



DAVE KISTLER

"Our Christian Nation"

This past week, while on his first overseas trip, President Barack Obama emphatically stated that "America is not a Christian nation." While revisionist historians would agree, wholeheartedly, with the president's assessment, the facts simply do not support his declaration. Consider the following insightful information.

Our first president, George Washington, said, "It is impossible to rightfully govern the world without God and the Bible." The same Washington clearly stated, "What children should learn above all else in American schools is the religion of Jesus Christ." The Bible was the first textbook in American schools and acted as the foundation for all education, exerting profound influence on American life.

Fisher Ames, a name unknown by most Americans, was a strong supporter of the Bill of Rights (the first 10 Amendments to our U. S. Constitution) and actually penned the wording of the First Amendment. Born in Dedham, Massachusetts, Ames received a classical education and graduated from Harvard College in 1774. He served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, as well as in the U.S. Congress. Though chosen to be President of Harvard in 1805, he declined because of his ailing health, and died three years later. After witnessing the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1787, Ames noted, with great concern, the introduction of books, other than the Bible, into the schools, prompting him to make the following observation. "We have a dangerous trend beginning to take place in our education. We are spending less time, in the classroom, on the Bible, which should be the principle text in our schools. The Bible states great moral lessons better than any other man made book." Obviously, Ames believed that America was founded on Christian principles and on the Judeo-Christian ethic.

Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, and author of the phrase "separation of Church and state" (a phrase not in the Constitution, but used, rather, in a letter he wrote to the Danbury Baptist Convention in 1802), was

probably not a Christian. However, he understood clearly the Christian founding and heritage of this great land. In 1804, President Jefferson, by official Presidential act, ordered an extension of the 1787 Act of Congress that designated federal land "for the sole use of Christian Indians and the Moravian Brethren Missionaries for the civilizing of the Indians and the promoting of Christianity." That's right! Jefferson actually promoted Christianity and used specific language that did so, as well.

Abraham Lincoln (16th President of the U. S.), in his now famous Gettysburg Address, used the phrase "this nation, under God" to refer to his beloved United States. Our National Motto, inscribed above the Speaker of the House's platform, is "One Nation Under God", signifying America's conception by, and dedication to, the God of heaven. Numerous governmental buildings in our nation's capital have references to the Bible, and the God of the Bible, on them, including the phrase "Praise Be To God" at the top of the 555ft. Washington Monument, and the 10 Commandments over the U.S. Supreme Court Building. Our Founder's knowledge of the Bible, specifically Isaiah 33:22, was the basis upon which they established the three branches of our government ("For the LORD is our Judge (Judicial Branch), the LORD is our Lawgiver (Legislative Branch); the LORD is our King (Executive Branch), He will save us."

I trust that we, as faith and freedom loving Americans, will listen carefully to what is coming from the lips of our national leaders. When their comments contain inaccuracies, may we correct them! When their speech contains outright lies, may we refute them! Above all, may we be thoroughly familiar with our nation's founding and its founding documents (especially the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution). To be ignorant of any of these (especially the Scriptures) might well cost us our freedom, and the opportunity to practice our faith.

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