

Politics and Government: There is a major problem for Christians who absolutize the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States.



While all Americans, both Christians and non-Christians, should live by our Constitution as good citizens and patriots, to absolutize the Constitution (above eternal law, natural law, divine positive law) is very problematic. The Constitution is not our Bible or absolute standard on government, socio-economics, ethics, or politics--and neither are our Founders' view of government as such; they viewed government as unnatural.

A fundamental problem is that the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution are both informed by and the products of the philosophy of John Locke and the deistic Enlightenment. This is very problematic.

The problem for followers of Christ is that Lockean philosophy begins with the proposition that human government is not from God. Instead, according to Lockeanism and our Founders, human government is but a social contract derived "from the consent of the governed," i.e., from the will of man."

In brief, John Locke did not believe that government was a divine institution—a serious problem.

The proper place for the Constitution for the Christian is at least four times removed from the absolute bedrock of Truth as far as socio-politico-economics: (1) Eternal Law (anchored in the mind and will of God); (2) Natural Law (man's ability

to grasp eternal law); (3) Divine positive law (Scripture); (4) Human positive law (American Constitution).

It is not that the Declaration and Constitution do not contain wonderful truths. However, if those truths are not placed within the proper context of divine teleology for all governments, the results are disastrous as can easily be demonstrated throughout our history (geocide of millions of native Americans, enslavement of millions of Blacks, and millions of abortions).

In fact, without the proper context, man can be viewed as endowed with inalienable divine rights and be his own god over all others for the benefit of his life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. All he needs is the "consent of the governed." The reality is that it is easy to draw a straight line from the Constitution to slavery, abortion, our current polarization, and a host of other evils.

There is hope, however. All one has to do is to place human rights (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) in the proper Thomistic teleology of government of the one and the many, the individual and society, to promote the common good and thus save our nation.

There are also many problems with absolutizing other popular secular theories, like pure capitalism (or socialism). But more about that at another time.

May God give us the insight and strength for Christ's Kingdom, the better way of Jesus' socio-politico-economic ways for our country and the glory of the Lord.

In His Matchless Grace,

Pastor Don