



July 4, 2020

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CIVIL SERVANTS' BIBLE STUDY • U.S. CAPITOLS

The 2018 Senate Series: "Good God: Give Us Good Government"

Rebels With a Cause?



Rebellion! What is it? Why is it? In the classic movie released right after his untimely death, James Dean played the role of a red-jacketed teenager who did not know, like so many teens, just exactly *why* he was so angry about life. In his frustration, immaturity, and teen-egoism, he became a dare-devilin', hot-roddin', spittin'-mad rebel—for what cause, he did not know.

Another teen, Franklin Graham, turned from his Bible to booze, big bikes, and rebellion against modern Christianity's most famous last name. Billy Graham's fourth of five children eventually returned to his father's house, having grown weary of the prodigal-son role played by many young sons of men in the ministry.

Faith and I are thankful that the now Rev. Franklin Graham has become, as he titled himself in his book, a "*Rebel With a Cause*." As a righteous rebel, he rallied thousands of Nebraskans to the north Capitol steps in May 2016. He did so for the love of the Gospel and his love of this great land—a nation now 241 years old.

Was our country born of a righteous rebellion led by the faith of our Founding Fathers, mature men, reasoning rightly for correct causes? Could it be instead that America was born of rebellion (as some say ^a), sinfully so? Let us read on.

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier, V.D.M.

^a In *Why Government Can't Save You: An Alternative to Political Activism*, Dr. John MacArthur says any blessings God may have given our country were "in spite of [the] disobedience [to Romans 13] by the Founding Fathers." (Nashville, Word, © 2000, p.6f)

Weekly Bible Study During the 105th Legislature's Second Session

SENATORS: 6:45-8:00 a.m., Wednesdays, **Room #2108** (Watermeier). *Hot Breakfast Served.*

STAFF: Noon; Wednesdays, **Room #1306** (Sen. Halloran). *Catered Lunch & BYOBrownBag.*



ATHEISM IN AMERICA

Revisionist historians falsely propagate the myth that America was founded primarily by deists, secularists, and atheists.



Ben Franklin was one of the five least religious of America's Founders, yet note his view:

*"Atheism is unknown [in America]; Infidelity rare and secret; so that persons may live to a great age in that country without having their piety shocked by meeting with either an Atheist or an Infidel. And the Divine Being seems...pleased to favor the whole country." **

* Ambassador to Europe for the Colonies, Benjamin Franklin, from his 1754 pamphlet *"Information to Those Who Would Remove [Themselves] to America."*

I. OUR FOUNDING FATHERS REALIZED REBELLION AGAINST RULERS WAS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER

Were the Founders right to rebel? Rebellion against king and country is treason. Political rebels (whom no regime can ever satisfy) risk regal wrath—possibly punishment for treason. King George III made it clear to them that they would dance at the end of a hangman's noose for colonial treason against the Crown. For generations, the colonists were steeped in Bible truth, especially aware of a key warning in this primary passage on civil authority.

Romans 13:1-2, & 4-5
Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For [they]...are established by God. ²Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God... ⁴...But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing... ⁵Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, [but] not only because of wrath....

➔ Most of the Founders were Bible-reading, God-fearing, deep, devoted disciples of Christ. Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, 29 were seminary graduates. Of the 255 Framers and Founders, 90% or more were not theists or deists but Christians, well aware of the serious sin of sinful, civil sedition.

Proverbs 24:21-22 (NIV)
Fear the Lord and the king, my son, and do not join with rebellious officials, ²²for those two will send sudden destruction on them....

TREASON SENT TRAITORS TO THE GALLOWS FOR "A LONG DROP AND A SHORT STOP."

What of the supposed abundance in early America of atheists? Was not

atheistic ideology a large portion of America's founding? Ponder none other than Ben Franklin's advice to those considering moving here.^b

In a 1754 pamphlet for Europeans titled *"Information to Those Who Would Remove [Themselves] to America,"* Benjamin Franklin wrote: "Atheism is unknown there; Infidelity rare and secret; so that persons may live to a great age in that country without having their piety shocked by meeting with either an Atheist or an Infidel. And the Divine Being seems ...pleased to favor the whole country."

➔ Not proud atheists but prudent, Bible-reading, God-fearing, king-honoring, dutiful leaders reflect an obedience to Proverbs 24:21 in *The Declaration of Independence:*

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; just accordingly, all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

Suffer they had, and with the "Olive Branch Petition" of July 5, 1775, the colonial magistrates made one last attempt to avoid a full-on war with Great Britain. "Just Warfare" may only rightly be entered into as a *final* attempt to right *vast* wrongs.

II. THE FOUNDERS KNEW RIGHTEOUS REBELLION CAN BE A BIBLICAL DUTY

A. A LONG HISTORY OF INJURY AND USURPATION BY HISTORY'S RULERS INFORMED THEIR DECISIONS

Murdered, bruised, and abused by a despotic king, they did not struggle *alone* in the vacuum of their era. As excellent, orderly students of the antiquities, they combed through 1,300 years of history, hoping not to be "doomed to repeat it." They applied lessons learned from centuries of cruel despots' horrific abuses of God-given, civil power.

The Founders sweated fitfully in a profound crisis of nightmarish civil abuse. Modern pastors, ignorant of history and void of life-threatening pressures, often condemn them.

**LEADERS LIVING IN LUXURY
BUT IGNORANTLY CRITICAL OF
THE FOUNDERS' HATRED OF
TYRANNY, COULD DOOM US TO
SUFFER UNDER IT.**

➤ The Founders learned that, for over 1,000 years, the institutions of church and state had been confusing, intermingling, and usurping each other's God-given cultural roles. The state kept dictating the church's beliefs—even punishing dissidents with pain of death. The church kept morphing theocratic, trying to run the state and wield its sword. Swapping their God-given cultural roles, this trans-institutional societal-reassignment surgery mutilated the purity of *both* church *and* the state. For example:

➤ **The Protestant King Henry VIII**, the divorcee-founder of his "Church of England," publicly burned and executed reformers who disagreed with his positions.

➤ **English-Catholic Queen Mary I** was Henry's daughter. In religious zeal, she launched killing sprees and burned Protestant blasphemers at the stake, hoping to char their message into silence. History dubbed her "Bloody Mary." She was a cruel arsonist of unalienable human rights such as the freedoms of conscience, speech, religion, and free expression thereof.

➤ **The English King James I** promoted dual doctrines: "*The Divine Right of Kings*" and "*Complete Submission and Nonresistance to Authority*." Well-taught, Biblical Christian dissenters were killed, hung, mutilated, and disemboweled.

➤ **Locking Down Liberties.** The Founders also studied the brilliant

work of English intellectual titan **John Locke**. His "*Two Treatises of Government*" were scripturally saturated. At least 1,506 Bible references were solid stones in the sure footing Locke laid down for the Founding Fathers' views of their rights and the rightness of the defiance of dictators.

**THANKFULLY THE FOUNDERS
READ WIDELY AND KNEW
CHURCH HISTORY.**

➤ **Calvin, the Father of America.** The authors of the Declaration of Independence received great clarity from the brilliant French theologian John Calvin. His Reformation *Doctrine of Lesser Magistrates*—magistrate is a civil official's title—was forged in oppression's hot fires.

His *Doctrine of Interposition* and *Doctrine of Lesser Magistrates* said that when a higher magisterial authority is abusively damaging those under his authority, the magistrates in the middle of such a mess (the lower magistrates) have a moral duty to interpose between them to protect those being abused. Blocking evil trumps "obedience."

➤ The usefulness and common sense of these doctrines are clearly seen if applied to the institution of the family. Imagine a father (who the Bible says has God-given, delegated authority to lead in the family) who is sexually abusing his daughter. The mother (Biblically as an equal like Jesus to the Father) is in submission to her husband within the marriage institution. However, she has a moral duty and must interpose for her daughter. The mother can and should remove her from the abuse of the father who has grossly misused his authority.

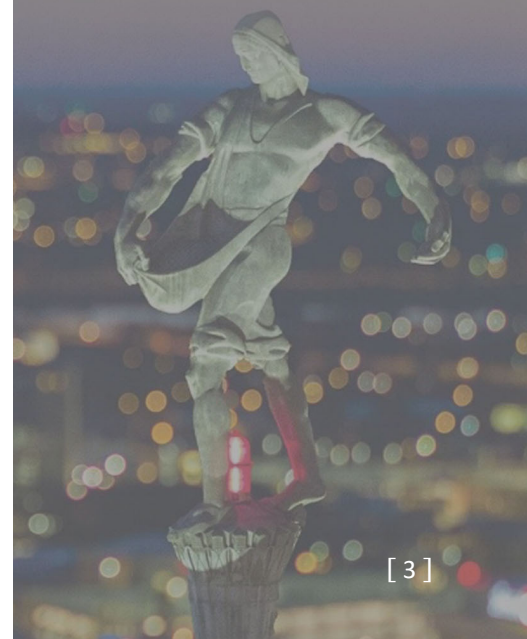
**SHOULD A MOTHER INTERCEDE
WHEN HER HUSBAND IS
SEXUALLY ABUSING THEIR
CHILDREN? THE DOCTRINE OF
LOWER MAGISTRATES GIVES A
SQUARE-MOUTHED SHOUT: "OF
COURSE SHE SHOULD!"**

FREDERICK OF SAXONY

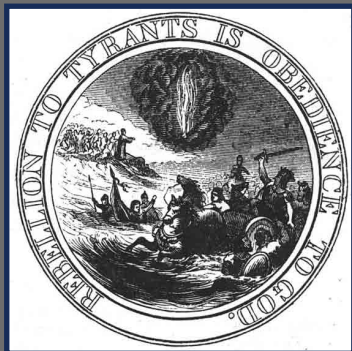


The Elector of Saxony

Frederick III, Elector of Saxony, who protected Martin Luther, was a "lesser magistrate" under Emperor Charles V.



PROPOSED UNITED STATES SEAL



"Pharaoh sitting in an open Chariot, a Crown on his head and a Sword in his hand, passing through the divided Waters of the Red Sea in Pursuit of the Israelites: Rays from a Pillar of Fire in the Cloud, expressive of the divine Presence and Command, beaming on Moses who stands on the shore and extending his hand over the Sea causes it to overwhelm Pharaoh.

Motto: "Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God." *

— Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin.

* The Continental Congress's appointed design Committee; August 1776

The Founders were rebels but rebels with a cause. The cause was Christian—Christian civil order—and the revolutionaries conducted themselves in a Christian manner. Note the honesty, integrity, and respect shown even to a terrible tyrant with whom they were dissolving their political bands. They did not shoot at His Majesty from behind the rocks in cowardly, passive aggression. Rather than lob secretive slanders against him, they candidly presented his 27 royal abuses before a watching world.

Of importance is the fact that these men didn't assemble as individuals (as somebody said "a bunch of rich white guys who hated taxes") but as noble leaders of a governmental body. These lower magistrates were in the middle of the mess and bound by *duty* to interpose themselves, risking and pledging their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor.

➤ Note this wording from the fifth and final part—the conclusion—of the Declaration of Independence:

Assembled We, therefore, the Representatives of the [U]nited States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown....

B. THE FOUNDERS' FAITH WAS GROUNDED IN BIBLICAL HISTORY AND BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE

The Founders had a deep knowledge of world history's governments. Their spirits were also nourished by a deep Biblical theology that synthesized the truths of both Testaments, giving them a robust and balanced justice system. Romans 13's call to submit to civil

rulers is not a stand-alone passage. Generalizing God's work in creating the institution of government does not equate to His specific approval of every government leader's life, morals, motives, or methods of rule.

GOD'S GENERAL CREATION OF GOVERNMENT DOES NOT IMPLY HIS SPECIFIC APPROVAL OF EACH RULER IN OFFICE.

This position is proven throughout the Bible as God Himself raised up leaders to fight against and throw off tyrannical governments. These were Biblical leaders like Moses, the judges, and certain kings.

➤ God praises their overthrowing actions as *great feats of faith*. See verses 32-34 of Hebrews 11—the chapter of "Faith's Hall of Fame."

And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David... ³³who by faith conquered kingdoms... shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴...escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

➤ God Himself sees to it that certain sovereigns (especially evil ones) are routed from office.

AS SURELY AS THERE ARE BALLOT BOXES IN NOVEMBER, IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT GOVERNMENTS CHANGE.

God's people are often called (as in Hebrews 11) to play active roles in such changes. Even in conquering the Promised Land, overthrowing brutal pagans, and occupying the land, Israel was compelled to actually pick up weapons and fight. They were human change agents to see God's will accomplished. For God politically ^c *"changes times and seasons; He removes kings and establishes kings"* (Dan. 2:21). God wills governments to change and thus uses all kinds of change agents.



Rahab of Jericho was formerly a pagan prostitute and is mentioned in Hebrews 11's "Hall of Faith." James 2 also shines a spotlight on her as a living illustration not of salvation (which is gained *by faith* alone) but of sanctification (which is proven *by good works*). Did you realize that her faith, which gave active, high-risk *proof* of her belief, was also exercised during wartime?

General Joshua (Moses' protégé and successor) led a holy war to capture and occupy the Promised Land (so called since God promised it to His people Israel). In the first battle at Jericho, Joshua sent spies to gather intel for the sake of overthrowing that city-state. By faith, Rahab cooperated with their righteous war efforts to topple that godless government.

☞ James 2:25 (NIV)

In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

Rahab helped the godly spies and deceived their godless enemies (the armies of *her own rulers*) to insure victory. *These*, says James, are the *kinds of good works that prove* that someone has been saved. Our Founders knew this, and it factored into their Biblical theology of revolt.

III. THE FOUNDERS KNEW THAT A JUST WAR, BIBLICALLY, WAS NOT A WAR OF AGGRESSION

Warfare is a horrific thing. Since Cain murdered Abel and until Christ ends world history with a war at His Second Coming, there will always be war and murder. A need for *just war* (Latin: *jus ad bellum*)^d will always be a peace-making and God-ordained reality.

A quandary for our pacifist friends, *Ecclesiastes* informs us regarding the well-timed need for superior force, virtuous violence, and the right to *the right kind of* righteous rebellion:

Ecclesiastes 3:2-8

There is a time for every event under heaven....³A time to kill....A time to tear down....⁵A time to throw stones....⁷A time to tear apart....⁸A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.

The Revolutionary War was fought by the principles of just war including fighting a *non-offensive war*. A fitting summary to our theme of "Rebels With a Cause" is Captain John Parker's April 19, 1775, charge to his Lexington Minutemen—"Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war let it begin here!" I love his noble nerve.

IV. THE FOUNDERS WERE REBELS WITH A CAUSE!

America's courageous Founding Fathers were historically grounded and Biblically rooted when they exercised the doctrines of the intercession of lower magistrates to save the colonies from destruction and birth this great nation.

V. ARE YOU A RIGHTEOUS REBEL? IF SO, FOR WHAT CAUSE?

Dear Honorable Senator:

Like so many things on God's good earth, rebellion against civil governmental authority is *not necessarily wrong*. Like the Founders, may you *fight* for what is right *especially* in the civil realm.

For the King of kings (& country),

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier, V.D.M.

CAPTAIN JOHN PARKER



"Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war let it begin here!"

— John Parker was an American colonial farmer, mechanic, soldier, and colonial militia officer who commanded the Lexington, Patriot, colonial militia at the Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775

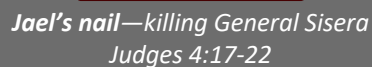


^b <http://www.wnd.com/2015/04/atheism-is-unknown-here/>

^c <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/Politics>

^d St. Augustine developed just war theory including: a just cause, last resort, proportionality of violence, leadership only by legitimate civil sovereigns, not motivated by greed, et al.

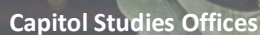
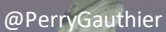
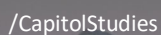
Senator's Personal Study Notes



*"There is a time to love,
and a time to hate; A
time for war and a time
for peace."*



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