

# WILL THE REAL 'CONSTITUTIONAL AMERICAN GOD' STAND UP?

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I'm confused. Will the real 'Constitutional American God' stand up and raise their right bible?

Now that a score of devout religious apologists of every stripe is flailing their arms while enraged others rush to seat them, let's look at some recent Daily Republic letters and commentary. John Adolph' letter remarked, "Politics are part of religion in... (America)... and Christians must do their duty to God." David McCabe responded eagerly with, "America is (not) a Christian country". Columnist Isaac Escobedo then told us "both are right". Oh my Lord, what are devout atheists or religious faithful to do?

For us mere mortals, there is that old nagging de jure-de facto thing; denotation and connotation. Namely, the difference between what is written as law vs. what is understood and in practice. De jure Christianity is the biblical denotation of Christianity embodied by literal religious principles, dogma and doctrine. De facto Christianity is commonly held interpretations of behaviors that folks make about Christians; good, bad or indifferent. And what of denominational spins on this?

God knows, dogma and daily life differ. New Testament authors lamented when looking at Christian's everyday behavior. Scholars and historians will always comment about the dividends of man's behavior, noble and nasty, in the name of any religion. Those tales weave a fascinating tapestry through the fabric of time making great scripture with twists and turns while variably filling hearts with joy, rage, hope and sorrow.

However, when Escobedo says, "When I speak of "Christianity"... I mean...the biblical sense...the only true sense" and then continues..."adher(ing) to our Constitution...is...adher(ing) to the Bible", he underscores a crucial point. Religious dogmatisms and insights subject to personal interpretations, such as this, gave inspiration to the crafters of the Constitution to take a stand. Founding fathers stated their position clearly in the first sentence of the First Amendment. Those God fearing patriots were even more man fearing. They knew that many will always claim the sole right for their God to occupy the moral and governmental bully pulpit.

Furthermore, American jurisprudence developed from a plurality of sources, both secular and sacred. Every statute, code and the entire body of case law derived from applying the precepts of the Constitution is not solely attributable to or in agreement with whatever is "biblical Christianity".

Certainly, principles of ethical monotheism, in this case Christianity, are part of the foundational bedrock of this nation. It is also true that the religious consciousness of the drafters had a major role in guiding creation of this monumental and fantastic work.

However, the Constitution's 'theology' is more about a moral compass that the founding fathers believed an omniscient and judicious creator embodied. This creator was felt to have endowed mankind with "inalienable" rights and responsibilities according to a 'true north' of ethical and socially responsible behavior.

There is a 'sacred marriage covenant' of the Constitution. It is one of secular interests and needs of individuals joined inseparably with universal moral precepts. It remarkably balances the democratic will of individuals and the common will of a nation; a free will. Furthermore, a belief in divine inspiration in the notion of free will is shared by the bible, those courageous constitutionalists and this author.

Divinely inspired or not, our founding fathers had immense respect for the divergence between religious or theological ideals and the realities of human behavior in a world where attitudes and aptitudes would never be equally shared. They knew that it is a short road from veneration, vespers and devotion of a God to decimation, terrorism and unbridled inhumanity towards ones' fellow man.

Thank God any God worth their salt knows that a perfect belief system to explain and govern an imperfect world populated by imperfect beings is perfectly suited to fail. Thus, thank God for the Constitution!

Now, put your hands down, please.

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