



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Government Cannot Answer for Man at the Final Judgment

America's 1st Amendment to the Bill of Rights assures the rights of each person to choose right and wrong as they serve their God so that no one should be forced to participate in actions contrary to their sincerely held beliefs.

Our founding fathers were of differing religious sects and practices but they shared the belief that the Bible was the Word of God and that each man would be subject to a personal judgement before their creator.

They recognized the danger to the immortal soul of citizens when legal permissions or encouragements are given by the state for man to participate in evil. They believed, those worldly, state proclamations are of no defense when each of us stands before God for that final, personal judgement of what we have done and what we have failed to do.

An early colonial pastor and proponent of freedom of conscience and of religious practice, Rev. John Leland (1754-1841) said, *"Every man must give account of himself to God, and therefore every man ought to be at liberty to serve God in a way that he can best reconcile to his conscience. If government can answer for individuals at the day of judgment, let men be controlled by it in religious matters; otherwise, let men be free."*

Another early American voice for religious freedom, Isaac Backus (1724 - 1806), a leading minister from Connecticut told the colonists, *"Religious matters are to be separated from the jurisdiction of the state, not because they are beneath the interests of the state but, quite to the contrary, because they are too high and holy and thus are beyond the competence of the state."*

The truth of their beliefs is evidenced by the law passed in Massachusetts this week removing any restrictions on abortion up to the moment of birth. This is the 11th state allowing abortions at any gestational age. Such unspeakable evil, empowered by the state, shows the necessity of keeping government far from the consciences of its citizens.

"Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use violence to get what they want." Mother Theresa