

“One Nation, Under God”
Deut. 8:10-18
August 23, 2009
Faith Community Fellowship
Massillon, OH

Documentation of References

The case for faith in God as the foundation of civil liberty in the early life of our country is incontestable.

The Declaration of Independence:

Voted by Congress, July 4, 1776:

*When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which **the Laws of Nature and Nature’s God** entitle them,...*

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, **that they are endowd by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights**,*

*...We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, the General Congress, Assembled, **appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions**,....*

*...And for the support of the Declaration, **with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence**, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.*

The Virginia Declaration of Rights

Written by George Mason, adopted by the Virginia Constitutional Convention, June 12, 1776:

A Declaration of rights made by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention which rights to pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of government...

*Section 16. **That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, nor by force or violence; and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love and charity toward each other.***

The Northwest Ordinance, voted by Congress in 1787 regulating the colonies at the time:

Section 14, Article 3. **Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind**, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.....

The Bill of Rights

The establishment clause: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Voted by Congress and sent to the states for ratification, September, 1789.

Rev. Samuel Provost **voted Chaplain of the Senate, with stipend**, at the same session, April 25, 1789.

Rev. William Linn, **voted Chaplain of the House, with stipend**, at the same session, May 1, 1789.

There was no contradiction between these actions and the establishment clause in the minds of Congress at the time. Congress was reacting against the establishment of religion as it was legislated in Europe at the time.

National Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer

From the presidential proclamation issued by George Washington in October, 1789, upon the completion of Congress’ work, including the Bill of Rights:

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor – and Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me “to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.....

The State Constitutions

Each of the 50 state constitutions of the United States have a reference to God/divinity in their preamble, from Virginia and Maryland in 1776 to Hawaii in 1959:

Alabama 1901, Preamble We the people of the State of Alabama, invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish the following Constitution.

Alaska 1956, Preamble We, the people of Alaska, grateful to God and to those who founded our nation and pioneered this great land.

Arizona 1911, Preamble We, the people of the State of Arizona, grateful to Almighty God for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution...

Arkansas 1874, Preamble We, the people of the State of Arkansas, grateful to Almighty God for the privilege of choosing our own form of government...

California 1879, Preamble We, the People of the State of California, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom.

Colorado 1876, Preamble We, the people of Colorado, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of Universe.

Connecticut 1818, Preamble. The People of Connecticut, acknowledging with gratitude the good Providence of God in permitting them to enjoy.

Delaware 1897, Preamble Through Divine Goodness all men have, by nature, the rights of worshipping and serving their Creator according to the dictates of their consciences.

Florida 1885, Preamble We, the people of the State of Florida, grateful to Almighty God for our constitutional liberty, establish this Constitution...

Georgia 1777, Preamble We, the people of Georgia, relying upon protection and

guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish this Constitution...

Hawaii 1959, Preamble We, the people of Hawaii, Grateful for Divine Guidance .
Establish this Constitution.

Idaho 1889, Preamble We, the people of the State of Idaho, grateful to Almighty God
for our freedom, to secure its blessings.

Illinois 1870, Preamble We, the people of the State of Illinois, grateful to Almighty God
for the civil l, political and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy
and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors.

Indiana 1851, Preamble We, the People of the State of Indiana, grateful to Almighty
God for the free exercise of the right to choose our form of government.

Iowa 1857, Preamble We, the People of the State of Iowa, grateful to the Supreme Being
for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation
of these blessings establish this Constitution.

Kansas 1859, Preamble We, the people of Kansas, grateful to Almighty God for our
civil and religious privileges establish this Constitution.

Kentucky 1891, Preamble. We, the people of the Commonwealth are grateful to
Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties...

Louisiana 1921, Preamble We, the people of the State of Louisiana, grateful to
Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties we enjoy.

Maine 1820, Preamble. We the People of Maine acknowledging with grateful hearts the
goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity ... And
imploring His aid and direction.

Maryland 1776, Preamble We, the people of the state of Maryland, grateful to Almighty
God for our civil and religious liberty...

Massachusetts 1780, Preamble We...the people of Massachusetts, acknowledging with
grateful hearts, the goodness of the Great Legislator of the Universe In the course of His
Providence, an opportunity and devoutly imploring His direction ..

Michigan 1908, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Michigan, grateful to
Almighty God for the blessings of freedom establish this Constitution.

Minnesota, 1857, Preamble We, the people of the State of Minnesota, grateful to God
for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings:

Mississippi 1890, Preamble We, the people of Mississippi in convention assembled,
grateful to Al mighty God, and invoking His blessing on our work.

Missouri 1845, Preamble We, the people of Missouri, with profound reverence for the
Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and grateful for His goodness . Establish this
Constitution

Montana 1889, Preamble. We, the people of Montana, grateful to Almighty God for the
blessings of liberty establish this Constitution

Nebraska 1875, Preamble We, the people, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom .
Establish this Constitution.

Nevada 1864, Preamble We the people of the State of Nevada, grateful to Almighty God
for our freedom establish this Constitution

New Hampshire 1792, Part I. Art. I. Sec. V Every individual has a natural and
unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

New Jersey 1844, Preamble We, the people of the State of New Jersey, grateful to
Almighty God for civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy,

and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors.

New Mexico 1911, Preamble We, the People of New Mexico, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty

New York 1846, Preamble We, the people of the State of New York, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, in order to secure its blessings.

North Carolina 1868, Preamble We the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for our civil, political, and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those

North Dakota 1889, Preamble We, the people of North Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, do ordain...

Ohio 1852, Preamble We the people of the state of Ohio, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings and to promote our common welfare, do establish this Constitution.

Oklahoma 1907, Preamble Invoking the guidance of Almighty God, in order to secure and perpetuate the blessings of liberty ... establish this

Oregon 1857, Bill of Rights, Article I. Section 2. All men shall be secure in the Natural right, to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their consciences..

Pennsylvania 1776, Preamble We, the people of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance

Rhode Island 1842, Preamble. We the People of the State of Rhode Island grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing

South Carolina, 1778, Preamble We, the people of the State of South Carolina grateful to God for our liberties, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

South Dakota 1889, Preamble We, the people of South Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberties

Tennessee 1796, Art. XI.III. That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience...

Texas 1845, Preamble We the People of the Republic of Texas, acknowledging, with gratitude, the grace and beneficence of God.

Utah 1896, Preamble Grateful to Almighty God for life and liberty, we establish this Constitution.

Vermont 1777, Preamble Whereas all government ought to enable the individuals who compose it to enjoy their natural rights, and other blessings which the Author of Existence has bestowed on man

Virginia 1776, Bill of Rights, XVI Religion, or the Duty which we owe our Creator can be directed only by Reason and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian Forbearance, Love and Charity towards each other

Washington 1889, Preamble We the People of the State of Washington, grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution

West Virginia 1872, Preamble Since through Divine Providence we enjoy the blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, we, the people of West Virginia reaffirm our faith in and constant reliance upon God ..

Wisconsin 1848, Preamble We, the people of Wisconsin, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, domestic tranquility

Wyoming 1890, Preamble We, the people of the State of Wyoming, grateful to God for

our civil, political, and religious liberties, establish this Constitution.

The Presidential Oath of Office

A tradition begun by George Washington (not legislated anywhere) is that the President of the United States takes the oath of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States with his (/her) hand on the Bible. For 34 of those inaugurations the incoming President has chosen to have the Bible open to a specific verse or passage.

The National Anthem – Francis Scott Key, 1814 “In God Is Our Trust”

Fourth stanza:

Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: **‘In God is our trust.’**
And the star-spangled banner forever shall wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

The phrase **“In God We Trust”** was first minted on the 2-cent piece in 1864, and various coins after that. The phrase was voted as standard practice for all coinage by Congress in 1938.

National Buildings

Washington Monument

- The phrase “Laus Deo,” Latin for “praise God” is etched into the east plane of the capstone at the top of the monument.

Jefferson Memorial

- Panel one inside the dome quotes a section of the Declaration of Independence (“...**endowed with their Creator...**,” see above)
- Panel two quotes from ‘A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom,’ authored in 1777, voted by the Virginia Assembly in 1786: **‘Almighty God hath created the mind free....All attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens....are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion....’**
- Panel three quotes from Jefferson’s 1785 Noted on the State of Virginia: **‘God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gifts of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just....’**

Lincoln Memorial

- From the conclusion of Lincoln’s second inaugural address: **‘With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right,....’**

Capitol Building

- The phrase **“In God We Trust”** is engraved over the presiding platform in the House of Representatives, the south entrance to the Senate chamber, and in the Chapel of the capitol building.

The Supreme Court

- Moses holding the Ten Commandments is depicted at the center of the sculpture over the east portico of the Supreme Court building, inside the courtroom, on the bronze doors of the Supreme Court, and over the chair of the Chief Justice.

The Library of Congress

- Moses holding the Ten Commandments is a sculpture in the main reading room and depicted in a painting on the ceiling. Micah 6:8 and Psalm 19:1 are inscribed on the walls.

The First Great Awakening

- In addition to the contention that the first “Great Awakening” set the stage for the notion of civil freedom during the American Revolution, three non-violent political revolutions at the end of the 20th century also had like spiritual components that were instrumental in their outcome: the deposition of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, the fall of communism in the Soviet Union, and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa.