

# Understanding the Constitution in the Declaration of Independence Part 3

---

By Susan Snelling

In this class I want to cover a subject that is important because it's something that not only violates an unalienable or natural right but it violates the Constitution in other ways as well. It affects every person in this country. This has to do with the Department of Education. Bear in mind that the Framers never intended for education to be mandated by the federal government. Education was supposed to be with the states and the people but it goes much deeper than that. Some say that education is a right; an unalienable or natural right. There is an unalienable right in all of this but it is not with the state. It is the parents! In the beginning, God created male and female and told them to be fruitful and multiply. God gave parents the domain of the children; their raising, training, discipline, and education. This is not to be infringed upon by the government. There are those who claim education is a right like they do for healthcare and abortion and so forth.

There was a proposed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution that was to be voted on in the 2020 election. It's Article XIII, Sec. 1: Notice the language used in the original amendment, which has remained the same since the Constitution was ratified and the language of the replacement amendment. The original amendment says: *"The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it is the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools. The legislature shall make such provisions by taxation or otherwise as will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools throughout the state."* The new amendment says: *"All children have a fundamental right to a quality public education that fully prepares them with the skills necessary for participation in the economy, our democracy, and society, as measured against uniform achievement standards set forth by the state. It is a paramount duty of the state to ensure quality public schools that fulfill that fundamental right."* I have to say this as an aside they change the word Republican form of government to democracy. Also, they declare that education is a fundamental right. They use fundamental right for a natural right. This is what people say is that education is a natural right.

As with everything it goes back to the laws of God. Our natural rights come from God, in this instance when God gave parents the right to educate their children. It is the unalienable right of

parents to raise and train and educate their children how they deem best. The family is a governmental entity and is important to the success of America. This was established in the Old Testament where we see it throughout where parents were charged with the training of their children and in the New Testament as well where the Church also became involved. Noah Webster noticed this and said that good education follows the example of the apostles. Speaking about his establishment of Amherst college as a response to the humanist leanings of other colleges, he said: *"[This institution] is to second the efforts of the apostles themselves, in extending and establishing the Redeemer's empire--the empire of truth. It is to aid in the important works of raising the human race from ignorance and debasement; to enlighten their minds; to exalt their character; and to teach them the way to happiness and glory."* (K. Alan Snyder, *Defining Noah Webster*, p. 219).

In early America the parents vetted the teachers. The civil and religious were both involved in education in early America. The Ole Deluder Satan Act was passed in 1647 in Massachusetts stating that if a community had a certain number of families that a teacher had to be appointed to teach the children. This would be paid for through tax dollars. The teacher was vetted by the parents. The reason for this was that parents wanted all children to be able to read and study the bible for themselves so they wouldn't be deluded by Satan. Around 1672 education was made compulsory and if parents refused to send their children to school they were removed from the home and put with another family who would make sure they got an education.

The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge. The Founders understood this. Without the teaching of Christian principles to children and America's founding principles they're not going to develop into virtuous citizens who can be virtuous leaders or vote for virtuous leaders. Christianity was removed from the education of children and instead the government adopted humanism for the underpinnings of public education in America. Humanism is a religion and with education coerced in America, children are subjected on a daily basis to the teaching of this religion. Even if it isn't overtly proclaimed it is the foundation of the teachings, the subject matter and the manner of teaching. Rev. Charles F. Potter in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century wrote: *"Education is thus a most powerful ally of humanism, and every American public school is a school of humanism. What can the theistic Sunday-schools, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day program of humanistic teaching?"*

Humanism has been around a long time and in the public school system. Humanism does not believe in the dual nature of man but that we are physical creatures only and that affects the way children are taught. So even if a teacher tries to avoid pushing humanism on children it is

inherent in the teaching methods and with some curriculums in what they can and can't teach. The Constitution never sanctioned the federal establishment of education and more of it has been tossed back to the states. President Trump established a committee to examine where the federal government has overstepped in the states' role in education. By establishing a system of education and with humanism or evolutionary humanism as the prevailing and only ideology presented the government has for all intents and purposes established a religion. The federal government does this through national arts, sciences, and humanities programs as it spends tax dollars presenting ideas to the American people and with public television and radio that is tax dollar funded. Humanism is a religion and it is foisted on children in the public education system.

Private schools that use public curriculum and even home schools that use public education curriculum participate in this religious education of the children. Creationism is a threat to the humanists because they deny the existence of God and that there is a Creator. They teach in their evolutionary material basically that the nature we see is not Created. That the children aren't created. They are saying what is True is false and what is false is true. That creation is a lie, the children have no purpose, God doesn't know their name. This reprehensible and foul lie is payed for by tax dollars, mostly property taxes.

The problem is that education is compulsory or coerced. If parents do not send their children to a government approved school they can be fined, sent to jail or have their children removed and sent into foster care. So the children are forced to learn ideas that the government mandates. This is unconstitutional. James Madison regarded the arena of conscience as property which is an unalienable right. It is a violation of our rights to be subjected by the government to ideas that we do not approve of. The government has no place when it comes to the mind and to forcing certain knowledge. Tax dollars are not supposed to pay for that. The best a parent can do is to homeschool their children using a curriculum that does not push a humanistic worldview.

Some original state constitutions provided for the education of children but did not force it. They made education available to all. James Madison said that the conscience was "the most sacred of all property" which was a natural right. The federal government is not supposed to be in the business of funding or forcing ideas on the American people like they do through the arts, sciences and humanities. The government is not supposed to pick and choose what ideas the American people are exposed to like the ideas that are in the public education system that have the religion of humanism as its underpinnings, where evolution is taught as a scientific fact. Schools do not teach children to think critically but what to think.

Teachers are not vetted by the parents but the government through credentialing after spending years in progressive education programs in college. Consider how much control the government has over families because of the educational system. They tell the children when to get up in the morning, when to have lunch, when to go home, and sometimes the children's evenings are consumed with homework. The family's year is controlled by the government. They dictate when breaks from school occur. The family is subservient to the educational system. The family is key to the success of America yet parents are undermined in what the children learn and with family time. God gave the parents the right to raise and educate their children.

Noah Webster wrote: the foundation of all free government and all social order must be laid in families and in the discipline of youth. Young persons must not only be furnished with knowledge, but they must be accustomed to subordination and subjected to the authority and influence of good principles. He also wrote: any system of Education, therefore, which limits instruction to the Arts and Sciences, and rejects the religion in forming the character of citizens, is essentially defective. Christianity was kicked out and replaced with secular humanism with education being coerced. There's no substitute for foundation in God's word for the education of children and yes that is up to the parents but what good does it do to send your children to a public school where the opposite is taught.

The educational system has gone so far as to insert teachings about perverse behaviors as valid as traditional behaviors. Children are forced to express certain ideas in order to get a good grade or forced to learn or see behaviors that they should be protected from. Your tax dollars pay for that. The government sanctions ideas that a child should not even be aware of and that go against the beliefs of the family. If parents could be a fly on the wall. Yes, your children are being influenced if not outright steeped in ideologies that are an affront to their Creator and are the opposite of what many parents believe. They are being pulled away from their Creator and robbed of their innocence. There is a natural right that comes into play; Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. It is no stretch to say that the public school system is an establishment of religion.

The establishment of religion means that they can't establish a religion or favor one religion over another or force people to believe a certain religion. On this basis the courts have ruled that prayers at commencements or over the intercom and football games and so forth are unconstitutional at the elementary and high school level but not at the college level. That is because college students are considered to be mature enough to understand that they can sit when told to stand for a prayer as protest and so forth but younger children do not have the

maturity to understand that so they are basically coerced, or forced to partake of a prayer, usually Christian prayer. Think of the illogic here and hypocrisy. These same children, on the other hand, are coerced or forced to sit for hours a day, 5 days a week, 9-10 months out of the year for 12 years to be taught a religion that is soul destroying and that is humanism. They are forced to sit in a humanistic environment and study evolution, literature that depicts ungodliness and other vehicles for humanism. They can't listen to a Christian prayer but they can have the religion of humanism influencing them all day long or shoved down their throats.

That is what they are doing when children are forced to attend the public school or private school and the state or the federal government set the standards and curriculum for what children learn. Parents try to raise good Christian children when they aren't in school but the children spend hours each day in a humanistic environment. Think about it... your tax dollars, and especially property taxes are going to pay for children to be taken away from their faith in God, their belief in the creator, away from founding principles, away from Truth and redirected to a life of selfishness and their own truth.

Noah Webster wrote in the Preface to *The American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828: *"In my view, the Christian religion is the most important and one of the first things in which all children, under a free government, ought to be instructed. ... No truth is more evident to my mind than that the Christian religion must be the basis of any government intended to secure the rights and privileges of a free people."*

The family was important to the Founders. When the Framers formed the Constitution, what did they have in mind as key to the success of America? John Adams and other Founders answered that question. John Adams said that the Republic is only for a moral people. John Adams said in a speech to the military on October 11, 1798: *"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."*

So what about morality? Where is the foundation of national morality laid? John Adams said that national morality comes from the family. On June 2, 1778 in "Diary" John Adams wrote: *"The foundation of national morality must be laid in private families.... How is it possible that Children can have any just Sense of the sacred Obligations of Morality or Religion if, from their earliest Infancy, they learn their Mothers live in habitual Infidelity to their fathers, and their fathers in as constant Infidelity to their Mothers?"*

The family is vital to the health of a nation! Children learn morality from their parents. If their parents do not live out moral lives then what kind of teachers do the children have? It has often been said that the family is the backbone of America. John Adams recognized this. Without a moral and virtuous people, America cannot continue to exist as a free people. The republican form of government cannot exist under any other kind of people than a moral people. Morality and virtue are intrinsic to freedom. Families are key to America's success. Let's make that even more specific. Moral families are key! Families that are virtuous. And without virtuous parents who set the example for their children and teach them what is right, America is no longer a land of liberty. John Adams also said in a letter to Zabdiel Adams on June 21, 1776: *"The only foundation of a free Constitution, is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People, in a great Measure, than they have it now. They may change their Rulers, and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting Liberty."*

The pillars of America are morality and religion and it begins in the home. This is the foundation of the Constitution. If parents fail to teach their children morality and walk it out for them to see, then those pillars will crumble. Adams said this virtue must be "in a great measure" or the liberty we have will not be long lasting. We might want to connect the dots. Notice how much liberty, if any, has been lost in America, how free are the people? What freedoms have been encroached upon by the government? Next, look at the culture. What are the standards of morality and ethics? What place does virtue have in the culture? Is goodness, rightness, virtue, morality trumpeted and embraced, or is every kind of immoral, decadent, self-gratifying, lasciviousness, and self-serving behavior celebrated?

Ask yourself, what has happened to the family in America? Is it strong and intact or broken and divided? As the Founders have said, this nation of liberty is only for a moral people and that morality begins in the family. One only needs to observe the breakdown of the family and the values that are embraced to know how close we are to losing our freedom.

This leads us to a common phrase that the left uses to keep Christianity out of the public square. The phrase "separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution or in any official Founding Father documents. Although it is used to keep religion in general from influencing the government, it's most insidious and targeted use is to undermine Christianity in America.

The First Amendment to the Constitution begins with: *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...* What is meant by the First Amendment regarding religion is clear, yet there are those who use the separation of church and state phrase to dismantle what the Framers meant. What the Framers meant by

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion” is there could be no official state church. And what they meant by “or prohibiting the free exercise thereof” is that the government could also not keep people from the exercise of their religion.

The separation of church and state phrase is twisted to mean the opposite of how the Founder’s viewed religion in America. Its proponents take it from an 1802 exchange of communication between the Danbury Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut, and President Thomas Jefferson. The Danbury Baptist Association reacted to a rumor that there was going to be an establishment of a particular national Christian denomination. Jefferson responded back to their letter of concern that no such thing was going to happen. He wrote, “the First Amendment has erected a wall of separation between church and state.” He was telling them that there was no truth to the rumor that there would be a state designated denomination and that the government would not interfere with freedom of religion. He was not telling them that religion could have no part in the government. People need to read the entire exchange and dispel this myth that has been perpetrated that has as its agenda the diminishing of Christianity in America. It is clear what the Founders and early American patriots thought about the relationship between religion, specifically Christianity, and the government.

Noah Webster wrote in 1832: Those who destroy the influence and authority of the Christian religion, sap the foundations of public order, of liberty, and of republican government. This separation of church and state myth is an enemy of the republican form of government. All one needs to do is an honest review of the multitude of Founding Father statements about the matter and it is undeniable that they believed that Christianity was to influence the government and to be fully embraced in the public square rather than diminished and prosecuted as some would have it.

There is no separation of church and state as some would have us believe. There is not supposed to be a state designated denomination of Christianity or of any religion, but Christianity was to have a definite involvement in our government and the public square and ideally embraced by our leaders. Jedidiah Morse, historian, geographer, and educator during the times of the Founding Fathers, wrote: *“To the kindly influence of Christianity we owe that degree of civil freedom and political and social happiness which mankind now enjoys. All efforts made to destroy the foundations of our Holy Religion ultimately tend to the subversion also of our political freedom and happiness. In proportion as the genuine effects of Christianity are diminished in any nation... in the same proportion will the people of that nation recede from the blessings of genuine freedom... Whenever the pillars of Christianity shall be overthrown, our*

*present republican forms of government – and all the blessings which flow from them – must fall with them.”*

In 1782, Thomas Jefferson wrote: Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. Often decisions regarding what is Constitutional and good for America or the right thing to do, are left up to the political leaders and others who are supposedly more educated. However, the protectors of this representative republic are the people, the ones who should be the most knowledgeable of our Constitution, our government, and our history. As “the sole depository of our political and religious freedom,” knowledge of our Founding and the principles behind this government should reside in the people. We are the ones trusted with liberty and the success of this nation.

Thomas Jefferson believed that unless most of the American people were educated that our liberty would not endure for long. He said he was: *“Convinced that the people are the only safe depositories of their own liberty, and that they are not safe unless enlightened to a certain degree, I have looked on our present state of liberty as a short-lived possession unless the mass of the people could be informed to a certain degree.”* Thomas Jefferson believed that the most effective way of preventing tyranny is to educate the people on the facts of history, so they may recognize “ambition under all its shapes” as he puts it. With this knowledge, the American people will then do what they can to defeat it. Ignorance never leads to freedom. He wrote: *“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.”*

A nation that refuses to be educated on the principles that produce and maintain freedom and that are the foundation of this government will experience problems. There is no way to escape it. Jefferson said: *“There is a price to pay for ignorance. No nation is permitted to live in ignorance with impunity.”* Education was so important to Thomas Jefferson and other Founders that he believed it played a key role in keeping us free. He said: *“Above all things I hope the education of the common people will be attended to, convinced that on their good sense we may rely with the most security for the preservation of a due degree of liberty.”*

With preservation of liberty at stake, the education of children is important, so they grow up with a true knowledge of American history, and therefore knowing who they are as a people. Noah Webster said: *“Every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that furnish him with ideas that will be useful to him in life and practice. As soon as he opens his lips, he should rehearse the history of his own country.”*



The right kind of education results in youth who have an affinity for American, an attachment that cannot be corrupted, violated or infringed upon; an inviolable attachment, as Webster puts it, Education alone without the right premise and foundation is worthless. The right kind of education is the difference between freedom and anarchy or despotism. Gouverneur Morris, signer of the Constitution wrote: *“For avoiding the extremes of despotism or anarchy....the only ground of hope must be on the morals of the people. I believe that religion is the only solid base of morals and that morals are the only possible support of free governments. Therefore, education should teach the precepts of religion and the duties of man towards God.”*

The Preamble to the Constitution says: We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

What did the Framers mean in the Preamble when they wrote: *“promote the general welfare”* of the Constitution and in the general welfare clause in Article 1 section 8 clause 1 which reads: *“The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States?”* When we go back to the original statements of the Framers we will find exactly what they did NOT mean by “welfare.” James Madison said that if general welfare meant unlimited power for the government that the “parchment (meaning the Constitution) should be thrown in a fire.” He said the Constitution would never have been ratified if that is what it meant.

In a letter to James Robertson on April 20, 1831, James Madison explains what would happen if the phrase “general welfare” is taken in a wrong sense: *“With respect to the words general welfare, I have always regarded them as qualified by the detail of powers connected with them. To take them in a literal and unlimited sense would be a metamorphosis of the Constitution into a character which there is a host of proofs was not contemplated by its creators.”* The Framers were against Congress using their discretion to spend their constituents money on acts of benevolence. This would lead to big government. Thomas Jefferson said: *“Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but only those specifically enumerated.”*

James Madison wrote to Edmund Pendleton on January 21, 1792: *“If Congress can do whatever in their discretion can be done by money, and its (sic) will promote the General Welfare, the Government is no longer a limited one, possessing enumerated powers, but an indefinite one, subject to particular exceptions.”*

When an appropriation bill for French refugees came before Congress in 1794, Madison's response was, I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents. When the government spends the peoples' money on "general welfare," in the way that phrase is misinterpreted today, we end up with big government and its nature is fundamentally changed.

*James Madison explains it when he says: "If Congress can employ money indefinitely to the general welfare, and are the sole and supreme judges of the general welfare, they may take the care of religion into their own hands; they may appoint teachers in every State, county and parish and pay them out of their public treasury; they may take into their own hands the education of children, establishing in like manner schools throughout the Union; they may assume the provision of the poor; they may undertake the regulation of all roads other than post-roads; in short, every thing, from the highest object of state legislation down to the most minute object of police, would be thrown under the power of Congress.... Were the power of Congress to be established in the latitude contended for, it would subvert the very foundations, and transmute the very nature of the limited Government established by the people of America."*

This idea of government welfare outside of its enumerated powers, undermines the foundation of America, and fundamentally changes this representative republic into something that the Founders fought against. The Founders advice and warnings should be heeded. We do not need to look far to see the results of dismissing their thoughts on all matters pertaining to this grand experiment of America that they entrusted to us. So what the Framers meant by promote the general welfare was the securing of our natural or unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In order to achieve this, the government needed to be small with limited powers as designated in the Constitution. The federal government taxation and spending was to be used for war, peace, negotiations, and foreign commerce as James Madison points out in Federalist #45: "those powers are "reserved to external objects" of "war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce." He also stated that the central government's power to tax is intended to be limited to those powers.

What the Framers of the Constitution wanted was to establish a federal government and specify the limitations to that government, its enumerated powers, so it did not infringe on the rights of the people nor interfere with the states, which had their own constitutions. The Constitution gives the federal government some of their original power but most of it remains with the states. There were a variety of problems with the individual states, including lack of

unity. The federal government served to unify but with limited power so it could not usurp the states' power. The federal government serves the states, not the other way around. But it is incumbent upon the states to make sure the federal government stays within its enumerated powers. The states are to make sure the Constitution is followed.

It is the states that have most of the power but the federal government is not checked as it should be. If more people understood this would we have the overgrown federal bureaucracy that we have today? I dare say that Benjamin Franklin would be disappointed today. There appears to be too many that do not know what we have or what we are or what our rights and duties are. And this puts our liberties at risk.

The importance of American citizens learning about the Constitution cannot be overstated. George Washington wrote to John Augustine Washington on May 31, 1776: *"A constitution founded on these principles introduces knowledge among the people, and inspires them with a conscious dignity becoming freemen; a general emulation takes place, which causes good humor, socialbility, good manners, and good morals to be general. That elevation of sentiment inspired by such a government, makes the common people brave and enterprising. That ambition which is inspired by it makes them sober, industrious, and frugal."*

After hearing those words of Washington's, wouldn't anyone be inspired to want to learn all about this great document, the Constitution? Studying and understanding the Constitution for its original intent is crucial if we want to keep our liberties. It is of paramount importance to teach our youth and the all too many adults who seem to be derelict in their knowledge of this great document, even some of our congressmen it would seem! Without this knowledge it is impossible to keep our representatives and the president, honest and the government from becoming tyrannical. A people knowledgeable about what we have, who we are, and what our rights and duties are, are necessary for the success of this Republic.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here. Those words were written by Founding Father, Patrick Henry. Under the umbrella of Christianity, people have the freedom to worship as they please. The Founding Fathers wanted people to worship within whatever religion those chose, except the freedom of that worship was never meant to be at the denigration and restriction of Christianity. It is because of Christianity that people enjoy the kind of freedoms that they have. The Founding Fathers' writings were clear that the principles in the bible were at the foundation of America, and that

the neglect of those principles would bring disaster. Noah Webster wrote: If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.

The Founding Fathers were in agreement regarding the importance of Christianity in the formation of this representative republic and of the Constitution. It is what drove our forefathers to weave Christianity throughout the fiber of every aspect of America. Daniel Webster wrote: *“Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary.”*

Those who would have us believe that Christianity should play no role in American life outside of private expression that does not go beyond the home or church, have no regard for the essence of America and seek to destroy the very fabric of society and the representative republic; to relegate the Constitution as an outdated, outmoded insignificant document. It defies the thoughts and held beliefs and intents of the Founding Fathers and that of our forefathers; it seeks to dismantle the very heart and core of what made America great and free. The Founding Fathers were so adamant in their beliefs as to the importance that the people were knowledgeable of the biblical principles as the basis of America, that they did not think America would survive without it.

The removal of God from the public square puts America on a slippery slope. The Founding Fathers understood this. It is Christianity on which America was founded that brought civil liberty and freedom to the world. It was not attributed to any other worldview, ideology, or system of beliefs, but to Christianity. This is what is good about America, what others give up everything to be a part of. In the words of Noah Webster: *“The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and His apostles, which enjoins humility, piety, and benevolence; which acknowledges in every person a brother, or a sister, and a citizen with equal rights. This is genuine Christianity, and to this we owe our free Constitutions of Government.”*

According to Noah Webster, it is adhering to Christian principles that make the people prosperous and happy, and what gives us our Constitution. When the people ignore the divine commands, as Webster puts it, they elect bad people to “make and administer the laws.” That takes us back to The Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God. It takes us back to the beginning, to In the Beginning God. It takes us back to the Source of our Laws and our Rights, to the absolute

Truth of where this all started. It takes us back to where we came from, who we are. It takes us back to those fundamental Truths that the progressive humanists would try to steal from the youth and remove from every aspect of our culture. We the people must be educated in the Laws of Nature and Nature's God.