



A Republic If You Can Keep it:

America's Authentic Liberty Confronts Contemporary Counterfeits

Preview Booklet

BY DR. GAI FERDON

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Britt Odom, Another Kind of Red

COVER ART

Original Image: Joseph Pennel,
Lest Liberty Perish from the Face of the Earth—Buy Bonds, 1918
Watercolor painted for the Fourth Liberty Loan Poster Series

Cover Design and Digital Adjustment

Britt Odom, Another Kind of Red

PUBLISHED BY



The Foundation for
American Christian Education

Forming Christian Character in Children . . . Since 1965!

PO Box 9588, Chesapeake, Virginia 23321-9588

Ordering and catalogue

800-352-3223 • www.face.net

A Republic If You Can Keep It

America's Authentic Liberty Confronts Contemporary Counterfeits

America, a model of freedom worldwide

America's urgent need to redeem her heritage of liberty and serve the world community as a model of freedom becomes more vital every day. In his acceptance speech at the 2004 Republican National Convention, President Bush highlighted liberty as the hallmark of America's identity and mission in the world. He stated that "the story of America is the story of expanding liberty," and that "our nation's founding commitment is still our deepest commitment: in our world, and here at home." He also declared, "By promoting liberty abroad, we will build a safer world. By encouraging liberty at home, we will build a more hopeful America." A new book by Dr. Gai Ferdon, published

by the Foundation for American Christian Education, *A Republic If You Can Keep It*, rises to the challenge of our president, well-timed to coincide with the quadricentennial year of the settlement of Virginia. It also recognizes the unique role of Virginia in the establishment of our nation's liberty, honoring Virginia as the home of great constitutional thinkers like former president and statesman James Madison.

New Book Based on a Classic Resource

Verna Hall's *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America, Vol. I: Christian Self-Government* in 1960 confronted and countered the Marxist-Leninist assumptions that threatened mid-twentieth-century America. *CHOC I* contains seven principles identified by its compilers as an enduring canon of Biblical values that gave birth to America's Christian history: "God's Principle of Individu-



America's government is built upon Biblical principles

ality," "The Christian Principle of Self-Government," "America's Heritage of Christian Character," "Conscience Is the Most Sacred of All Property," "The Christian Form of Our Government," "How the Seed of Local Self-Government Is Planted," and "The Christian Principle of American Political Union."

A Republic If You Can Keep It proves the enduring nature of these seven Christian Principles by recommissioning them to champion liberty against a new foe—postmodernism. Postmodernism is the philosophical movement common in the modern-day West characterized by lack of confidence in absolute truth. It is the overarching philosophy over multiculturalism, cultural relativism, moral relativism, linguistic relativism, historical relativism, legal relativism, and internationalism. Postmodernism rejects the value of the individual and the family, revering instead the collective as the fundamental social unit (sharing ground with socialism). In the global arena as internationalism, postmodernism rejects the sovereignty of the individual nation-state, looking instead to international bodies to govern.

Counterfeit Unveiled

Each chapter of *A Republic if You Can Keep It* presents an historic principle, shows its role in America's founding era, contrasts it with its contemporary counterfeit principle, and exposes the counterfeit's policy consequences in today's American society.

In addition to examining the counterfeit principles undermining America's Christian character, liberty, and constitutional system of government, *A Republic If You Can Keep It* reveals the effect of postmodernism and its daughter, relativism, in different areas of American society. The natural outgrowth of the postmodern approach is revealed in relative jurisprudence and legal philosophy aimed at reacting to issues in society rather than built on principled precedence. Postmodernism's fruit is also seen in America's current intellectual crisis of relative truth, and the triumph of the international governing body over the sovereignty of individual nation-states.

American Liberty: the Product of Christianity

America's liberty arose from a Biblical Chris-

The State Is the Servant of Man

tian view of man and life, the dominant intellectual current of America's 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. America's formative periods of colonization, development of state constitutions, and foundation of the Republic were expressions of thoroughly Christian thought, not an enlightened rationalism, deism, romanticism, or transcendentalism. These and other hollow philosophies waited on the intellectual horizon to erode our liberty's foundation, but they did not impact America's founding. Many have attempted to rewrite our national history to reflect the influence of Godless philosophies in an effort to discredit Christianity and render it irrelevant in the minds of Americans. Truly, America's liberty, prosperity, and strength are the direct fruit of the Reformation, especially in England.

Multiculturalism asserts that less developed cultures should be praised regardless of their contributions (or lack thereof) to civilization. It minimizes the significant and praiseworthy achievements of Western societies in particular, and revises history to establish an imaginary past that maligns the West. In its efforts to raise the dignity of less developed nations,

multiculturalism flatters even the corrupt values of less developed nations while concealing the true, life-giving values of so-called "imperialist" nations. By concealing the truth from those who most need its liberating power, multiculturalism further enslaves and cripples. Speaking the truth—and the whole truth—sets people and nations free (John 8:32). In Herbert Schlossberg's *Idols for Destruction*, he eloquently declares, "The culture of the West, infused as it is with Christian values, is superior to any other, and all the valid charges against the West are indications that it has betrayed its own heritage." [1] In other words, although the West has not always acted irreproachably, its injustices are the result of failing to living by its Christian principles, not evidence of the Christian principles themselves being evil or false.

The State: the Servant of Man

Jurisdiction—in other words, who's responsible for doing what in society, whether the government or someone in the private sector—is the anchor of civil and religious liberty. America's liberty tradition was possible because our founders understood jurisdiction,

[1] Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation with American Society*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983, 72.



By surrendering individual self-government, we leave a vacuum of authority

and knew the nature and direction of authority. The government is God's chosen tool to serve and protect the rights of the individual. The government exists to provide stability so that each person can fulfill his moral duties to God and his neighbor without fear, and live his life as he chooses so long as he doesn't infringe on the rights of his neighbor. The Declaration of Independence states: "that all men are . . . endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, . . ." Man is not a servant of the state—rather, the state is a servant of man.

The Free and Independent Man

The postmodern assault on America confuses the nature and direction of authority. Valuing the collective as the fundamental social unit, postmodernism views the individual as a fraction of society, an incomplete, helpless minion of the collective. It sees man as the pawn of the state, and therefore protects the imagined

"rights" of the state at the expense of the true God-given rights of the individual. By sacrificing individual self-government in exchange for dependence on the state, Americans greatly enlarge the jurisdiction of civil power, unwittingly endangering their own rights and freedoms.

The Biblical principles of individuality and liberty of conscience are fundamental values in a society that supports the dignity and self-government of each member. The modern counterfeits of individualism and autonomy, self-worship and self-centeredness, result in a crippling "entitlement mentality" in the needy. This "entitlement mentality" assumes that a person is unable to improve or affect his situation—that he must be rescued from his circumstances by someone else (usually the government). This mindset creates a cycle of dependence and indignity in the poor instead of enabling and equipping them to become self-supporting (the fruit of a Biblical worldview).

Egalitarianism: Counterfeit Equality

Individual management of private property once sustained a voluntary charitable system that confronted poverty; this has given way

to expensive and ineffective state-regulated programs for the mandatory redistribution of wealth. The state's "generosity" extends not only to the needy within our own nation, but globally in the form of massive foreign aid in the name of disarmament, humanitarianism, and egalitarianism. Egalitarianism is a corruption of the Christian concept of equality: equality gives equal value to every individual in society and ensures equal protection under the law. Among other things, egalitarianism, a postmodern counterfeit, enforces equality of condition (regarding social, political, and economic privileges) among all members of society. In particular, it charges the state with apportioning equal wealth to every person, an essential task in Communism. This endangers the long-protected Western value of private property by redistributing wealth. Although it initially appears to be benign, the practice of state-regulated entitlement programs hinders individuals from fulfilling their moral duties to God and their neighbors. Charity, once considered a matter of individual conscience motivated by the highest virtue of love, has been exchanged for state-ordered regulation to

make us "good." In the final analysis, by surrendering individual self-government in this area, we leave a vacuum of responsibility that the state naturally expands to fill.

Man has been reduced to a helpless victim

Legal and Judicial Befuddlement

Man, once viewed as an accountable being, is reduced by postmodernism to a helpless victim, a casualty of biological and environmental factors, gender and social inequalities, etc. This mindset leads to the conviction that the jurisdiction of civil government, especially at the national level, should be expanded to solve all sorts of new social evils. Federalism, once the bulwark of our liberty, is being displaced by centralism, while our constitutional republic of law is transformed into a social democracy responsible for even the most menial tasks at home and abroad.



The more significant the desired blessing, the greater the sacrifice required

According to today's postmodern confusion of thought, individuals are no longer considered unique, distinct from the rest of creation, and made in the image of God with unalienable rights and duties. This also causes disproportionate honoring of nature: the environment is so superior to mankind that man is seen as its servant instead of its steward. This turns the Christian concept of stewardship and dominion over creation (found in Genesis 1:28) on its head, and results in some of the extreme environmental policies of the left.

Postmodernism: Battlefield in the New War of Ideas

Postmodern shifts in our culture's ideas about truth have so altered our society that the nature of our judicial order is threatened. The founders intended that our legal system be grounded in common-law precedence based on the pre-existing law established by God. They believed in the existence of absolute truth, and our entire legal system is based on the Biblical presupposition of its existence. Postmodernism, however, rejects the concept of absolute truth, and instead attempts to es-

tablish a jurisprudence that reacts to circumstances in society, unanchored by principle or precedence.

Postmodernism also attacks the traditional view of international relations. The nation-state system, once considered the mainstay of international security, is now portrayed as the primary obstacle to peace. In order to ensure stability, this new view declares, common interests shared by nations (instead of national interests stemming from national identities) must be pursued. This demands that each nation relinquish its sovereignty to an international body equipped with the authority to single-handedly alter the global landscape. The sovereignty of the nation-state, with national interests, citizenship obligations, and foreign policy authority, is slowly surrendering to the claims of internationalism. Internationalism strives for lofty utopian ideals of global unity, common interests, world citizenship, and a one-world-state system of government.

Reform for Winning Again the Victory of Liberty

Confusion undermines the national charac-

ter and contributes to the drift from the Biblical principles that built the nation. The temptation is to believe too much has been lost—that we have been carried along too far from the hope of restoration. While there is no quick fix, no easy solution to our society's many and varied problems, as long as we retain the principles that our nation was founded upon, there is hope for the survival and growth of liberty, and the return of the Christian character that hallmarked our nation.

Postmodernism poses in the disguise of a credible alternative to contemporary problems while playing out the subversion of our basic liberties. It sells out true individuality for a counterfeit form of individualism or self-worship. It replaces authentic equality with egalitarianism. It abandons genuine liberty and embraces relativism's license. It subverts our national sovereignty to global governance. It imposes the contemporary opinions of society on our legal and judicial system. Postmodernism's stealthy tentacles are subtly reaching into every corner of American life, and advancing ever closer to the heart of our liberties. To regain lost ground, and reassert our historic

foundations, we cannot tolerate these intellectual invaders in the name of diversity, but we must instead boldly confront them. We must restore the Biblical principles that built our nation in our children to preserve our constitutional republic, and reclaim our sovereignty as a nation.

Although winning back the liberty-heritage that has so long been targeted by persuasive but empty philosophies is an enormous task, we have shining examples throughout our history of whole-hearted devotion to freedom. One such example is found in the Pilgrims, who made their homes on the forbidding shores of Plymouth. They deeply understood that the more significant and lasting the blessing, the greater the sacrifice required to secure it. Their longing for lasting liberty compelled them to leave one land to sacrificially lay down their very lives in a new, unbroken one, steadfastly enduring hardship of all kinds. The Pilgrims seized this bold opportunity to be "even as stepping stones unto others for the performing of so great a work."^[2]

How can we, their children and heirs of that hard-won liberty, be satisfied with giving less?

[2] William Bradford's Of Plimoth Plantation quoted in Verna Hall's *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America*, Vol. I: *Christian Self-Government*, Chesapeake, VA: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1960, 193.



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God's Principle of Individuality

Authentic: Created Personhood and Its Unique Identity

versus

Counterfeit: Collectivism and Multiculturalism

Christian Principle of Self-Government and Christian Character

Authentic: Individual Authority and Responsibility

versus

Counterfeit: Government Control and Regulation

"Conscience Is the Most Sacred of All Property" or Liberty of Conscience

Authentic: Individual Stewardship of Property

versus

Counterfeit: The Welfare State's Redistribution of Property

Christian Form of Government and the Principle of Local Self-Government

Authentic: Representative Republic with Limited Civil Government

versus

Counterfeit: Expanding Centralization of Power

Christian Principle of American Political Union

Authentic: Sovereignty of the Nation-State

versus

Counterfeit: Subjection to International Bodies

New Book Based on a Classic Resource

A Republic If You Can Keep It is an adaptation of America's historic Christian principles of government developed in Verna Hall's *Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America, Vol. I: Christian Self-Government* (Foundation for American Christian Education, 1960) to confront today's threat of postmodernism. By reasserting America's historic Christian principles of government, this new publication provides a fresh yet time-tested approach to today's ongoing policy.

CHOC I, as Miss Hall's first book is known, is a compilation of primary and secondary source excerpts documenting America's Christian history from its earliest founding through the American War for Independence. The intention of the original volume was to remind America of those distinctly Christian principles that uphold American institutions of liberty in order to reaffirm and reapply them to protect America's mid-20th century society from the corrupting

influence of Marxism-Leninism.

A Republic If You Can Keep It refutes the widespread opinion among educational institutions that America's founding texts are archaic, holding time-bound principles that are irrelevant to contemporary American life. Instead, this book demonstrates in today's language the vital link between America's past and present, revealing those enduring principles of human relationships and institutions that established the character and structure of early American society. *A Republic If You Can Keep It* asserts that America's Christian principles of civil and religious liberty are just as relevant to the complex issues presented by the twenty-first century. The goal of the book is to equip readers to contend against postmodern principles, destructive counterfeits of true Biblical principles, by redeploing America's historical values and principles that framed her liberty.



You Can Join Us in This Mission!

The Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to reminding America of her Christian history and unique liberty heritage—individual Christian character and timeless principles.

Founded in 1965, FACE has published many books documenting America's Christian history through primary sources, developed an effective K–12 curriculum modeled after the education of the founding era (the Principle Approach®), trained parents and teachers, and equipped and inspired ordinary citizens with the principles that sustain liberty. Many of those ordinary citizens founded their own ministries sharing America's Christian history; some founded schools employing the Principle Approach. As the result of the Foundation's work, families all

over the nation have learned the principles of liberty—the fruit of Christianity, and the hope for America's future.

It is the sacred honor of every American patriot to pass on the love of liberty to the next generation. Forming Christian character in children is the key that will determine the type and scope of government, the quality of culture, the influence of the Church, the strength of the family, and the health of the economy of our nation tomorrow.

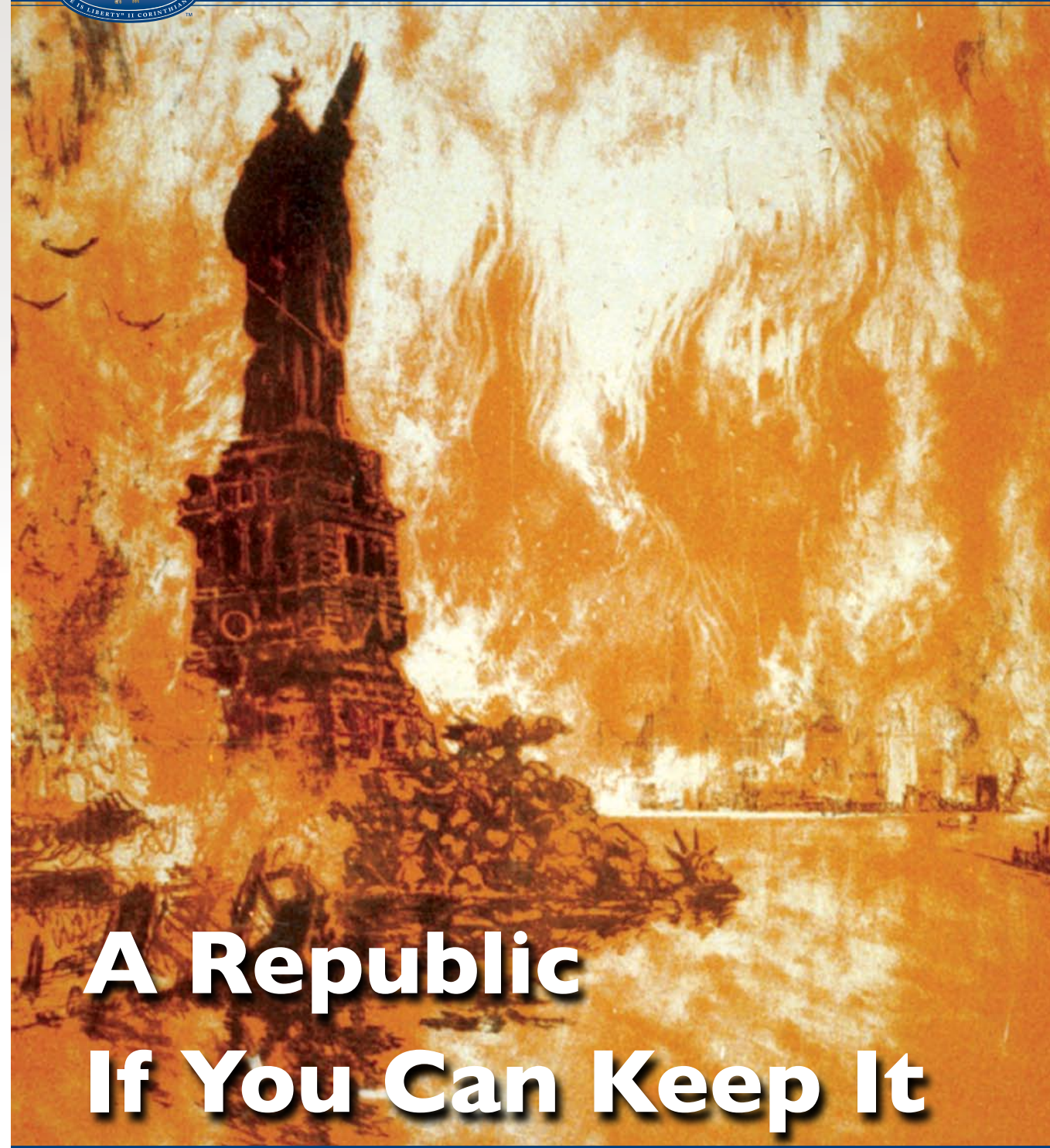
If you would like to help us fulfill this mission, visit the Foundation for American Christian Education at www.face.net or call 800.352.3223. You may also use the attached remittance envelope to support the Foundation for American Christian Education with your tax-deductible contribution to preserve America's authentic liberty.

Meet the Author

Dr. Gai Ferdon joined the Foundation for American Christian Education in April 2004 to spearhead the editing of its seminal volume, *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America, Vol. I: Christian Self-Government*. This newly updated work will better serve the Foundation and its partner organizations in the 21st century.

In May of 2000, Dr. Ferdon left Virginia to pursue her doctoral studies with the University of Leicester, United Kingdom in early modern British political thought. These studies were undertaken at Tyndale House, an evangelical Biblical studies library in Cambridge. She completed her PhD in November, 2004. Dr. Ferdon also holds a Masters Degree

in Government and Public Policy from Regent University, where she continues as an adjunct professor in the School of Undergraduate Studies and the School of Education. Dr. Ferdon has recently accepted an assistant professorship position with Liberty University's Helms School of Government beginning in the spring of 2007.



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