

# A VOTER'S GUIDE FOR AMERICANS:



HOW TO VOTE FROM THE HISTORIC  
JUDEO-CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

*by Dr. Peter A. Lillback*  
The Providence Forum  
September 2012

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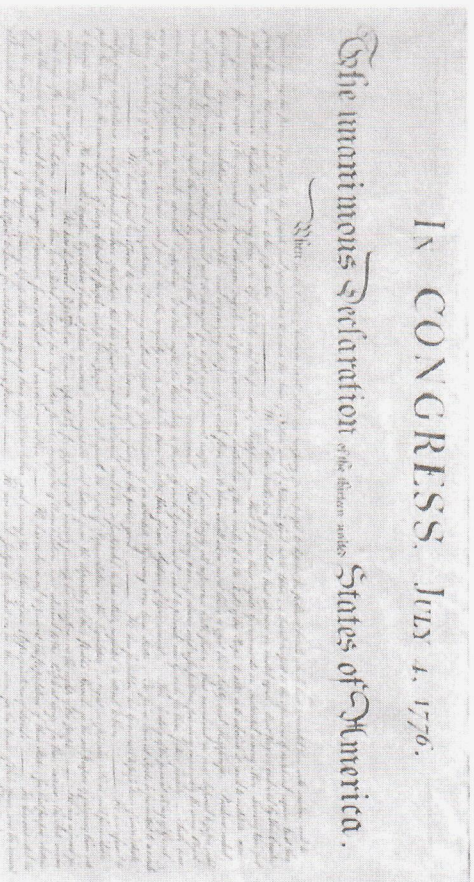
Our founders established a republic that required the involvement of the people. As **Abraham Lincoln** concluded his *Gettysburg Address*, he recognized the vulnerability of our government *of the people, by the people, for the people*. The living, he said, needed a devotion to that cause for which they [the dead] gave the last full measure of devotion. He declared that the living must highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.



Abraham Lincoln

Americans are the privileged heirs of the sacrifice and wisdom of our Founders and Patriots. The purpose of this guide is to present practical principles that cannot be ignored if you desire to vote from a historic moral framework. These values cannot be compromised or rejected if you seek to follow the foundational belief in the Judeo-Christian teachings that were so important to our Founding Fathers.





The Declaration of Independence

## PREPARING TO VOTE: FOUR TIMELESS PRINCIPLES

Our founding document, *The Declaration of Independence*, gives us four timeless principles that we must acknowledge when electing leaders for our nation:

1. We must reflect the “laws of nature” and the “laws. . . of Nature’s God” in our political activities: *When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands 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 of Nature’s God entitle them.*
2. We must recognize that our activity in the democratic process is a gift of God Himself: *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...*

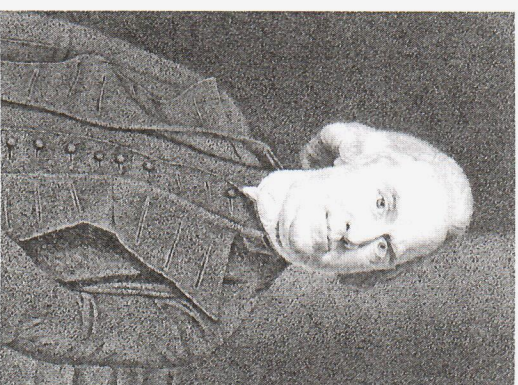
3. We are accountable to God for what we do in our roles as citizens: *We therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States...*

4. We can trust in the help of God as we seek to do that which is just: *And for the support of this 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.*

## VOTING IN AMERICA IS BOTH A RIGHT AND A DUTY

Samuel Adams, the sparkplug of American independence, wrote, *Let each citizen remember at the moment he is offering his vote that he is not making a present or a compliment to please an individual—or at least that he ought not so to do; but that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country.*

The precious and fragile gift of our American form of government was captured in a remark that Benjamin Franklin made. As he left the Constitutional Convention that met at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, a woman asked him “What kind of government have you given us?” Franklin answered, “A republic, if you can keep it!”



Samuel Adams



## OUR REPUBLIC, THE RULE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, IS THREATENED WHENEVER VOTERS BECOME UNINVOLVED



Franklin D. Roosevelt

Did you know that according to a recent study, only 60% of Christians in America are registered to vote? And sadly, a significant percentage of those who are registered did not vote in the last election. What can we do to reverse this dangerous trend?

We must heed the warning of **Franklin D. Roosevelt**, our 32<sup>nd</sup> President: *Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country.* Supreme Court Justice **Felix Frankfurter** put it this way, *In a democracy, the highest office is the office of citizen.*

### SEVEN PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING OUR NATIONAL LEADERS:

To assist us all in our highly charged political environment, consider these principles that reflect the founding wisdom of our greatest Americans.

#### 1. Voting is a Sacred Responsibility.

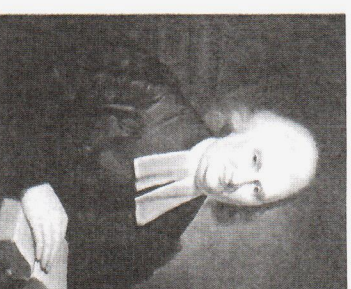
a. Ballots must take the place of bullets. **Abraham Lincoln**, our 16<sup>th</sup> President, said: *Ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors to bullets.*

b. **John Jay** our first Supreme Court Chief Justice said, *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.*

c. Matthew 22:21 states, *Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.* In America, "We the People" are the equivalent of Caesar. When we vote, we are doing our just duty to civil government under God.

#### 2. Character Matters in Elected Officials.

a. **John Witherspoon**, both a minister and a signer of the *Declaration of Independence* declared, *The people in general ought to have regard to the moral character of those whom they invest with authority either in the legislative, executive or judicial branches.*



John Witherspoon

b. Proverbs 29:2 says, *When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.*

#### 3. Righteousness Exalts a Nation. (Proverbs 14:34)

a. The eternal rules established by God should be followed when considering moral issues in an election. In **George Washington's** First Inaugural Address, he stated: *...the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained. And since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.*

b. **James Madison**, the author of the First Amendment and architect of our *Constitution* said on Nov. 20, 1825: *The belief in a God All Powerful wise and good, is so essential to the*



*moral order of the World and to the happiness of man, that arguments which enforce it cannot be drawn from too many sources...*

- c. Our Second President, **John Adams** declared in his address to the military dated October 11, 1798: *We 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.*

#### 4. Marriage and The family are Established by Our Creator:

- a. The Family is the building block of society. Biblical teaching on marriage and the family is clear.



John Adams

Marriage is to be between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:22-25). Homosexuality (Romans 1:21-27), promiscuity (1 Corinthians 6:12-20) and polygamy (Matthew 19:4-6) are outside of historic Judeo-Christian biblical teaching. America's first Constitution, *The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* states in Article 1: *That the Scriptures hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men in all daies which they are to perform to God and men, as well in families and commonwealths as in matters of the church.*

- b. **Samuel Adams** wrote to a young man, *I could say a thousand things to you, if I had leisure. I could dwell on the importance of piety and religion, of industry and frugality, of prudence, economy, regularity and even Government, all of which are essential to the well being of a family. But I have not time.*

*I cannot however help repeating piety, because I think it indispensable. Religion in a family is at once its brightest ornament and its best security.*

- c. Homosexuality is not an acceptable life-style in historic Judeo-Christian ethics. Consider **George Washington's** General Orders at Valley Forge: *At a General Court Martial (10th March 1778) Lt. Enslin ... tried for attempting to commit sodomy, with John Monhort a soldier; ... found guilty of the charges exhibited against him, being breaches of ... the Articles of War...sentence...to be dismissed from the service with Infamy.*

- d. The Parent-Child relationship is a deep moral concern. (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-4.) The great statue to honor the Father of our Country—the Washington Monument—reminds us of the importance of parental training. **Senator Robert C. Byrd** said on June 27, 1962, *Engraved on the metal on the top of the Washington Monument are the words: 'Praise be to God.'*



Senator Robert C. Byrd

*Lining the walls of the stairwell are such biblical phrases as 'Search the Scriptures,' 'Holiness to the Lord,' 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'*

- e. The significant role of parents in the life of children is at the core of the moral concern about human cloning. Human cloning by its very nature creates an orphan from birth. It deprives the child of a mother or a father. The wisdom of the ages and modern



research have demonstrated that the healthiest environment for Children is a home with both a mother and father. Deuteronomy 10:18 says, *He defends the cause of the fatherless.* John 14:18 promises, *I will not leave you as orphans.*

5. **Sanctity of Life Is the Ideal that We Must Pursue.**

- a. Life is sacred. God declares that murder is unacceptable. When we consider questions such as abortion, or embryonic stem-cell research, or euthanasia, we must ask the question is a human life being taken?

**FOR YOU CREATED MY INMOST BEING;  
YOU KNIT ME TOGETHER IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB  
I PRAISE YOU  
BECAUSE I AM FEARFULLY  
AND WONDERFULLY MADE**

**YOUR WORKS ARE WONDERFUL. I KNOW THAT FULL WELL.**

**MY FRAME WAS NOT HIDDEN FROM YOU  
WHEN I WAS MADE IN THE SECRET PLACE  
WHEN I WAS WOVEN  
TOGETHER IN THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH  
YOUR EYES SAW  
MY UNFORMED BODY;  
ALL THE DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME WERE  
WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK**

**BEFORE ONE OF THEM CAME TO BE...  
WHEN I AWAKE, I AM STILL WITH YOU  
PSALM 139:13-16, 18**

- b. The sanctity of the life of the unborn is clear from these Biblical Texts: Jeremiah 1:5 says, *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart.* Psalm 139:13-16 says, *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

- c. As our *Declaration of Independence* asserts, *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...*

- d. **Mother Teresa** at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. on February 3, 1994 said, *If we remember that God loves us, and that we can love others as He loves us, then America can become a sign of peace for the world. From here, a sign of care for the weakest of the weak—the unborn child—must go out to the world. If you become a burning light of justice and peace in the world, then really you will be true to what the founders of this country stood for.*





## 6. Judicial Activism is a

### Threat to our Constitution and to our Freedom.

- a. In the face of the judicial tyranny that has determined that the **Ten Commandments** have no relevance to our nation and need to be removed from any and all public places, we must assert the abiding wisdom of the Founders and great leaders of our nation who consciously formed a government that had a Judeo-Christian worldview as its foundation.



The Ten Commandments

- b. Jesus declared, *Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.* (John 7:24.) King David asserted, *The wicked freely strut about when what is vile is honored among men.* (Psalm 12:8.)

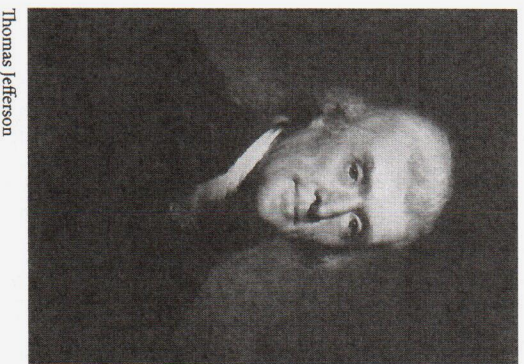
- i. **President Washington:** *Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity.*

- ii. **President Harry S. Truman** affirmed: *The fundamental basis of this nation's laws was given to Moses on the*

*Mount. The fundamental basis of our Bill of Rights comes from the teachings we get from Exodus and St. Matthew, from Isaiah and St. Paul. I don't think we emphasize that enough these days. If we don't have a proper fundamental moral background, we will finally end up with a totalitarian government which does not believe in rights for anybody except the State!*

- iii. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957:** *The blessing of life and the freedoms all of us enjoy in this land today are based in no small measure on the Ten Commandments which have been handed down to us by the religious teachers of the Jewish faith. These Commandments of God provide endless opportunities for fruitful service, and they are a stronghold of moral purpose for men everywhere.*

- c. **Thomas Jefferson** had grave concerns about the judiciary: *At the establishment of our constitutions, the judiciary bodies were supposed to be the most helpless and harmless members of the government. Experience, however, soon showed in what*



Thomas Jefferson

*way they were to become the most dangerous; that the insufficiency of the means provided for their removal gave them a frehold and irresponsibility in office; that their decisions, seeming to concern individual suitors only, pass silent and unheeded by the public at large; that these decisions, nevertheless, become law by precedent, sapping, by little and little, the foundations of the constitution, and working its change by construction, before any one has perceived that that invisible*



*and helpless worm has been busily employed in consuming its substance. In truth, man is not made to be trusted for life if secured against all liability to account.* (Letter to A. Coray, October 31, 1823)

d. **Abraham Lincoln** echoed these concerns: *At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their Government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.*

e. The biblical description of the “unjust judge” (Luke 18:6) is one who *neither fears God nor cares about men.* (Luke 18:2.) *Indeed, Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law resist them.* (Proverbs 28:4.)

## 7. Free Speech and Religious Liberty are cornerstones of our Nation.

a. **William Penn**, in his 1701 *Charter of Privileges* established religious freedom that was then nearly unknown: *BECAUSE no People can be truly happy, though under the greatest Enjoyment of Civil Liberties, if abridged of the Freedom of their Consciences, as to their Religious Profession and Worship: And Almighty God being the only Lord of Conscience, Father of Lights and Spirits; ...I do hereby Grant and Declare, that no person or persons, Inhabiting in this Province or Territories, who*



William Penn

*shall Confess and Acknowledge One Almighty God, the Creator upholder and Ruler of the World; and profess him or themselves Obligated to live quietly under the Civil Government, shall be in any Case molested or prejudiced, in his or their Person or Estate, because of his or their Conscientious persuasion or practice, nor be compelled to frequent or maintain any Religious Worship place or Ministry contrary to his or their mind or do or suffer any other act or thing, contrary to their Religious persuasion.*

b. In a letter to Philadelphia ministers upon his election as President, **Washington** wrote: *While all men within our territories are protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of their consciences; it is rationally to be expected from them in return, that they will be emulous of evincing the sanctity of their professions by the innocence of their lives and the beneficence of their actions; for no man, who is profligate in his morals, or a bad member of the civil community, can possibly be a true Christian, or a credit to his own religious society.*

c. The Golden Rule of Matthew 7:12 teaches, *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.* When we know this rule, we will give to others the religious liberty and free speech we desire for ourselves. Similarly, we are then in a position to insist that our liberty of religious conviction and free speech are not assaulted or abridged.



George Washington



## WHY YOUR VOTE MATTERS

1. **Your Vote Advances the Two Great Commandments** When it is **Consciously Moral**. When a vote is cast to reflect God's moral principles, we are loving God and our neighbor. **Edmund Burke** once declared, *All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.*
2. **Your vote is the ultimate check and balance on our Government.** The alternatives are clear: voting or tyranny. **John Adams**, the second President of the U.S. explained, *We electors have an important constitutional power placed in our hands: we have a check upon two branches of the legislature.*

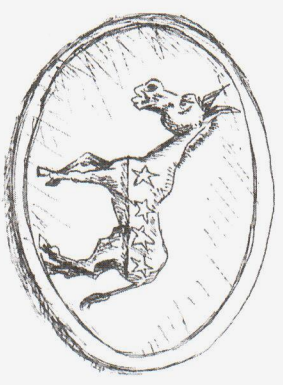
3. **Your Vote is a Witness to Your Conscience.** Even if your moral vote is defeated by the false arguments of popular secularism, you have witnessed to the truth of your conscience and you have preserved your right to continue to peak for moral change. **John Hancock**, whose signature dominates the *Declaration of Independence*, gives this challenge, *I conjure you, by all that is dear, by all that is honorable, by all that is sacred, not only that ye pray but that ye act.*



4. **Your Vote is Needed to Preserve our Liberty for Future Generations.** Our Founding Fathers wrote in the *Journal of the Continental Congress*, 1774, *It is an indispensable duty which we owe to God, our country, ourselves and posterity, by all lawful ways and means in our power to maintain, defend and preserve these civil and religious rights and liberties for which many of our fathers fought, bled and died, and to hand them down entire to future generations.*

## HOW TO DETERMINE A CANDIDATE'S POSITION

1. Make a point to stay tuned to newspapers, radio and television, recognizing that each media has its own particular bias. Seek out direct quotations from the candidates themselves.
2. You have every right to contact a candidate directly through phone, mail or email. Most candidates welcome this contact and are happy to provide materials on their positions on various issues.



## SOME DON'TS OF VOTING

1. Don't vote simply on your party affiliation.
2. Don't vote based on appearances – looks can be deceiving. Look at the candidate's values, not the outward appearance.
3. Don't vote based on a candidate's claim that he/she is a "religious Christian" or a "believer". These terms have come to mean many different things to many different people. Only actions truly determine a person's view.
4. Don't vote based on lesser important issues – make sure your candidate will get it right on the big issues.
5. Don't vote only for your own self-interest. Consider the greater good for future generations of Americans.



## SOME DO'S OF VOTING

1. Do know how each candidate stands on the Seven Principles.
2. Do rank candidates according to their stance on the Seven Principles.
3. Do support candidates that do not contradict these Principles
4. Do choose the candidate least likely to do harm, if all candidates oppose one or more of the Seven Principles.
5. Do remember that your vote today, even if cast for lesser offices, may determine future higher offices that will be held by that candidate.
6. When there is no acceptable candidate, Do vote for the one least likely to put into place legislation contrary to the Seven Principles.
7. Do listen to your Conscience. It was put there by God as an alarm system. If you keep your mind informed, your conscience will be a valuable tool in the voting booth. A well informed and trained mind will never lead you away from the historic Judeo-Christian moral teachings given by God.

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: EVERY FOUR YEARS POWERFUL PEOPLE ELECT POWERFUL PRESIDENTS

The American President is one of the most powerful men on earth. Our first President under the *U.S. Constitution* understood that the system of government created by the Constitutional Assembly gave great powers to the nation's leaders.

He also knew such power was dangerous. An overly powerful government could re-create another tyranny over the citizens of the new nation. The founders' solution was to create a constitution with defined powers limited by checks and balances. **George Washington** wrote to Marquis de Lafayette on February 7, 1788:

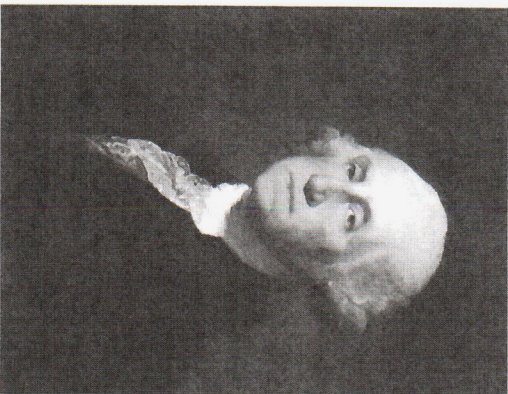
*It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed Constitution that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of Tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any Government hitherto instituted among mortals....*

Washington called these two concepts – the vast but delegated power of government and the regular return of governmental power to the people – “pivots” that give motion to the entire constitution. In the same letter to Lafayette, **Washington** says,

*With regard to the two great points (the pivots upon which the whole machine must move,) my Creed is simply,*

*1st. That the general Government is not invested with more Powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good Government;*

*2ly. That these Powers (as the appointment of all Rulers will forever arise from, and, at short stated intervals, recur to the free suffrage of the People) are so distributed among the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches, into which the general Government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating... so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the People.*



George Washington

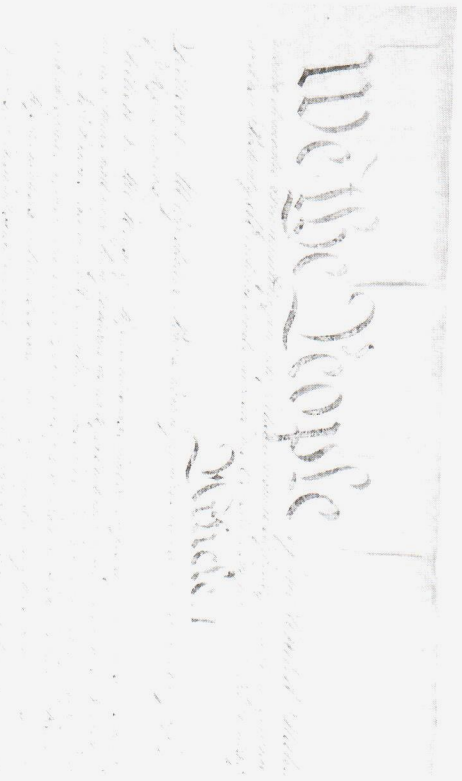
If we take Washington's “wheel” metaphor seriously, we as individual citizens have a powerful motivation to be involved in the electoral process. Clearly government is not remiss in exercising its wheel of power. That



“pivot” or “wheel” functions like a well-oiled machine. But what about Washington’s second wheel or pivot? **Washington** was counting on “We the People of the United States” to exercise the rights for which the writers of the constitution fought so mightily, namely:

*The power under the Constitution will always be in the People. It is entrusted for certain defined purposes, and for a certain limited period, to representatives of their own choosing; and whenever it is executed contrary to their interest, or not agreeable to their wishes, their Servants can, and undoubtedly will be, recalled. (To future Supreme Court Justice Bushrod Washington on November 10, 1787)*

Do “We the People of the United States” exercise our right to reclaim our power on the regular intervals established by our *Constitution* as the ultimate check and balance? Sadly, millions of Americans remain unregistered and millions more do not vote in election after election. How well would your car function if only half the wheels worked? Our founders were counting on us to keep our government functioning well. Be a good citizen and vote! Remember: *In a democracy, the highest office is the office of citizen.*



## GEORGE WASHINGTON ON RELIGION AND POLITICS

### THE INTEGRITY OF THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES A MORAL ELECTORATE:

*George Washington's Proposed Address To Congress, April 1789*

I pretend to no unusual foresight into futurity, and therefore cannot undertake to decide, with certainty, what may be its [the Constitution's] ultimate fate. If a promised good should terminate in an unexpected evil, it would not be a solitary example of disappointment in this mutable state of existence. If the blessings of Heaven showered thick around us should be spilled on the ground or converted to curses, through the fault of those for whom they were intended, it would not be the first instance of folly or perverseness in short-sighted mortals.

The blessed Religion revealed in the word of God will remain an eternal and awful monument to prove that the best Institutions may be abused by human depravity; and that they may even, in some instances be made subservient to the vilest of purposes. Should, hereafter, those who are entrusted with the management of this government, incited by the lust of power and prompted by the Supineness or venality of their Constituents, overleap the known barriers of this Constitution and violate the unalienable rights of humanity: it will only serve to show, that no compact among men (however provident in its construction and sacred in its ratification) can be pronounced everlasting and inviolable, and if I may so express myself, that no Wall of words, that no mound of parchment, can be so formed as to stand against the sweeping torrent of boundless ambition on the one side, aided by the sapping current of corrupted morals on the other.