain with the Church of England. The First Amendment simply prohibits the U.S. government from creating and operating a church or interfering with the religious practices of its citizens.

In an attempt to erode and destroy the religious principles on which America was founded, some have misapplied the First Amendment to mean that any religious activity in public is unconstitutional using the fabricated disguise of "separation of church and state." This has now evolved into court ordered bans which have falsely declared it unconstitutional to pray in school or at public meetings, unconstitutional to display the Ten Commandments in schools and other government buildings.

Many are actively seeking legislation which will exclude any mention of God or any display of religious connotation in the public square. Such religious exclusion is undoubtedly counter to the intentions of the First Amendment and the founding fathers. God is the foundation upon which the American republic was built. Its currency bears the inscription of its motto, "In God We Trust," and citizens pledge allegiance to a "Nation under God." President Eisenhower said of these words in the pledge of allegiance, "They will help us to keep constantly in our minds and hearts the spiritual and moral principles which alone give dignity to man, and upon which our way of life is founded."

## GOD'S HAND IN THE FOUNDING OF AMERICA

The Founding Fathers relied upon and called upon God for assistance. They frequently declared that God's hand was working through them in the founding of America. James Madison commonly called the Father of the Constitution, recognized God's hand in the rising of America. He concluded his inaugural address as President of the United States on March 4, 1809 with this statement, ". . . we have all been encouraged to fell in the guardianship and guidance of the Almighty Being whose power regulates the destiny of nations, whose blessings have been so conspicuously displayed to the rising of this republic, and to whom we are bound to address our devout gratitude for the past, as well as our fervent supplications and best hopes for the future."

In a motion for daily prayers in the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin declared, "God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this, and I also believe without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

## GEORGE WASHINGTON-SERVANT RAISED UP AND PROTECTED BY GOD

George Washington was born in what is now modern day Virginia on February 22, 1732 to Mary Ball and Augustine Washington. George Washington's character was formed and developed early in his youth. His parents instilled in him the values found in the Bible. At a very early age George Washington was required to memorize the Ten Commandments. George's father made it crystal clear that a member of the Washington family does not lie, steal, or cheat. These early lessons prepared him for the inspired missions he completed later in his life.

In 1754, Washington, age 22, was a colonel in the British army and fought in many battles during the French and Indian war. One such battle was the battle at the Monongahela on July 9, 1755 in which the British were ambushed by a party of the French and Indians. The British suffered a decisive defeat with 714 of the 1,300 soldiers being killed or wounded while only 60 of the French and Indians were killed or wounded. During the battle, all of the mounted officers of the British army were slain or disabled except for Washington. This made him an obvious and important target as he moved about on horseback commanding the soldiers.

Dr. James Craik, a military surgeon, who witnessed the events of the battle, recorded this regarding Washington, "I expected every moment to see him fall. His duty and situation exposed him to every danger. Nothing but the superintending care of Providence could have saved him from the fate of all around him."

Following the battle, Washington wrote to his brother, John, saying, ". . . by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I have been protected

beyond all human probability, or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, though death was leveling my companions on every side of me!"

An Indian warrior who played a leading part in this bloody battle stated, "Washington was never born to be killed by a bullet! For I had seventeen fair fires at him with my rifle, and after all could not bring him to the ground." Another distinguished young Indian warrior, Redhawk, became acquainted with a doctor, Daniel Craig. In a conversation with the doctor, Redhawk inquired what young officer it was who rode with great speed from post to post during the action. The doctor replied, "Colonel Washington." Redhawk immediately stated, "I fired eleven deliberate shots at that man, but could not touch him. I gave over any further attempt, believing he was protected by the Great Spirit, and could not be killed."

In 1758, Washington resigned from active military duty and worked as a Virginia planter and politician. In 1770, Colonel Washington and some woodmen were locating lands in Kanawha, present day Ohio and West Virginia, when they were approached by a group of Indians. One of the Indians who led the attack at Monongahela on the British 15 years earlier approached Washington and said through an interpreter, "I am a chief and ruler over many tribes. My influence extends to the waters of the great lakes, and to the far Blue Mountains. I have traveled a long and weary path, that I might see the young warrior of the great battle. It was on the day, when the white man's blood mixed with the streams of our forest, that I first beheld this chief [pointing to Washington]: I called to my young men and said, mark yon tall and daring warrior? . . . Quick, let your aim be certain, and he dies. Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for him, knew not how to miss—'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we, shielded him from harm. He cannot die in battle. I am old, and soon shall be gathered to the great council-fire of my fathers, in the land of shades, but ere I go, there is a something bids me speak in the voice of prophecy. Listen! The Great Spirit protects that man, and guides his destinies—he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire."

The prophecy of the Indian chief would soon be fulfilled as Washington took a leading role in the growing resistance of the American colonies to British rule in the early 1770's. Fighting began on April 19, 1775 with the Battles of Lexington and Concord to begin the Revolutionary War. On June 14, 1775, congress created the Continental Army and selected Washington as commander-in-chief. The fight for freedom and the creation of a mighty empire had begun.

Washington led the Continental Army in numerous battles. In each battle, Washington escaped unharmed. The Continental Army suffered much sickness, privations and death over the eight years of the Revolutionary War, but Washington's courage, will, and reliance on the power and guidance of the Almighty led the colonies to an eventual victory over the Kingdom of Great Britain. In 1783, the Treaty of Paris officially ended the Revolutionary War and a new Nation was born, even the United States of America. To bring about this noble purpose, God raised up, protected and guided George Washington.

After victory, there were desires by some to make Washington king. The first Congress voted to pay Washington a salary of \$25,000 a year (approx. \$500,000 in 2006 dollars). Washington, however, chose to continue his work as an unpaid servant of the people for during his years as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army he took no pay. He would do the same during his 8 years as the first President of the United States. He exemplified the word of the Savior found in the Bible, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

In 1797, as he ended his presidency, Washington delivered a farewell address which emphasized the proper role and function of government. In this address he stated, "Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness. . . . It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government." Washington had completed his divinely inspired work and would shortly be taken home to the God who gave him life.

On December 14, 1799, at age 67, George Washington died, but the Nation he brought to life lives on. At his death, Congressman Henry Lee said of Washington, "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen. . . . Correct throughout, vice shuddered in his presence and virtue always felt his fostering hand; the purity of his private character gave effulgence to his public virtues. . . . Such was the man for whom our nation mourns."

Washington was a patriot whose soul did joy in the liberty and freedom of his country. A man more concerned with deeds than words, who fought and labored exceedingly for his people. Through his firm faith in Christ and selfless devotion to country, he lived his motto, "For God and my Country."

## CONCLUSION

The famous French historian Alexis de Tocqueville traveled to America in the early 1800's to find out what made America great. He said, "I sought for

the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world of commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”

### About the Author

Cameron C. Taylor is the author of the book "Does Your Bag Have Holes? 24 Truths That Lead to Financial and Spiritual Freedom." Content for this article was taken from chapter 7 of this book. Table of Contents and sample chapters are available online at <http://www.DoesYourBagHaveHoles.org>

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