

Biblical Look at Our U.S. Government

July 8th, 2017

Notes for Part 1, Part 2 & Part 3

Notes Outline:

I. Introduction

A. The Birth of America upon the Word (Grant)

B. Introduction to U. S. Government: Declaration, Constitution, (Dow)
Legislature/Judicial/Executive

C. Checks and Balances, Separation of Power (Dow)

II.

A. When the government changed to a Federal power. (Grant)

- a) Reconstruction period after Civil War
- b) What does that mean for today?

B. The Great Awakenings in America (Grant)

C. Heart/ Testimonial/ Families/ Patriotism (Danetta)

III.

A. The importance of U.S. Political parties (Grant)

- a) Example of Abraham Lincoln as close to the center.

B. What does God want for the future of our country? (Grant)

The Birth of America Upon the Word

-Is the United States a Republic or Democracy?

Definition of republic:

- a state in which supreme power is held by the people and their elected representatives, and which has an elected or nominated president rather than a monarch.

Definition of democracy:

- a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

Technically, the United States is a constitutionally limited, representative democratic republic.

Our form of government,

-the constitution limits the power of government.

-We elect representatives, so it's not a pure democracy.

-But we do elect them by majority rule so it is democratic.

-And the form of, the infrastructure, is republican, it is a republic.

Why does this matter? Well it is Biblical!

Civilizations have over the course of history struggled with the best way to govern over themselves. Even in Jewish history, Israel interchanged from a judicial republic, to monarch, to theocracy. The problem is human nature and sin corrupt everything. So how do you create a government that fights against humans sinful nature, protects individual freedoms, yet gives your governing body actual power to rule?

Let's look at how God first set up a government with Moses and the Israelites.

Exodus 18: 13-26

Deuteronomy 1: 9-18

Exodus 20: 1-17 (Ten Commandments)

The rest of the Law.

The best governments, rest upon the moral truths and foundations of God's laws and morals.

Moses actually set up a republic of Judges to help govern disputes and make executive decisions for the people based on God's law given through Moses.

Hebrew Republic Characteristics: (notice the similarities to our system of government)

- Had a written law, document, that bound the people to a moral standard and determined their freedoms
- Had an executive leader, i.e. Moses, Joshua, who represented the entire people before God. "...you shall represent the people before God." Exo 18: 19
- These executives a) taught the Law of God to all so they entire people knew it
b) had veto power over elected officials. Deut 1:13
- The people were free under the law, and yet held to a standard of morals to combat sinful nature.
- The people majority chose wise, well-able and respected heads over themselves. Approved and appointed by their executive head. Deut 1:18
- The people elected heads over different factions/levels 1000s, 100s, 50s, 10s. They also had a separate governing council of 70 elders alongside Moses and Aaron
- The people verbally agreed and submitted themselves to the Law. Deut 1:14

The Opportunity For Individual and Religious Freedom Brought Immigrants to America

The land of America, became a place of refuge for a growing number of believers facing persecution in Europe throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. America became a place for indentured servants a place to earn their freedom and create new living, and it also was a place of refuge Protestant and Catholic believers weary of harassment in their homelands.

"Many of the British North American colonies that eventually formed the United States of America were settled in the seventeenth century by men and women, who, in the face of European persecution, refused to compromise passionately held religious convictions and fled Europe. The New England colonies, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland were conceived and established "as plantations of religion." Some settlers who arrived in these areas came for secular motives--"to catch fish" as one New Englander put it--but the great majority left Europe to worship God in the way they believed to be correct..."

The religious persecution that drove settlers from Europe to the British North American colonies sprang from the conviction, held by Protestants and Catholics alike, that uniformity of religion must exist in any given society. This conviction rested on the belief that there was one true religion and that it was the duty of the civil authorities to impose it, forcibly if necessary, in the interest of saving the souls of all citizens. Nonconformists could expect no mercy and might be executed as heretics. The dominance of the concept, denounced by Roger Williams as "inforced uniformity of religion," meant majority religious groups who controlled political power punished dissenters in their midst. In some areas Catholics persecuted Protestants, in others Protestants persecuted Catholics, and in still others Catholics and Protestants persecuted wayward coreligionists. Although England renounced religious persecution in 1689, it persisted on the European continent. Religious persecution, as observers in every century have commented, is often bloody and implacable and is remembered and resented for generations."

- Religion and the Founding of the American Republic America as a Religious Refuge: *The Seventeenth Century*, Part 1 webpage

Freedom of religion became a basic American principle, and numerous new movements emerged, many of which became established denominations in their own right. It was upon these resolute convictions, new found freedom, and colonial governing that after a hundred years the colonies birthed into the United States of America in response to new monarchial oppression.

Introduction to US Government

Declaration of Independence

America's Great Religious Document

The Fourth of July is America's birthday. The anniversary of the declaring of the Declaration of Independence gives us a good chance to reflect on our nation's religious roots.

The best way to observe our nation's birthday is to re-read and re-examine our Declaration of Independence, and to rededicate ourselves to the principles of our nation's founding document.

Did you know that the Declaration of Independence is America's great religious document?

The Declaration of Independence is the official and unequivocal affirmation by the American people of their belief and faith in God. It affirms God's existence as a "self-evident" truth that requires no further discussion or debate. The nation created by the great Declaration is God's country. The rights it defines are God-given. The actions of its signers are God-inspired.

The Declaration of Independence proclaims God as Creator.

The Declaration contains five references to God — God as supreme Lawmaker, God as Creator of all men, God as the Source of all rights, God as the world's supreme Judge, and God as our Protector on whom we can rely.

The Declaration of Independence declares that each of us is created. If we were created, we must have had a Creator. The Declaration of Independence declares that each of us is created equal. This means equally endowed with unalienable rights. It does not mean that all are born with equal capabilities, as obviously they are not. Nor does it mean that all of us can be made equal, as Communist dogma alleges. Obviously and realistically, as the modern discovery of DNA now confirms, each of God's creatures is unequal and different in every other way from every other person who has ever lived or ever will live on this earth.

The Declaration of Independence proclaims natural rights as gifts of God.

The Declaration of Independence proclaims that life and liberty are the unalienable gifts of God — natural rights — which no person or government can rightfully take away. It affirms that the purpose of government is to secure our God-given unalienable individual rights, and that government derives its powers from the consent of the governed. Our Declaration reduced government from master to servant, for the first time in history.

Knowledge of our Declaration of Independence should be required of all schoolchildren.

The unchangeable Declaration of Independence forever pledges the firm reliance of the American people on the continued protection of God's Divine Providence. Schoolchildren should be taught that many of the men who signed it paid dearly for their courage — and that's why we are able to enjoy our freedom and independence.

When you study the documents of the Revolutionary period, a precise picture comes into focus. Here it is:

- Virtually all those involved in the founding enterprise were God-fearing men in the Christian sense; most were Calvinistic Protestants.
- The Founders were deeply influenced by a biblical view of man and government. With a sober understanding of the fallenness of man, they devised a system of limited authority and checks and balances.
- The Founders understood that fear of God, moral leadership, and a righteous citizenry were necessary for their great experiment to succeed.
- Therefore, they structured a political climate that was encouraging to Christianity and accommodating to religion, rather than hostile to it.
- Protestant Christianity was the prevailing religious view for the first 150 years of our history.

However...

- The Fathers sought to set up a just society, not a Christian theocracy.
- They specifically prohibited the establishment of Christianity--or any other faith--as the religion of our nation.

Constitution of the United States of America:

The [Preamble](#) to the Constitution has no force in law; instead, it establishes the "Why" of the Constitution. Why is this document in existence? It reflects the desires of [the Framers](#) to improve on the government they currently had (to be "more perfect" than the [Articles of Confederation](#)), to ensure that that government would be just, and would protect its citizens from internal strife and from attack from the outside. It would be of benefit to the people, rather than to its detriment. And, perhaps as importantly, it intended to do the same for the future generations of Americans. A more extensive exploration of the Preamble is [also available](#).

Article 1 establishes the first of the three branches of the government, the Legislature. [Section 1](#) establishes the name of the Legislature to be The Congress, a bicameral, or two-part, body.

[Section 2](#) defines the House of Representatives, known as the lower house of Congress. It establishes a few minimum requirements, like a 25-year-old age limit, and establishes that the people themselves will elect the members for two years each. The members of the House are divided among the states proportionally, or according to size, giving more populous states more representatives in the House. The leader of the House is the Speaker of the House, chosen by the members.

[Section 3](#) defines the upper house of Congress, the Senate. Again, it establishes some minimum requirements, such as a 30-year-old age limit. Senators were originally appointed by the legislatures of the individual states, though this later changed. They serve for six years each. Each state has equal suffrage in the Senate, meaning that each state has the exact same number of Senators, two each, regardless of the population. This Section introduces the Vice-President, who is the leader of the Senate (called the President of the Senate); the Vice-President does not vote unless there is a tie.

[Section 4](#) says that each state may establish its own methods for electing members of the Congress, and mandates, or requires, that Congress must meet at least once per year.

[Section 5](#) says that Congress must have a minimum number of members present in order to meet, and that it may set fines for members who do not show up. It says that members may be expelled, that each house must keep a journal to record proceedings and votes, and that neither house can adjourn without the permission of the other.

[Section 6](#) establishes that members of Congress will be paid, that they cannot be detained while traveling to and from Congress, that they cannot hold any other office in the government while in the Congress.

[Section 7](#) details how bills become law. First, any bill for raising money (such as by taxes or fees) must start out in the House. All bills must pass both houses of Congress in the exact same form. Bills that pass both houses are sent to the President. He can either sign the bill, in which case it becomes law, or he can veto it. In the case of a veto, the bill is sent back to Congress, and if both houses pass

it by a two-thirds majority, the bill becomes law over the President's veto. This is known as overriding a veto.

There are a couple more options for the President. First, if he neither vetoes a bill nor signs it, it becomes a law without his signature after 10 days. The second option is called a pocket veto. It occurs if Congress sends the bill to the President and they then adjourn. If the President does not sign the bill within 10 days, it does not become law.

[Section 8](#) lists specific powers of Congress, including the power to establish and maintain an army and navy, to establish post offices, to create courts, to regulate commerce between the states, to declare war, and to raise money. It also includes a clause known as the Elastic Clause which allows it to pass any law necessary for the carrying out of the previously listed powers.

[Section 9](#) places certain limits on Congress. Certain legal items, such as suspension of habeas corpus, bills of attainder, and ex post facto laws are prohibited. No law can give preference to one state over another; no money can be taken from the treasury except by duly passed law, and no title of nobility, such as Prince or Marquis, will ever be established by the government.

[Section 10](#), finally, prohibits the states from several things. They cannot make their own money, or declare war, or do most of the other things prohibited Congress in Section 9. They cannot tax goods from other states, nor can they have navies.

Article 2 establishes the second of the three branches of government, the Executive. [Section 1](#) establishes the office of the President and the Vice-President, and sets their terms to be four years. Presidents are elected by the [Electoral College](#), whereby each state has one vote for each member of Congress. Originally, the President was the person with the most votes and the Vice-President was the person with the second most, though this is later changed. Certain minimum requirements are established again, such as a 35-year minimum age. Presidents must also be a [natural-born citizen](#) of the United States. The President is to be paid a salary, which cannot change, up or down, as long as he is in office.

[Section 2](#) gives the President some important powers. He is commander-in-chief of the armed forces and of the militia (National Guard) of all the states; he has a [Cabinet](#) to aid him, and can [pardon](#) criminals. He makes treaties with other nations, and picks many of the judges and other members of the government (all with the approval of the Senate).

[Section 3](#) establishes the duties of the President: to give a state of the union address, to make suggestions to Congress, to act as head of state by receiving ambassadors and other heads of state, and to be sure the laws of the United States are carried out.

[Section 4](#) briefly discusses the removal of the President, called impeachment.

Article 3 establishes the last of the three branches of government, the Judiciary. [Section 1](#) establishes the Supreme Court, the highest court in the United States. It also sets the terms of judges, of both the Supreme Court and lower courts: that they serve as long as they are on "good

behavior," which usually means for life (no Justice and only a few judges have ever been impeached). It also requires that judges shall be paid.

[Section 2](#) sets the kinds of cases that may be heard by the federal judiciary, which cases the Supreme Court may hear first (called original jurisdiction), and that all other cases heard by the Supreme Court are by appeal. It also guarantees trial by jury in criminal court.

[Section 3](#) defines, without any question, what the crime of treason is.

Article 4 concerns the states. [Section 1](#) mandates that all states will honor the laws of all other states; this ensures, for example, that a couple married in Florida is also considered married by Arizona, or that someone convicted of a crime in Virginia is considered guilty by Wyoming.

[Section 2](#) guarantees that citizens of one state be treated equally and fairly like all citizens of another. It also says that if a person accused of a crime in one state flees to another, they will be returned to the state they fled from. This section also has a clause dealing with fugitive slaves that no longer applies.

[Section 3](#) concerns the admittance of new states and the control of federal lands.

[Section 4](#) ensures a republican form of government (which, in this case, is synonymous with "representative democracy," and both of which are opposed to a monarchical or aristocratic scheme - the state derives its power from the people, not from a king or gentry) and guarantees that the federal government will protect the states against invasion and insurrection.

[Article 5](#) details the method of amending, or changing, the Constitution. Please see [The Amendments Page](#) for more information.

[Article 6](#) concerns the United States itself. First, it guarantees that the United States under the Constitution would assume all debts and contracts entered into by the United States under the [Articles of Confederation](#). It sets the Constitution and all laws and treaties of the United States to be the supreme law of the country. Finally, it requires all officers of the United States and of the states to swear an oath of allegiance to the United States and the Constitution when taking office.

[Article 7](#) details the method for ratification, or acceptance, of the Constitution: of the original 13 states in the United States, nine had to accept the Constitution before it would officially go into effect.

The Amendments

The first ten amendments to the Constitution were all adopted at the same time and are collectively known as the [Bill of Rights](#).

The [1st Amendment](#) protects the people's right to practice [religion](#), to speak freely, to assemble (meet), to address (petition) the government, and of the press to publish.

The [2nd Amendment](#) protects the right to own guns. There is [debate](#) whether this is a right that protects the state, or a right that protects individuals.

The [3rd Amendment](#) guarantees that the army cannot force homeowners to give them room and board.

The [4th Amendment](#) protects the people from the government improperly taking property, papers, or people, without a valid warrant based on probable cause (good reason).

The [5th Amendment](#) protects people from being held for committing a crime unless they are properly indicted, that they may not be tried twice for the same crime, that you need not be forced to testify against yourself, and from property being taken without just compensation. It also contains [due process](#) guarantees.

The [6th Amendment](#) guarantees a speedy trial, an impartial jury, that the accused can confront witnesses against them, and that the accused must be allowed to have a lawyer.

The [7th Amendment](#) guarantees a jury trial in federal civil court cases. This type of case is normally no longer heard in federal court.

The [8th Amendment](#) guarantees that punishments will be fair, and not cruel, and that extraordinarily large fines will not be set.

The [9th Amendment](#) is simply a statement that other rights aside from those listed may exist, and just because they are not listed doesn't mean they can be violated.

The [10th Amendment](#) is the subject of some debate, but essentially it states that any power not granted to the federal government belongs to the states or to the people. See the [Federalism Topic Page](#) for more information.

The [11th Amendment](#) more clearly defines the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court concerning a suit brought against a state by a citizen of another state.

The [12th Amendment](#) redefines how the President and Vice-President are chosen by the Electoral College, making the two positions cooperative, rather than first and second highest vote-getters. It also ensures that anyone who becomes Vice-President must be eligible to become President.

The [13th Amendment](#) abolished [slavery](#) in the entire United States.

The [14th Amendment](#) ensured that all citizens of all states enjoyed not only rights on the federal level, but on the state level, too. It removed the three-fifths counting of slaves in the census. It ensured that the United States would not pay the debts of rebellious states. It also had several measures designed to ensure the loyalty of legislators who participated on the Confederate side of the Civil War.

The [15th Amendment](#) ensures that race cannot be used as a criteria for voting.

The [16th Amendment](#) authorizes the United States to collect income tax without regard to the population of the states.

The [17th Amendment](#) shifted the choosing of Senators from the state legislatures to the people of the states.

The [18th Amendment](#) abolished the sale or manufacture of alcohol in the United States. This amendment was later repealed (erased).

The [19th Amendment](#) ensures that gender cannot be used as a criteria for voting.

The [20th Amendment](#) set new start dates for the terms of the Congress and the President, and clarifies how the deaths of Presidents before swearing-in would be handled.

The [21st Amendment](#) repealed the 18th Amendment.

The [22nd Amendment](#) set a limit on the number of times a President could be elected - two four-year terms. It has one exception for a Vice-President who assumes the Presidency after the death or removal of the President, establishing the maximum term of any President to 10 years.

The [23rd Amendment](#) grants the District of Columbia (Washington D.C.) the right to three electors in Presidential elections.

The [24th Amendment](#) ensured that no tax could be charged to vote for any federal office.

The [25th Amendment](#) clarifies even further the [line of succession](#) to the Presidency, and establishes rules for a President who becomes unable to perform his duties while in office.

The [26th Amendment](#) ensures that any person 18 or over may vote.

The [27th Amendment](#) requires that any law that increased the pay of legislators may not take effect until after an election.

Branches of government:

Legislative – makes laws

The legislative Branch enacts legislation, confirms or rejects Presidential appointments, and has the authority to declare war.

This branch includes Congress (the Senate and House of Representatives) and several agencies that provide support services to Congress. American citizens have the right to vote for Senators and Representatives through free, confidential ballots.

- [Senate](#) – There are two elected Senators per state, totaling 100 Senators. A Senate term is six years and there is no limit to the number of terms an individual can serve.
- [House of Representatives](#) – There are 435 elected Representatives, which are divided among the 50 states in proportion to their total population. There are additional non-voting delegates who represent the District of Columbia and the territories. A Representative serves a two-year term, and there is no limit to the number of terms an individual can serve.

Executive – carries out laws

The [executive branch](#) carries out and enforces laws. It includes the President, Vice President, the Cabinet, executive departments, independent agencies, and other boards, commissions, and committees.

American citizens have the right to vote for the President and Vice President through free, confidential ballots.

Key roles of the executive branch include:

- President – The President leads the country. He/she is the head of state, leader of the federal government, and Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces. The President serves a four-year term and can be elected no more than two times.
- Vice President – The Vice President supports the President. If the President is unable to serve, the Vice President becomes President. The Vice President can be elected and serve an unlimited number of four-year terms as Vice President, even under a different president.
- The Cabinet – Cabinet members serve as advisors to the President. They include the Vice President and the heads of executive departments. Cabinet members are nominated by the President and must be approved by the Senate (with at least 51 votes).

Judicial – evaluates laws

The judicial branch interprets the meaning of laws, applies laws to individual cases, and decides if laws violate the Constitution. It's comprised of the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

- Supreme Court – The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Justices of the Supreme Court are nominated by the President and must be approved by the Senate.
 - The court is comprised of nine members — a Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices. A minimum or quorum of six justices is required to decide a case.
 - If there is an even number of Justices and a case results in a tie, the lower court's decision stands.
 - There is no fixed term for Justices. They serve until their death, retirement, or removal in exceptional circumstances.
- Other federal courts – The Constitution grants Congress the authority to establish other federal courts.

Checks and balances

Legislative Branch

- Checks on the Executive
 - Impeachment power (House)
 - Trial of impeachments (Senate)
 - Selection of the President (House) and Vice President (Senate) in the case of no majority of electoral votes
 - May override Presidential vetoes
 - Senate approves departmental appointments
 - Senate approves treaties and ambassadors
 - Approval of replacement Vice President
 - Power to declare war
 - Power to enact taxes and allocate funds
 - President must, from time-to-time, deliver a State of the Union address
- Checks on the Judiciary

- Senate approves federal judges
- Impeachment power (House)
- Trial of impeachments (Senate)
- Power to initiate constitutional amendments
- Power to set courts inferior to the Supreme Court
- Power to set jurisdiction of courts
- Power to alter the size of the Supreme Court
- Checks on the Legislature - because it is bicameral, the Legislative branch has a degree of self-checking.
 - Bills must be passed by both houses of Congress
 - House must originate revenue bills
 - Neither house may adjourn for more than three days without the consent of the other house
 - All journals are to be published

Executive Branch

- Checks on the Legislature
 - [Veto power](#)
 - Vice President is President of the Senate
 - Commander in chief of the military
 - Recess appointments
 - Emergency calling into session of one or both houses of Congress
 - May force adjournment when both houses cannot agree on adjournment
 - Compensation cannot be diminished
- Checks on the Judiciary
 - Power to appoint judges
 - Pardon power

- Checks on the Executive
 - Vice President and Cabinet can vote that the President is unable to discharge his duties

Judicial Branch

- Checks on the Legislature
 - Judicial review
 - Seats are held on good behavior
 - Compensation cannot be diminished
- Checks on the Executive
 - Judicial review
 - Chief Justice sits as President of the Senate during presidential impeachment

Republican form of government – not a true democracy. Representative form of government

The [U.S. Constitution](#) guarantees a republican form to the states. (See Art.4,Sec.4)

republic **n 1** : a government having a chief of state who is not a monarch and is usually a president; also : a nation or other political unit having such a government **2** : a government in which supreme power is held by the citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by elected officers and representatives governing according to law; also : a nation or other political unit having such a form of government *Source: NMW*

In the context of the United States, both definitions apply.

The US is a federal republic

A **federal republic** is a [federation](#) of [states](#) with a [republican](#) form of government.^[1] At its core, the literal meaning of the word republic when used to reference a form of government means: "a country that is governed by elected representatives and by an elected leader (such as a president) rather than by a king or queen".

In a federal republic, there is a [division of powers](#) between the federal government, and the government of the individual subdivisions. While each federal republic manages this division of powers differently, common matters relating to security and defense, and monetary policy are usually handled at the federal level, while matters such as infrastructure maintenance and education policy are usually handled at the regional or local level. However, views differ on what

issues should be a federal competence, and subdivisions usually have sovereignty in some matters where the federal government does not have jurisdiction. A federal republic is thus best defined in contrast to a [unitary republic](#), whereby the central government has complete sovereignty over all aspects of political life. This more decentralized structure helps to explain the tendency for more populous countries to operate as federal republics.^[21] Most federal republics codify the division of powers between orders of government in a written [constitutional document](#).

How the U.S. Government Changed During Reconstruction After the Civil War

A Mrs. Powel, of Philadelphia, asked Benjamin Franklin, "Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?" With no hesitation whatsoever, Franklin responded, "A republic, if you can keep it."

This exchange was recorded by Constitution signer James McHenry in a diary entry that was later reproduced in the 1906 American Historical Review.

A little less than 100 years after our country was founded we tried to destroy it ourselves. This struggle was summed up famously in one president's address.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here 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
November 19, 1863
The Gettysburg Address

Due to the trauma of the Civil War, in order to keep our union together. Our government evolved from a republic with strong individual state rights to a strong overall federal government with the representative democracy as we know today. After another traumatic economic event, the Great Depression, we evolved again into a stronger federal government.

To see the difference you have to understand the evolvement of U.S. **federalism**. (the federal principle or system of government)

Federalism has evolved over the course of American history. At different points in time, the balance and boundaries between the national and state government have changed substantially. In the twentieth century, the role of the national government expanded dramatically, and it continues to expand in the twenty-first century.

Dual Federalism (1789–1945)

Dual federalism describes the nature of federalism for the first 150 years of the American republic, roughly 1789 through World War II. The Constitution outlined provisions for two types of government in the United States, national and state. For the most part, the national government dealt with national defense, foreign policy, and fostering commerce, whereas the states dealt with local matters, economic regulation, and criminal law. This type of federalism is also called **layer-cake federalism** because, like a layer cake, the states' and the national governments each had their own distinct areas of responsibility, and the different levels rarely overlapped.

The Civil War and the Fourteenth Amendment (1861–1868)

Part of the disputes that led to the Civil War (1861–1865) concerned federalism. Many Southerners felt that state governments alone had the right to make important decisions, such as whether slavery should be legal. Advocates of **states' rights** believed that the individual state governments had power over the federal government because the states had ratified the Constitution to create the federal government in the first place. Most Southern states eventually seceded from the Union because they felt that secession was the only way to protect their rights. But Abraham Lincoln and many Northerners held that the Union could not be dissolved. The Union victory solidified the federal government's power over the states and ended the debate over states' rights.

The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified a few years after the Civil War in 1868, includes three key clauses, which limit state power and protect the basic rights of citizens:

1. The **privileges and immunities clause** declares that no state can deny any citizen the privileges and immunities of American citizenship.

2. The **due process clause** limits states' abilities to deprive citizens of their legal rights.
3. The **equal protection clause** declares that all people get the equal protection of the laws

Industrialization and Globalization (1865–1945)

The nature of government and politics in the United States changed dramatically in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The national government assumed a larger role as a result of two major events:

1. **Industrialization:** The economy became a national, industrial economy, and the federal government was much better equipped than the states to deal with this change. For much of the nineteenth century, the government pursued a hands-off, laissez-faire economic policy, but it began to take a stronger regulatory role in the early twentieth century.
2. **Globalization:** Because of its vast economy and its extensive trading networks, the United States emerged as a global economic power. The federal government assumed a greater economic role as American businesses and states began trading abroad heavily.

Although these events played out over many decades, they reached their high points during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt (1933–1945). The Great Depression, brought about by the crash of the stock market in 1929, was one of the most severe economic downturns in American history. Many businesses failed, roughly one-third of the population was out of work, and poverty was widespread. In response, Roosevelt implemented the New Deal, a series of programs and policies that attempted to revive the economy and prevent further depression. The New Deal included increased regulation of banking and commerce and programs to alleviate poverty, including the formation of the Works Progress Administration and a social security plan. In order to implement these programs, the national government had to grow dramatically, which consequently took power away from the states.

This current state of a very strong federal government remains today and is the type of government we have grown up in. During the 1990s through Supreme Court rulings the states have gained more power back but in most governmental arenas the federal government has control.

What does this mean for today?

-Obviously, the amount of power you give your government in any arena the greater amount of influence it has on the arena. For example, before the Social Security plan during the New Deal, individuals with personal bankers took care of their own future retirement plans. After the New Deal, the government now implemented themselves as a retirement provider through Social Security.

-In some cases having a strong federal government is helpful, such as in emergency disaster relief, citizens can get help, protection and relief relatively fast and organized. It is also essential in military during this global period of history. In many cases though, having a big government involved in many affairs complicates decisions, muddles up policies and strips away individual and corporate initiative. In many ways, this is what caused the colonists to revolt against the rule of England when the big government got too involved with their everyday affairs in commerce. It caused the very zealous colonists to create their own government with more individual freedoms.

-Big government requires big spending which requires big taxes. That's just the way it is.

The Great Awakenings

The Great Awakenings were periods in United States History where the Lord came in revival over our land. Revival and Awakening are used essentially as synonyms.

Observers of one First Awakening preacher, testified about it like this, “ It pleased God... to display His free and sovereign mercy in the conversion of a great multitude of souls in a sort space of time, turning them from a formal, cold, and careless profession of Christianity, to the lively exercise of every Christian grace, and the powerful practice of holy religion.”

The Great Awakenings made the Christian faith not just a community faith but intensely personal to the average person. God supernaturally came to transform believers and non-believers through sudden intense enthusiasm for the gospel of Jesus. Hence the term “Awakening”.

There are three to four periods of Great Awakenings acknowledged by historians.

We will focus on the first three, as they are most widely acclaimed.

The First Great Awakening

1734 – 1743

Famous preachers – Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield

Note: The United States of America declared their independence in 1776.

The Second Great Awakening

1800 – 1824

Famous preachers – Charles Finney

Note: “ After 1800, Rev. Gardiner Spring reported that for the next 25 years not a single month passed without news of revival somewhere.”

Third Great Awakening

1850 – 1900s

Famous preachers – Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday, Jacob Knapp

Note: The Civil War 1861-1865

Emancipation Proclamation of Slaves 1863

Women's Right To Vote 1920

Prohibition of Alcohol 1920 - 1933

Each Great Awakening in America birthed, strengthened, or launched us into an important time of history. Every national revival has been God's mercy to grant repentance from our own agenda and set our sights on His agenda again. The Great Awakenings in America are the only reason our form of government has lasted so long, so successfully. Because we have been a nation consistently submitting our government under God's law, personally and nationally. With the Lord's law on our hearts, our democratic republic has been able to withstand human sin and corruption in government.

This is why when our nation turns away, and has turned away so strongly lately, our governments, schools, families, morals have struggled so mightily. God's law is not being submitted to above our own laws.

Patriotism and the Family

- I. Not too long ago, men didn't always have a choice to join the military to serve our country. They were drafted. Families lived in fear of a son being called to go overseas and fight.
 - a. It was a common thing for families to say goodbye to loved ones.

- II. Today, most don't remember or understand the cost
 - a. Freedoms are taken for granted
 - b. We've become a nation with an entitlement mentality, thinking that the freedoms we have are just suppose to happen.
 - c. Freedom is never free

- III. Families SERVE-not just those enlisted
 - a. There's a room in the Alamo that was where the wives, mothers and children hid, knowing full well that their husband / daddy would probably not return.
 - b. I know families now that serve and sacrifice because their son, daughter, brother, sister, mom or dad are in our military.

- IV. Educate yourself and teach your children
 - a. Don't leave the task to school curriculum
 - b. Don't leave the task to the media
 - c. Many of those avenues are being revised to leave God out (and to leave certain historical facts out in order to be politically correct.)

- V. Teach them
 - a. How to honor the flag
 - b. The Story behind the Star Spangled Banner
 - c. Teach them Patriotic songs
 - d. Don't let days like Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and 4th of July just be days off of work. Explain to them why we celebrate.

e. Make it a habit to thank a soldier, buy their dinner when you see them in a restaurant.

f. Educate them on the platforms and issues at hand (age appropriate)

g. To pray for leaders

VI. The freedom we have in Christ wasn't free; nor is the freedom we have in this country.

a. The Christian family **MUST RISE UP** and take a stand in and for this country, or the freedoms that we enjoy now can be taken away.

b. The Father is after **NATIONS!!** We want the United States of America to be a **SHEEP NATION** but it only happens when the **CHURCH RISES UP...one generation!**

c. Educate yourself and **VOTE**.

d. Talk to your children about voting, how you'll vote and why

The Importance of Political Parties

The U.S. has primarily always had only two competing political parties. This is not mandated, we can as many as we want but history has shown other parties simply fold under a larger umbrella party for greater access to voters towards their policies.

Currently we have:

Democrats

Republicans

Democrats current political platform:

- [Raise Incomes and Restore Economic Security for the Middle Class](#)
- [Create Good-Paying Jobs](#)
- [Fight for Economic Fairness and Against Inequality](#)
- [Bring Americans Together and Remove Barriers to Opportunities](#)
- [Protect Voting Rights, Fix Our Campaign Finance System, and Restore Our Democracy](#)
- [Combat Climate Change, Build a Clean Energy Economy, and Secure Environmental Justice](#)
- [Provide Quality and Affordable Education](#)
- [Ensure the Health and Safety of All Americans](#)
- [Principled Leadership](#)
- [Support Our Troops and Keep Faith with Our Veterans](#)
- [Confront Global Threats](#)
- [Protect Our Values](#)
- [A Leader in the World](#)

Democrats want to utilize federalism and the power of government to accomplish their platform goals. This lends to more federal control, which a characteristic of the term “political left”.

Republicans current political platform:

- Restoring the American Dream
- A Rebirth of Constitutional Government
- Agriculture, Energy, and the Environment
- Government Reform
- Great American Families, Education, Healthcare, and Criminal Justice
- America Resurgent

Republicans want to utilize a more conservative, traditional approach to governing and accomplishing their platform goals. This lends to more state rights, military support and increase, and less federal control. These characteristics fall in line with the term “political right”.

Hence, we often hear of the “Left” being Democrats, the “Right” being Republicans.

Lately you’ve might have heard a couple words being thrown around politics towards our certain political parties derogatively.

Socialism and Fascism

Socialism is: a political and economic theory of social organization that advocates that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community (or government) as a whole.

Fascism is: an authoritarian and nationalistic right-wing system of government and social organization. (in general use) extreme right-wing, authoritarian, or intolerant views or practice.

If you go too far on the political scale to the left you actually run into socialism where the government has control and runs nearly every facet of the country. If you go too far towards the right of the political scale, you actually get into fascism and an authoritarian, martial law type government where authorities, usually military, keep everything in order and control.

Whether to the right or the left both sides ultimately lean towards taking away governmental control from the people majority and giving it to the government itself.

Lately our country is very divisive, offended, and argumentative more than ever before. And as our divides have become more pronounced, our political tendencies have become more polarizing far left too far right.

But in reality, in order for our country to last as federal republic, we need each other, and policies from both parties.

Rick joyner explained it best with this metaphor:

“America is an increasingly divided nation, but we can expect this in just about every nation now. This is prophesied in Scripture. The wheat and the tares are being separated; the clash between light and darkness is increasing as we see in Isaiah 60, and it will continue. If we are not going to be caught up in the increasing deception, we must guard our hearts from reactionary doctrines or politics. Some of the most diabolical movements in history were born out of reactionary beliefs caused by rejection or other wounding. As the polarization continues, so will wounding and rejection. This is the biggest gate of hell for ultimate evil.

An eagle needs a left wing and a right wing to fly. The issues now facing us are bigger than many of the liberal and conservative issues we've been fighting over. Though we must never compromise our convictions, we must learn to fight together as Americans when facing these ultimate issues of our basic freedom.”

The eagle is one the best symbols of the United States. In order for us to fly again as a country we must have both our left and right wings balanced under God. This only happens as our hearts are changed by God, unto Him.

Actually most of our best Presidents were more towards the Political Center with political policies that aligned with both sides of the scale.

Example: Abraham Lincoln

What does God want for the future of America?

- God wants us to be sheep.
- He wants us to be a wheat harvest more than a tare harvest.
- He watches and responds to how we treat and support Israel.
- He wants to come again in Awakening to glory.
- He wants us to pursue justice for the nations, in our own land. Then beyond.
- He wants the Church in America to take responsibility, enthusiastically, again.
- He wants the hearts of all Americans to be His.