

Slide 1



---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

Slide 2

RESTORE

Dates stay the same, but the order of the topics is different.

September 21	The Genius of the Federal System: The Seed of Local Self-Government
October 5	Pennsylvania's Christian History and Constitution
October 19	Looking at Lancaster County: Why "Off-year" Elections Matter



---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 3

America's Founding  
Documents

The Biblical Christian Expression of Civil Government



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Slide 4

### America Stands at the Crossroads

Go stand at the crossroads and look around.  
Ask for directions to the old road,  
The tried-and-true road. Then take it.  
Discover the right route for your souls.  
But they said, 'Nothing doing.  
We aren't going that way.'  
I even provided watchmen for them  
to warn them, to set off the alarm.  
But the people said, 'It's a false alarm.  
It doesn't concern us.'  
Jeremiah 6:16-17



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Slide 5

### A Quick Review of Our Presuppositions:

- God is sovereign over all His creation.
- The natural state of mankind is that of individual liberty.
- As a result of the fall of Adam and Eve, civil government was established to protect man from man.
- God sent a Redeemer, who gave His church the authority to bring His Kingdom (God's government) to bear on earth.
- The United States of America was established by reasoning from the Biblical principles of Christianity.
- If we abandon God and His law, we lose our identity and liberty.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Slide 6

### A Reminder

The Bible reveals that the purpose of civil government is limited to

- Protect the rights of individuals and
- Punish evil doers

Philosophers and scholars from antiquity have reasoned to this very point with (and without) reference to the Bible because it is part of the Law of Nature and of Nature's God (i.e., baked into creation).  
See Psalm 19 and Romans 1.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 7

### Organic Law of the United States of America

Organic, a. Instrumental; acting as instruments of nature or art to a certain end.”  
Webster, 1828

Organic Law is seen as the “fundamental law” of the United States

The *United States Code Annotated* identifies these four alone:

1. **The Declaration of Independence** (1776)
2. **The Articles of Confederation** (1777; ratified in 1781)
3. **The Northwest Ordinance** (1787; reauthorized in 1789)
4. **The Constitution of the United States of America** (1787; effective in 1789 after 9 states had ratified it. The last state did so in 1790)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


Slide 8

### Foundation

In John Wycliffe's translation of the Bible into English (1382), the General Prologue states this purpose:

**“This Bible is for the Government  
of the People,  
by the People,  
and for the People.”**

Also, quoted by J. Locke and A. Lincoln



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 9

### The Declaration of Independence

“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.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...”



---

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

Slide 10

### The Back Story

“The first human subject and original of civil power is the people...and when they are free, they may set up what species of government they please. The end of all good government is to cultivate humanity and promote the happiness of all, and the good of every man in all his rights, his life, liberty, estate, honor, etc., without injury or abuse done to any.”— **Rev. John Wise**, Chebacco Parish of Ipswich (Essex), MA, circa 1700

<https://historicipswich.org/2021/07/24/john-wise/>



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 11

Rev. John Wise (1652 – 1725)  
**“*Founder of American Democracy*”**

- “It has been asserted that John Wise was the first man in America to thus maintain the just prerogatives of the people in defiance of government.
- [His second] “essay marks him as the earliest political philosopher in America and in it the sentiments of the Declaration of Independence are expressed in language as clear and as strong as in that of Jefferson’s famous document.”
- “All men are born free, and nature having set all men upon a level and made them equals, no servitude or subjection can be conceived without inequality.”

[J. Mackaye, The New England magazine, 1887](#) as cited in <https://historicipswich.org/2021/07/24/john-wise/>.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 12

Anglo-Saxons		
Hebrew Republic		
<p><b>“Ancient Principles”</b> <b><i>The Constitutional Pattern</i></b></p> <p>Thomas Jefferson</p>		

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 13

Ancient Principles – Seeds of America's Founding

- The belief in a Supreme Creator is the foundation of good government.
- The Supreme Creator created all humans equal in value, in their rights, before the seat of justice, in His sight, but not in talents, gifts, & property.
- The great natural rights of mankind are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Natural rights are inalienable; vested rights are created by man and protect the natural rights.
- Only individuals have natural rights; groups have rights only as individuals give their consent to give up their rights for the good of the group.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 14

Why the Declaration is Important

1. It is a declaration of **liberty for the individual** (the natural state of human beings).
2. It acknowledges that **God is the ultimate authority** over our nation. "We have no king but Jesus!" – the rallying cry of the Colonists.
3. It affirms that government must be established by the consent of the people.
4. It established the principle that a government can only be changed when a majority of its citizen agree. In other words, use the power of persuasion rather than arbitrary force.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 15

Why the Declaration is Important

"The assertion of that principle, at that time, was the word, 'fitly spoken' which has proved an 'apple of gold' to us. The Union, and the Constitution, are the picture of silver, subsequently framed around it. The picture was made, not to conceal, or destroy the apple; but to adorn, and preserve it. The picture was made for the apple--not the apple for the picture."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN - "Fragment on the Constitution and the Union"  
c. 1860. - Referring to Proverbs 25:11 in relation to the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 16

Why the Declaration is Important

- In 1897, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the Constitution was the “body and letter” of our government, while the Declaration of Independence was the “thought and the spirit.”
- At least 100 U.S. Supreme Court opinions made reference to the Declaration.
- Abolitionists frequently referenced the Declaration in making their case against slavery, leading to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment.



• [GULF, C. & S. F. R. CO. v. ELLIS](#)  
• [165 U.S. 150 \(1897\)](#)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 17

The Articles of Confederation

- Articles of Association (1766)
- Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union (1777, ratified in 1781)
- Full Name: “Articles of Confederation and perpetual Union between the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts-bay Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.”

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 18

Why No for the Articles of Confederation?

1. Failure of the States to comply with the Requisitions.
2. The States encroachment on Federal authority.
3. Violations of the Law of Nations (Treaties).
4. Trespasses by the States on the rights of each other.
5. Lack of concerted action where the general good was at stake.
6. Violence as a remedy for will by a more capable minority.
7. Want of ratification of the Articles by the people (rather than States.)
8. Multiplicity, mutability, and unjust laws in the States

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

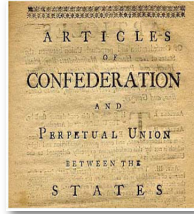
---

## Slide 19

### Articles of Confederation

Were it not for the multiple deficiencies in the Articles we would not have the Constitution

Still ten features were carried forward into the Constitution



---

---

---

---

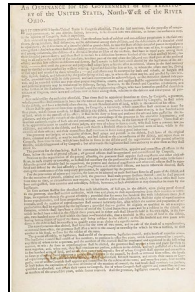
---

---

---

---

## Slide 20



### The Northwest Ordinance...

adopted July 13, 1787, by the Confederation Congress, chartered a government for the Northwest Territory (renewed in 1789)

"provided a method for admitting new states to the Union from the territory, and listed a bill of rights guaranteed in the territory. Following the principles outlined by Thomas Jefferson in the Ordinance of 1784, the authors of the Northwest Ordinance (probably Nathan Dane and Rufus King) spelled out a plan that was subsequently used as the country expanded to the Pacific."

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=8#>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Slide 21

The following three principal provisions were ordained in the document:

(1) a division of the Northwest Territory into "**not less than three nor more than five States**";

(2) **a three-stage method for admitting a new state to the Union**—with a congressionally appointed governor, secretary, and three judges to rule in the first phase; an elected assembly and one nonvoting delegate to Congress to be elected in the second phase, when the population of the territory reached "five thousand free male inhabitants of full age"; and a state constitution to be drafted and membership to the Union to be requested in the third phase when the population reached 60,000; and (

3) **a bill of rights protecting religious freedom, the right to a writ of habeas corpus, the benefit of trial by jury, and other individual rights.**

In addition, the ordinance **encouraged education and forbade slavery.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

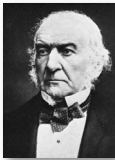
Slide 22

### The Constitution of the United States of America

Lincoln's "Picture of Silver" that holds the "Gold"

"The American Constitution is, so far as I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

William Gladstone  
British Prime Minister  
1868–1874



---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---


Slide 23

### The Constitution of the United States of America

"For my own part, I sincerely esteem it [the Constitution] a system which without the finger of God, never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests." Alexander Hamilton



"I do not believe that the Constitution was the offspring of inspiration, but I am as perfectly satisfied that the Union of the States in its form and adoption is as much the work of a Divine Providence as any of the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testament." Benjamin Rush



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 24


### The Historical Roots of Our US Constitution

☞ The Hebrew Republic

"Much of western constitutionalism originated in the Hebrew polity found in the Books of Moses."

Sir William Blackstone

Quoted in *The Biblical Roots of the American Republic*, 2011, by John W Zull



William Blackstone

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Slide 25

### The Historical Roots of Our US Constitution

Among the **Biblical** texts America's Founders thought offered useful guidance on republican government and political leadership were:

- Exodus 18:13-27
- Deuteronomy 1:9-18
- Deuteronomy 16:18-20

83 “The Hebrew commonwealth, they believed, was republican in form, committed to political liberty and the rule of law, and characterized by representative government and the voluntary consent of the governed.”

*Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, p. 84  
Daniel L. Dreisbach, 2017

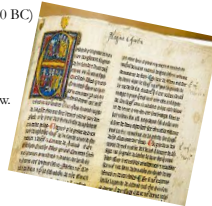
## Slide 26

### The Historical Roots of Our US Constitution

84 The Hebrew Republic (c. 1000 BC- c. 1000 BC)

84 **Magna Carta (1215 AD)**

- ☐ Placed limits on the powers of the King
- ☐ Declared that the King is not above the Law.
- ☐ Affirmed individual (natural) rights, many of which were included in the US Bill of Rights (and other colonial/state documents).



## Slide 27

### Clear echoes of Magna Carta in the U.S. Constitution


“No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, ... except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.” (Magna Carta)

“...nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” (14<sup>th</sup> Amendment)



Slide 28

The Historical Roots of Our US Constitution



- § The Hebrew Republic
- § Magna Carta
- § Colonial Charters

***The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut***  
(Said to be the first American Constitution)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 29

Fundamental Orders of Connecticut - 1639

For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God by the wise disposition of his divine providence so to order and dispose of things that we the Inhabitants and Residents of Windsor, Hartford and Wethersfield are now cohabiting and dwelling in and upon the River of Connectecotte and the lands thereunto adjoining; and well knowing where a people are gathered together the word of God requires that to maintain the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require; do therefore associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one Public State or Commonwealth; and do for ourselves and our successors and such as shall be adjoined to us at any time hereafter, enter into Combination and Confederation together, to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus which we now profess, as also, the discipline of the Churches, which according to the truth of the said Gospel is now practiced amongst us; as also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed according to such Laws, Rules, Orders and Decrees as shall be made, ordered, and decreed ...

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

Slide 30

The Historical Roots of Our US Constitution

- § The Hebrew Republic
- § Magna Carta
- § Colonial Charters, often affirming natural rights
- § Declaration of Independence
- § Articles of Confederation
- § State Constitutions/BORs
- § The Constitution of the United States of America



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 31

## The Uniqueness of Our US Constitution

"The Americans are the first people whom Heaven has favored with an opportunity of deliberating upon, and choosing the forms of government under which they should live. All other constitutions have derived their existence from violence or accidental circumstances."

John Jay  
First Chief Justice,  
US Supreme Court



Charge to the Grand Jury of Ulster County, NY, 8 September 1777

## Slide 32

## Founding Principles of our US Constitution

Christian Influences:

- 80 “[T]he Bible waited at the Constitutional Convention as authority in  
81 support of or opposition to specific provisions.”
- 82 Example: Benjamin Franklin reminded the delegates: “We should  
83 remember the character which the Scriptures requires in Rulers.”
- 84 Franklin’s reference to Exodus 18:21 was the deciding factor in rejecting a  
85 property requirement for Representatives.

(Daniel Dreisbach, p. 85)

## Slide 33

## Founding Principles of our US Constitution

Other remarks during the convention by several different delegates plainly pointed to these verses:

Matthew 9:16	Genesis 4:15
Matthew 12:25	Genesis 11:9
Matthew 10:29	Psalms 127:1
Luke 12:20	Ecclesiastes 7:16
2 Corinthians 9:7	Revelation 13:17
Philippians 4:5	

Source: "Finding God in the Constitutional Convention," by Bill Fortenberry

Slide 34

Founding Principles of our US Constitution

Christian Influences in the document itself

- 80 The Presentment Clause gives the President 10 days to consider the veto of a bill, not including Sundays. (Ex 20:8-10)
  - o This clearly honors the Christian Sabbath.
- 80 Two or more witnesses are required for a charge of treason. (Deut 19:15)
- 80 Although no Religious Tests can be used, solemn oaths are still required of elected officials. The Bible is often used.

"I am persuaded that no civil government of a republican form can exist & be durable, in which the principles of [the Christian] religion have not a controlling influence." Noah Webster, to James Madison, 16 October 1829

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 35

So, What About a Theocracy?

Next time we will answer this question as we examine the Christian form of our Government

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 36

Questions and Comments



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 37



---

---

---

---

---

---

---