

Rock of the Republic

Teacher Edition of Student Activity Book

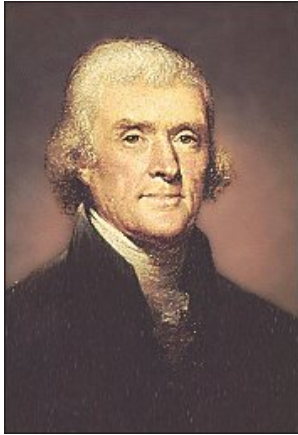
Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Rock of the Republic Syllabus..... | 5 |
| Activity 1.1 America’s Christian Roots..... | 7 |
| Activity 1.2 Separation of Church and State and Beliefs of the Founding Fathers | 13 |
| Lesson 1 Homework | 17 |
| Activity 2.1 Rewriting American History: Revisionism and Inaccuracy | 19 |
| Activity 2.2 Christian vs. Secular Point-of-view..... | 21 |
| Activity 2.3 Capitol Visitor Center..... | 23 |
| Lesson 2 Homework | 25 |
| Activity 3.1 Founder’s Beliefs | 27 |
| Activity 3.2 Body of Law of the Colonies | 31 |
| Activity 3.3 Bible Verse | 35 |
| Activity 3.4 Blackstone on the Nature of Law..... | 37 |
| Activity 3.4 Blackstone on God’s Word as the basis of Law | 39 |
| Activity 3.5 The Legal Concept of Stare Decisis..... | 41 |
| Homework Lesson 3 | 43 |
| Activity 4.1 The Beliefs of the Founders and Framers..... | 45 |
| Activity 4.2-Causes of the Revolution | 47 |
| Activity 4.3 Character and Beliefs of the Founders and Leaders of the Patriots | 51 |
| Activity 4.4 The Declaration of Independence and the Christian Character of Key Signers.. | 53 |
| Activity 4.5 The Constitutional Convention of 1787..... | 57 |
| Activity 4.6 Ben Franklin’s Prayer Request | 59 |
| Homework Lesson 4 | 61 |
| Activity 5.1 Application of Bible Verse, and Early American Education | 63 |
| Activity 5.2 Changing Educational Attitudes towards God | 65 |
| Activity 5.3 de Tocqueville on God and Education in America | 67 |
| Activity 5.4 Court Decisions Impacting God in School | 71 |
| 5.5 Homework Court Decisions: Prayer in School | 75 |
| Activity 6.1 Bible Verse and Giving Thanks | 77 |
| Activity 6.2 William Bradford’s Thanksgiving Prayer 1621 | 81 |
| Activity 6.3 George Washington in Prayer..... | 83 |
| 6.4 Thanksgiving Proclamations of Our leaders..... | 85 |
| Activity 6.5 President Lincoln’s Addresses and Writings | 89 |
| 6.7 Homework Essay..... | 93 |
| Activity 7.1 Public Expressions of Faith of Recent American Leaders. Discuss Bible Verse ... | 95 |
| 7.2 Theodore Roosevelt | 97 |
| 7.3 Franklin Delano Roosevelt..... | 99 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 7.4 Eisenhower & MacArthur | 101 |
| 7.5 Justice William O. Douglas and Chief Justice Earl Warren | 105 |
| 7.6 Martin Luther King Jr. Christian Brotherhood and Character..... | 107 |
| 7.7 Presidents Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan..... | 109 |
| 8.1 Our Heritage at Risk. Discuss Bible Verse | 111 |
| 8.2 The Dangers of Forgetting Our Heritage | 113 |
| 8.3 Examples of American Leaders Reliance on God | 115 |
| 8.4 Removing God from the Public Square..... | 117 |
| 8.5 The End of American Exceptionalism? | 119 |
| 8.6 Thomas Jefferson, the Establishment Clause and Separation of Church and State | 123 |
| 8.7 Homework: The Great Dictators | 125 |
| | |
| Appendix of Primary Historical Documents..... | 127 |
| | |
| The Magna Carta | 128 |
| Columbus Letter to Luis de Sant Angel 1493 | 138 |
| The Mayflower Compact..... | 142 |
| 1629 Charter of Massachusetts Bay | 143 |
| Fundamental Orders of Connecticut..... | 147 |
| Patrick Henry Speech of 1775..... | 151 |
| Blackstone’s Commentaries..... | 153 |
| Virginia Declaration of Rights-1776 | 157 |
| Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom - 1786..... | 159 |
| Sam Adams Speech 1776..... | 161 |
| The Declaration of Independence | 164 |
| United States Constitution-1787..... | 168 |
| Bill Of Rights - 1789..... | 178 |
| Amendments 11-27 | 179 |
| President George Washington’s First Inaugural Address 1789..... | 188 |
| George Washington Thanksgiving Proclamation 1789..... | 191 |
| President James Madison Prayer for Peace War of 1812 | 192 |
| The Star Spangled Banner | 193 |
| The Gettysburg Address..... | 194 |
| The Second Inaugural Address of President Abraham Lincoln | 195 |
| Franklin D. Roosevelt's Day of Infamy Speech | 197 |
| Inaugural Address of John F. Kennedy | 199 |
| I have a Dream Speech | 202 |

Activity 1.2 Separation of Church and State and Beliefs of the Founding Fathers

Separation of Church and State is often cited as a reason for banning prayer in public places or even mentioning God at all.



Discuss the meaning of “Separation of Church and State” as understood in Thomas Jefferson’s letter to the Baptist convention.

Thomas Jefferson

To Messer’s Nehemiah Dodge, Ephraim Robbins, & Stephen S. Nelson a committee of the Danbury Baptist association in the state of Connecticut

Gentlemen

The affectionate sentiments of esteem & approbation which you are so good as to express towards me, on behalf of the Danbury Baptist association, give me the highest satisfaction. My duties dictate a faithful & zealous pursuit of the interests of my constituents, and in proportion as they are persuaded of my fidelity to those duties, the discharge of them becomes more & more pleasing.

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man & his god, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state. [*Congress thus inhibited from acts respecting religion, and the Executive authorized only to execute their acts, I have refrained from presenting even occasional performances of devotion presented indeed legally where an Executive is the legal head of a national church, but subject here, as religious exercises only to the voluntary regulations and discipline of each respective sect.*] Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties.

I reciprocate your kind prayers for the protection and blessing of the common Father and creator of man, and tender you for yourselves and your religious association, assurances of my high respect & esteem.

(signed) Thomas Jefferson, Jan.1.1802.

Activity 1:2 Separation of Church and State ... continued

1. Does Jefferson mean that there can be no discussion of God in a public place? Explain

Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit

- The reference was in a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association
- The Associating had expressed concern to Jefferson that that Baptist faith might not be able to be practiced openly given the preponderance of Anglicans and Congregationalists in the government
- In his replay to the Danbury Baptist, Jefferson makes no reference to discussion of God in a public place.

2. Or does Jefferson mean that there is no official state religion as there was in England?

Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit

- Jefferson's point, enshrined in the Constitution, is that the legislature cannot make any law regarding the establishment of a religion
- Jefferson says that there can be no law prohibiting the free practice of that religion
- He clarifies the term "separation of church and state as meaning that there will be no official state religion as there was in England and many European countries

Activity 1:2 Separation of Church and State ... continued

As you will see, the signers of the Declaration of Independence who are referred to as the “Founders” and the authors of the Constitution, who are referred to as “Framers” were mostly Christians who often used the public forum or public square to discuss the importance of their faith to them and to America. Thomas Jefferson believed that American liberties were a gift from God. Benjamin Franklin who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Constitutional Convention called for prayer to resolve the deadlocked Constitutional convention. John Adams stated that the Constitution was made for a religious people. George Washington publicly prayed for God’s help and thanked God for his grace as General of the Army during the Revolution and as president of the United States. More recent presidents asked for God’s help including Franklin Roosevelt after the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.



George Washington at Valley Forge

(see following page for activity question)

Activity 1:2 Separation of Church and State ... continued

3. Discuss an overview of faith of American Leaders throughout our history (use space below and on following page for your answer):

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|--|
| <p>Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thomas Jefferson believed that American liberties are a gift from God• Benjamin Franklin called for prayer at the deadlocked Constitutional Convention of 1787• John Adams believed that the Constitution was made for a religious people• George Washington prayed for deliverance of America at Valley Forge• Franklin Roosevelt asked God for strength after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor |
|--|

Describe the relevancy of today's Bible verse to the lesson

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deuteronomy 32: 4

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|---|
| <p>Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God's Word is the rock upon which the republic of America was built• His Word is always true and always just |
|---|

Lesson 1 Homework

1. Name three Founding Fathers who public expressed the importance of faith.

| | |
|---|-------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• George Washington• Thomas Jefferson• John Adams | _____ |
| | _____ |
| | _____ |

2. What did John Adams believe was essential to democracy?

| | |
|---|-------|
| <p>Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adams believed that “unbridled human passion” without morality or religion could not permit Democratic government to exist• He believed that citizens of a Democracy had certain responsibilities that could not be met without the guidance of religion and morals• Adams believed that the Constitution would be inadequate to provide a basis for law unless Americans were and remained a moral and religious people | _____ |
| | _____ |
| | _____ |
| | _____ |
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| | _____ |

See next page for essay question 3

Lesson 1 Homework ... continued

3. Write a one page essay on what you think Thomas Jefferson meant by "Separation of church and state" in his 1802 letter to the Baptist Association of Connecticut

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| <p>Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jefferson expressed a true interest for the concern of the Baptist Association of Connecticut that America might become a country with an official state religion.• He believed that our government had no place making any laws regarding the establishment of an official state church• England, France, Italy, Austria, Spain had state churches which were the cause of much civil strife and bloodshed• He believed in the right of all Americans, Baptists included, to worship without state interference.• He believed in public prayer, but not under the rule of a national executive ie president,• He wanted to reassure the Baptists that their right to worship freely would not be infringed by the American Government• He demonstrated his faith in God by reciprocating God's blessings and protection on the Baptists |
|---|

Activity 2.2 Christian vs. Secular Point-of-view

Compare and contrast the point of view of the secular humanist vs. that of the Christian.
Review the chart with the class. Then ask students to complete activity 2.2

| Category | Secular Humanist belief | Traditional Judeo-Christian Belief |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Constitutional Law | The constitution is a living document. It should be reinterpreted without regard to the Intent of the Framers | The Constitution should be interpreted with great respect for the intent of the framers |
| Ethics and Morality | Ethics and morality are relative, and change with the times. Current topics of interest to secularists include the green movement, multiculturalism, and radical feminism | Ethics and morality are given to us through the laws of God. We are responsible for obeying those laws |
| The Origin of Liberty | Repression and totalitarianism is caused by an equal distribution of wealth and lack of education. When these are fixed, liberty is restored | Liberty is a gift from God and not man. Liberty is a divine right. |
| American Exceptionalism | America is a country that has often been greedy, racist, repressive, and soiled the environment dirty. America is responsible for much of the ill in the world | America is a great country because she was founded on Christian law, and the liberty and prosperity of her citizens comes from God. America's liberty and prosperity is the envy of the world |
| God in the Public Square | God or symbols of God must not be allowed in public because it violates Constitutional separation of Church and state | There must be no official state religion as in England, Italy or other countries in the world. But America's gifts from God: our laws, freedoms and prosperity should be recognized. Americas leaders have done so since the founding of America |
| The family | Any human relationship can constitute a family. The relationship of one family member to another is not clear | The family starts with the marriage of one man and one woman brought together by God. The father is the head of the family, but each member of the family has a key role to play under God |

Activity 3.4 Blackstone on the Nature of Law

Lesson 3, Session 3.2

Sir William Blackstone was an 18th English barrister (lawyer entitled to try cases before the King's Bar). He was a graduate of Oxford, and was considered the most able legal minds of his time. He wrote "Blackstone's Commentaries" a set of law books that were broadly used and referenced in England and in her American colonies. "Blackstone's Commentaries" were in use through the 19th century in America. They were referenced by the Framers of the United States Constitution. Blackstone believed in the primacy of God over all the laws of man.

Excerpts from Blackstone's Commentaries on the Nature of Law:



Sir William Blackstone

This law of nature, being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other-It is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this: and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.

But in order to apply this to the particular exigencies of each individual, it is still necessary to have recourse to reason; whose office it is to discover, as was before observed, what the law of nature directs in every circumstance of life: by considering, what method will tend the most effectually to our own substantial happiness. And if our reason were always, as in our first ancestor before his transgression, clear and perfect, unruffled by passions, unclouded by prejudice, unimpaired by disease or intemperance, the task would be pleasant and easy; we should need no other guide but this. But every man now finds the contrary in his own experience; that his reason is corrupt, and his understanding full of ignorance and error.

This has given manifold occasion for the benign interposition of divine providence; which, in compassion to the frailty, the imperfection, and the blindness of human reason, hath been pleased, at sundry times and in divers manners, to discover and enforce it's laws by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the Holy Scriptures. These precepts, when revealed, are found upon comparison to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend in all their consequences to man's felicity. But we are not from thence to conclude that the knowledge of these truths was attainable by reason, in its present corrupted state; since we find that, until they were revealed, they were hid from the wisdom of ages.

Activity 3.4 Blackstone on the Nature of Law

As then the moral precepts of this law are indeed of the same original with those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic obligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet undoubtedly the revealed law is of infinitely more authenticity than that moral system, which is framed by ethical writers, and denominated the natural law. Because one is the law of nature, expressly declared so to be by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority; but, till then, they can never be put in any competition together.

Answer the following questions about Blackstone's Commentaries

1. Who was Blackstone?

Answer: A prominent 18th century barrister, and graduate of Oxford

2. Why were his commentaries influential?

Answer: They were the most complete and best written law books of their time. They provided guidance on legal thought and case law.

3. Whom did they influence?

Answer: They influenced statesmen in England and America. The framers of the Constitution used his law books as guidance in drafting the constitution

4. What is the "law of nature"? Full text may be found in the appendix.

Answer: The law of nature are laws established by God and superior to those of man

5. Who dictates the law of Nature?

Answer: God dictates the laws of Nature

6. How does Blackstone say people must form laws?

Answer: Since people cannot know all of God's thoughts they must use reason to apply laws for each human situation

Activity 3.4 Blackstone on God's Word as the basis of Law

List three key points Blackstone makes about the primacy of God's law when we consider the laws governing civil society

Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit:

1. God's law is superior to human law
2. Laws are invalid if they are contrary to God's law
3. Since every day to day matter is not specifically discussed in God's law, humans must use reason to interpret how God's laws should be applied to various affairs

7.3 Franklin Delano Roosevelt



Franklin Roosevelt had much in common with his cousin Theodore Roosevelt. They both came from privileged backgrounds, both had to overcome poor health, both attended Harvard, both were governor of New York and President of the United States. Both men has a strong sense o noblesse oblige, or the obligations of the privileged toward the less well off. There were some important differences, Theodore Roosevelt was a Republican and Franklin Roosevelt was a Democrat. Theodore presided over America during peacetime and Franklin Roosevelt was president during World War II. The immediate cause of WWII was the surprise attacked on the US Naval Base at Pearl Harbor by the Empire of Japan on December 7, 1941. Days later, Nazi Germany declared on America. Both Germany and Japan were run by brutal dictators who waged war on the world. The United States was unprepared for war and her Army and Navy were a small fraction of the size of those of Germany and Japan. Yet, thanks to Franklin Roosevelt's leadership, and our allies England, Russia and China America was able to defeat both countries and establish a lasting and just peace. Before and during the war Roosevelt, in the tradition of earlier American presidents, publicly called upon God to aid America, and give him the strength to lead.

Franklin Roosevelt's Declaration of War

"I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire." Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation As commander in chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us. No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory. I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again. Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces - with the unbounding determination of our people - we will gain the inevitable triumph - **so help us God.** I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire."

7.3 Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Cite examples of how Roosevelt called on God for assistance. Cite examples of his faith.

Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit

- In the book "No Ordinary Time" the authors states that Roosevelt's "religious faith was the strongest, most mysterious force that was in him"
- At the meeting with Winston Churchill aboard the British battleship HMS Prince of Wales, Roosevelt join Churchill and the officers in men for a joint prayer service. Roosevelt selected the Hymns and they included "Onward Christian Soldiers" Roosevelt himself said "We are Christian soldiers and we will go on with God's help."
- He called on God before Congress to help America defeat Japan following the sneak attack at Pearl Harbor

7.5 Justice William O. Douglas and Chief Justice Earl Warren

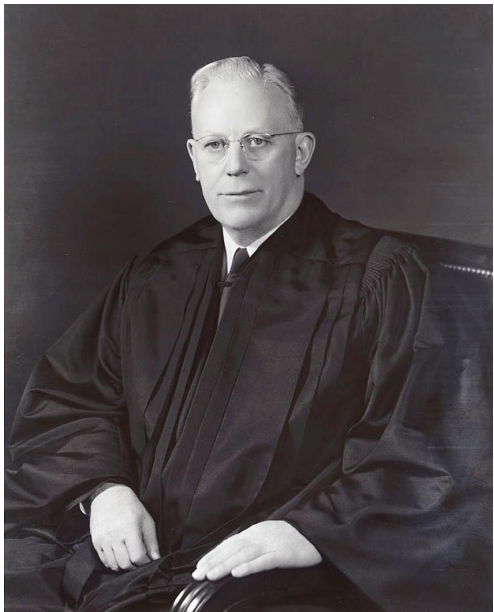


Justice William O. Douglas

Justice William O. Douglas and Chief Justice Earl Warren both served on the Supreme Court during the 1950's. They are examples of judges who publicly and legally stated the deep connection between American law and God. Justice Douglas stated: "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." (from *Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306 at 313 (1952))

Only in later did the ACLU argue the phrase "Separation of Church and State" to mean that God cannot be mentioned in public places like schools, courts, and government buildings. Students should be reminded that the phrase "separation of church and state" does not appear in the Constitution, but only in a letter by Jefferson reassuring Baptists that there will be no official state religion.

Chief Justice Earl Warren on the Origin of American Laws 1954



Chief Justice Earl Warren

"I believe no one can read the history of our country without realizing that the Good Book and the spirit of the Savior have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses...Whether we look to the first Charter of Virginia...or to the Charter of New England...or to the Charter of Massachusetts Bay...or to the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut...the same objective is present...a Christian land governed by Christian principles. I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge our forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under law, and the reservation of powers to the people...I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of the Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do so, no great harm can come to our country." Quoted in "Breakfast at Washington," *Time*, Feb. 14, 1954, p. 49.

7.5 Justice William O. Douglas and Chief Justice Earl Warren

Discuss how Justices' Douglas and Warren demonstrate the importance of God to our laws

Include a rubric prioritizing the elements of a complete answer that would earn full credit

- Justice Douglas says in *Zorach v Clauson*: "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme being"
- Justice Warren said at a 1954 Washington breakfast that the Bible and the spirit of Christ have been America's guiding genius. He said that as long as we continue to live in the spirit of the Christian religion, no great harm can come to our country.