



Focus on Religious Freedom

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America's Essential Character Must Include Morality

The United States is the only nation instituted by a people claiming the rights of nature and nature's God to rule themselves without the dictates of a king, emperor or "divinely-appointed" magistrate. The United States Declaration of Independence asserts these natural rights "...all men are created equal...that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights."

In the US Constitution's Bill of Rights, religious freedom, freedom of speech and of the press, freedoms to assemble and to petition for redress are named as critical first examples of man's rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The framework our founders created, along with their writings and speeches, confirm their convictions that morality was essential to preserving liberty and that freedom of religion and conscience were indispensable supports of morality.

- "Religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness." *Samuel Adams*
- "Religion and morality are the essential pillars of civil society."
George Washington
- "In my view, the Christian religion is the most important one and one of the first things in which all children, under a free government, ought to be instructed." *Noah Webster*
- "We have no government armed in power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion." *John Adams*
- "Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion."
Daniel Webster
- "Morality is not man's prison, but rather the divine element in him."
Pope Benedict XVI
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