

On the Nature of Our Republic

[T]he primary objects of government are the peace, order, and prosperity of society. . . . To the promotion of these objects, particularly in a republican government, good morals are essential. Institutions for the promotion of good morals are therefore objects of legislative provision and support: and among these . . . religious institutions are eminently useful and important. . . . [T]he legislature, charged with the great interests of the community, may, and ought to countenance, aid and protect religious institutions – institutions wisely calculated to direct men to the performance of all the duties arising from their connection with each other.

- Oliver Ellsworth, Delegate, Constitutional Convention; 3rd Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1796-1800)

[O]nly a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.

- Benjamin Franklin – American Pundit; Philosopher; Scientist; Envoy to France (1778-1785)

[W]e have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. . . . Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

-John Adams, 2nd President of the United States (1797-1801)

Our liberty depends on our education, our laws, and habits . . . it is founded on morals and religion, whose authority reigns in the heart,

and on the influence all these produce on public opinion before that opinion governs rulers.

- Fisher Ames, 1st US Congressman from Massachusetts (1789-1795)

Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled either by a power within them or by a power without them; either by the Word of God or by the strong arm of man; either by the Bible or by the bayonet.

- Robert Winthrop, 18th Speaker of the House, In US Congress (1840-1851)

The promulgation of the great doctrines of religion – the being, and attributes, and providence of one Almighty God; the responsibility to Him for all our actions, founded upon moral accountability; a future state of rewards and punishments; the cultivation of all the personal, social, and benevolent virtues – these never can be a matter of indifference in any well-ordered community. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how any civilized society can well exist without them.

- Joseph Story, Associate Justice U.S. Supreme Court (1812-1845)

[I]f we and our posterity reject religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity.

- Daniel Webster, US House & Senate (1823-1850), Secretary of State under two US Presidents