

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present,

Lecture 11, The Enlightenment

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I do like to read a little devotional thing, but we haven't been together for a couple of Fridays except for our discussion of the text and everything, so we haven't been actually teaching. And I forget to be honest with you if I read one of my favorite passages from John Calvin, so I don't remember if I did it or not. So, for a little devotional thinking, kind of through some things, I'm reading from the beginning of Calvin's Institutes this morning, Book 1, Chapter 1, and I love the way he starts his Institutes.

He says that nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other, it is not easy to discern. In the first place, no one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God, in whom he lives and moves, Acts 17:28.

For quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves. Indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God. Then, by these benefits shed like dew from heaven upon us, we are led as by rivulets to the spring itself.

Indeed, our very poverty better discloses the infinitude of benefits that are reposed in God. The miserable ruin into which the rebellion of the first man cast us especially compels us to look upward. Thus, not only will we, in fasting and hungering, seek thence what we lack, but in being aroused by fear, we shall learn humility.

For as a veritable world of miseries is to be found in mankind, and we are thereby despoiled of divine raiment, our shameful nakedness exposes a teeming hoard of infamies. Each of us must then be so stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness as to attain at least some knowledge of God. Thus, from the feeling of our own ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, and, what is more, depravity and corruption, we recognize that the true light of wisdom, sound virtue, full abundance of every good, and purity of righteousness rest in the Lord alone.

To this extent, we are prompted by our own ills to contemplate the good things of God, and we cannot seriously aspire to him before we begin to become displeased with ourselves. For what man in all the world would not gladly remain as he is? What man does not remain as he is so long as he does not know himself, that is, while content with his own gifts and either ignorant or unmindful of his own misery? Accordingly, the knowledge of ourselves not only arouses us to seek God but also, as it were, leads us by the hand to find him. So, the beginning of the Institutes, knowing

God and knowing ourselves, and how integrally related they are, really is a beautiful way to begin.

So that's how he starts. Well, that's just a little devotional for him. We're going to, we, I don't know if we'll finish up this lecture, we may, but let's just kind of remind ourselves where we are here, Lecture 5, on page 13 of the syllabus.

What we're trying to do in this lecture, and we're calling this lecture The Theology of the Age of the Enlightenment, and what we're trying to do in this lecture is see how there was a real response to the Church, to organized Christianity, to the Scriptures, to the revelation of God in Christ, and so forth, kind of as a backlash, almost, as you come into this Age of the Enlightenment. Then, we decided to go to four places: England, France, Germany, and America. We would talk about those four places in relation to that kind of backlash. Okay, remind ourselves that just in England, the response to Christianity was pretty measured in a sense.

It wasn't too violent, really. It was deism. Deism was a philosophy, and it was a monotheistic philosophy of God is up there, we're down here, and leading the virtuous life is the best expression of a good Christian, in a sense.

It eventually evolves into Unitarianism. Very measured response. The next country was France, of course, and we mentioned naturalism as a kind of expression of the French response to the Church, and the French response to the Church and to Christianity was very violent.

The French Revolution is a good example of that. Much less measured than the English response. We mentioned that there were some people in that world who really kind of gave voice to this response to Christianity.

So, we mentioned Spinoza, we mentioned Voltaire, and then the third person we mentioned was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. And we said that while he was born in Switzerland, though, he moved to Paris, so we used him as a, he did a lot of his writing and thinking in Paris, so we used him as a kind of a natural model for the French response. Okay, he is himself, however, pretty measured, and we said we were going to say four things about Rousseau.

I think we said the first two, didn't we? Did we give two things about Rousseau? Did we talk about kind of feeling rather than rationality? The feeling is the hallmark of what we mentioned, okay? And then did we mention kind of his, the return to nature, kind of the noble savage imagery? Getting away from you need to get away from all the oppression that the Industrial Revolution has brought upon you, and you need to kind of stand back from that. And if you're really going to understand what you're, you shouldn't live lives of selfishness, you shouldn't live lives of want, you shouldn't live lives of jealousy and so forth, you should live a more virtuous life than

that, you know? And the noble savage can kind of teach us those virtues, I think we mentioned that. Did we get to number three in the importance of, no, okay?

So, I've got two more things to say about Rousseau that are helpful in terms of kind of underlining the age of the Enlightenment, but both of these are also helpful to when we come to America as well. So, okay, number three is there's one place where reason is very important for Rousseau. So, he is a product of the Enlightenment in this sense.

So, there is a place where reason is very important. And the place where it is important is in the formation of government. In the formation of government, reasonable people are able to form and shape the government that they want or should have.

So, under this third point, now notice Rousseau's dates. If you want, there is a very, the top of the list here, from 1712 to 1728. So, during the 18th century, what Rousseau challenged was the divine right of kings. There's no divine right of kings.

Governments are not instituted by divine right. Governments are instituted by the reasonable will of the people. And the people should have a say in the formation of government.

So that becomes a real, obviously, a very, a real challenge to the French monarchy, right as he's teaching in Paris. And some of that thinking, of course, is going to lead up to the French Revolution, which became infinitely more violent than I think Rousseau would have wanted it. But in any case, he challenges the divine right of kings.

Now, governments are formed by the will of the people, by the reasonable will of the people, and governments are formed by the common people. That's going to sound familiar when we come over to America's understanding of the formation of government. So Rousseau is going to be very, very influential. As an Enlightenment thinker, he's going to be very influential in American thinking.

So we want to watch for that kind of connection when we come to it. Okay, number four with Rousseau, as a lot of authors have said, Rousseau kind of helped to establish a civil religion. It wasn't necessarily a religion of the church.

It wasn't a religion, certainly not a religion of Orthodox Christianity, but it was a civil religion. Now, what did that civil religion, and what were the characteristics of that civil religion? Well, one characteristic was a belief in God, a belief in the supreme being. So this civil religion believed in God, the supreme being.

It wasn't kind of a godless religion or a godless society that he was after. So that's number one. So civil religion, number one, God.

Number two is a belief in personal immortality. There is, as this civil religion does believe in some kind of reward and punishment because they reasoned that that's not taken care of in this life. There are a lot of good people who suffer and aren't rewarded.

There are a lot of evil people who do evil things and never seem to be punished. So there is some kind of a sense of personal immortality where there are rewards and punishments in an afterlife of some kind. So that's number two in terms of civil religion.

Okay, number three, and the importance of living the good life, the virtuous life, in this life. In civil religion, we want people to live the good life, the moral life, and the virtuous life in this world. Number four was the principle of toleration.

The principle of toleration is tolerating other people, other points of view, other religions, and so forth. But the principle of toleration is certainly part of a civil religion. Now again, not part of an organized Christian denomination, not part of an organized Christian church or something like that.

But certainly kind of in the fabric of civil society. Now, these kinds of things would also be true in America as people are reading Rousseau over here; that kind of interest in civil religion has got to take root here on American soil as well. Okay, so that's number C. It's C in your outline, but we gave A the introduction, then we gave B England, the measured response of deism, and C the Enlightenment response in France, which was naturalism but with much fewer restraints.

Any questions about that? Then we'll go on to Germany and to America. Okay, let's go to D then, let's go to Germany. The word I would use for Germany at this time would be rationalism.

Let's go back to our categories here, but certainly rationalism, there's no doubt about that. Reason in Germany became kind of the touchstone for understanding reality. So, if you want to understand the world around you, including the scientific world, we have a day in which we're kind of celebrating the sciences here at Gordon.

If you want to understand the scientific world, you have to put reason to use in order to understand the world around you. So, there is that external world that can be known by reason, and many people think known by reason alone. Another thing about Germany is that what you get in Germany is a belief that there's an order in the universe.

Okay, and what our job is, what the job of human beings is, is to harness that order. There's an order in the universe, let's harness that order, let's use that order, and let's allow the use of that order to kind of define our lives. So, the rational use of order in order to define living, including scientific life, has become very important in Germany, and with the rise of German universities, that kind of philosophy of rationalism has become pretty dominant.

Now we will see this also, as we mentioned the other day, but you will also see this in art, music, and the fine arts. You will see a kind of rationalism in terms of artistic expression, whether it's painting or whether it's music, and like I say, if you like Handel-Haydn, if you would like to belong to the Handel-Haydn society, my wife and I belong to that society quite a few years, if you like that kind of music, that 18th-century music, you would understand this kind of stuff. It sounds very rational, very logical, very ordered.

The music is very ordered, isn't it? So that becomes important. Okay, now, how did this work out in Germany? How did this work out in religion? That's our most important, that's what we're interested in. How does this rationalism work out religiously in Germany? Well, I'm going to mention two things: how it worked out in religion.

First of all, I'm going to just mention how it worked out in religion in general. How did it work out in kind of a religious philosophy, this rationalism? Everything has to be ordered; everything has to be known rationally in order to count it as true and meaningful, and so forth. Well, as a matter of fact, in terms of religion in general, it worked out with a very severe criticism of the Bible, of the church, of Christian history.

So, if you can't, if you're thinking of religion, that religion has to be measured only by reason, by reason alone, by rationality alone, then the Bible, the church, and a lot of Christianity went out the door. This is where you get the rise of what we call biblical criticism, really severe, heavy-handed biblical criticism, which comes in the 18th century in Germany and 19th century as people were so critical of the Bible, of Christianity, of the church, organized religion, and so forth. It got to such an extreme that in Germany, there were people even doubting the historicity of Jesus.

So, they doubted the historicity of Jesus. They said Jesus was a made-up figure, the Gospels were written very late, they made up Jesus as the ideal human being, kind of, but there never was a Jesus of Nazareth, who lived in Nazareth, ministered in Galilee and Judea, died on a Roman cross, was resurrected and so forth. They denied all of that. So the first result is really a pretty radical biblical criticism that comes in now in Germany.

And really, really challenges the church and the thinking of the church, no doubt about that. So, the second result was a redirection of Lutheranism, because Lutheranism basically is the state church in Germany. So, Lutheranism was redirected in Germany in the 18th century.

Now, how is it redirected? Well, I think one thing we forget about Luther is to go back to Luther himself for a minute. Luther was a very, you know, larger-than-life figure, but he was very creative, imaginative, and creative. He didn't want a church where just kind people sat in the pews on Sunday and didn't think through anything; he just listened to the sermon and so forth.

There was creativity about Luther, imagination about Luther, a passion for the Gospel and for the truths of the Gospel, and all that. So you had a larger-than-life figure, and Lutheranism in the first generation following Luther took on those kinds of characteristics. But once you get to the 18th century, and here's our word right at the top here, scholasticism, once you get to the 18th century, what developed was a Lutheran scholasticism in the 18th century.

What developed in the Lutheran church was a very dead, scholastic, rational kind of religion, and the common people were going to their Lutheran churches on Sunday morning, and they were hearing. Basically, they heard treatises, theological treatises. They weren't hearing the Bible come alive through the preaching like it did through Luther. So, there was a deadness to Lutheranism, which settled in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Now there are, long story short on this second one, so the first one was just religion in general, the second one is specifically with Lutheranism, but there is going to be a movement that is going to take a look, there's going to be a group of Lutherans, they're going to take a look at this and they're going to say, is this what the church is intended to be? Is it dead, scholastic kind of? No, they're going to say no, this is not what Lutheranism was ever intended to be, and so they're going to try to bring Lutheranism alive again, and that movement was called Pietism. I don't have that on the list. We're going to lecture. Actually, it's on your syllabus because the first group in the next lecture we're going to talk about are the Pietists, but that movement is called Pietism, bringing the Lutheran church alive once more to what it was intended to be. Okay, so Germany, this kind of rationalism in Germany.

Now, let me stop there for just a minute before I move to America. We've got England, we've got France, we've got Germany, responding in the age of the enlightenment, but responding to the church and responding to Christianity and sometimes pretty harsh criticism about the church, Christianity, Christ, and so forth, but anything about these three, we're going to move to America in just a minute. Okay, let's come over to these shores, let's come over to America and see what we have in America in terms of the age of the Enlightenment.

Okay, before we do, let me just, oh, I think any terms we've got are there, so before we do, let me just say how much I love my job at Gordon College. Let me just say how delighted I am to be here now in my 41st year at Gordon. So, I'm going to say things about the enlightenment in America that you might not all agree with, and I will understand that.

I'm very sympathetic to that. I'm going to try to explain the enlightenment in America as I understand it. So, are we okay with that? Can I do that? You don't mind if I do that, do you? Let's see if there are some differences of opinion about that.

Let's see if you don't quite. I'm not trying to sell you anything, but I'm trying to lay it out. So I have to do that, you know, I think it's important just that you know that. I'm just trying to lay this out.

Are you okay with that? So, let's go, let's see what happened in America. I begin by talking about the founding fathers, basically the founding fathers, and by them, I'm thinking of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and people like that. Okay, so here's my premise, and then I'll develop it a bit.

There was, in America, there was pervasive, in American public life, there was a pervasive deism. There's no doubt about that in American public life. Deism had come over from England and had really taken shape and taken form, taken hold, I would say, of American public life, especially American intellectual life.

The life of the universities, the life of many, some of the churches, and so forth. Now, that's eventually going to evolve into Unitarianism, but the first Unitarian church in America was not until after the revolution. So, the first Unitarian church was not until 1785.

So, we don't have deism evolving into, kind of taking that denominational form, actually into after the American Revolution, but we have it taking shape during the time of the American Revolution. So, deism is really, really, really important here. Okay, so here's my thesis.

My thesis is that the founding fathers were basically enlightened deists. They picked up on Enlightenment principles, and in the founding of America, they put those Enlightenment principles to good use in the founding of what they believed was going on here. So, what is that to say? I do not see the founding fathers that I have mentioned, and I do not see them as flaming evangelicals.

I do not see them as people who are committed to what we would call orthodox evangelical Christianity, biblical Christianity. Some of you may see them, and there were some of the people who signed the Declaration of Independence, for example,

who were that, no doubt about that. But the people who had the most impact on American public life and somewhat on American religious life, in terms of the founding fathers, I would see as enlightened deists.

Okay, so let me just use Thomas Jefferson as an example of that. Thomas Jefferson developed what he called the Jefferson, what became known as the Jefferson Bible. I do not know if you have ever seen the Jefferson Bible, but the Jefferson Bible, what Thomas Jefferson did in Jefferson Bible was he eliminated all of the miracles of Jesus because he did not think the miracles of Jesus were true to the story, that these were made up in order to show Jesus to be divine, which he was not, of course, according to Jefferson.

So, the Jefferson Bible gets rid of all the miracles and ends up with Jesus, whom he thinks is just a nice person to follow. We want to be a moral man like Jesus was a moral man, and we want to live by the Beatitudes. Well, you cannot cut out the miracles of the New Testament and still have the Jesus of the Gospels.

I mean, you just cannot do that and have the Gospel story because they are essential to the Gospel story and to the story of the Kingdom. That is what Jefferson did. So I would see he is doing an Enlightenment kind of deistic, kind of Unitarian kind of thing in doing that.

So, I would say that what follows from that is that America was founded on Enlightenment principles, not Biblical principles. I am talking about the actual founding of America here. It was not founded on, I would not say it was founded on Biblical principles, but Enlightenment principles.

Let me use an example of that from the Declaration of Independence. Okay, you know this as well as I do. The Declaration of Independence says we hold these truths to be what? We hold these truths to be self-evident.

We hold these truths to be self-evident. In other words, the Declaration of Independence does not say we hold these truths to be Biblical. They are using a philosophical kind of self-evidence, a kind of common sense realism here.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The deists believed in the Creator God, of course, but they did not see God as the Redeemer.

They did not see God as the Savior. So, it did not say that we hold these truths to be self-evident. We hold these truths to be self-evident.

They were endowed by their Savior God, by their Redeemer. It does not say that. It says we are endowed by their Creator.

That language is very deistic language. Self-evident truths, the Creator God. So, I make the case then that what happened in America, what happened religiously and politically, was a deism that came into America and helped to provide, I would say, the philosophical foundation for American public life and for American religious life, especially as some Americans moved into Unitarianism.

Now, let me just go back here. Sometimes in America, there are some writers who are downright savage in their attack on Christianity. Now, people like Jefferson was not.

The enlightened deists were not savage in their attack on Christianity. They were just using Enlightenment principles, deistic principles, and so forth. Some people were, and a perfect example of this is Thomas Paine.

And there he writes, 1737 to 1809. What Thomas Paine does in the Age of Reason Notice the title of the book, Age of Reason. So, this is not the Age of Revelation from God.

This is the Age of Reason. And what Thomas Paine does in his book is he really does attack Orthodox Christianity. He's really attacking pretty savagely in his attack on Orthodox Christianity.

What he does in the book, in Age of Reason, basically says that the only thing that's going to work in this 18th century is deism. So, the Age of Reason, the book, is kind of a defense of deism. Therefore, it's a defense of those kinds of things like natural reason, the rights of people, all people, political equality, and so forth.

So, this kind of, again, it's not, people like Jefferson, I don't see Jefferson as making that kind of a savage attack, but I see someone like Thomas Paine, whose book was very influential, making a pretty savage attack upon Orthodox Christianity. And trying to espouse for this nation, trying to espouse natural rights. And you get those natural rights by common sense, by reason, by looking at the natural world, by natural theology, and all kinds of things, you know, the civil liberties that do.

Okay, now I'll give you a chance to. I want you to question this and talk about it, but I'll give you a chance to do that. Let me just say that this was then a theology by way of anthropology. What developed in our country then, in the 19th century and the 18th century, was a theology by way of anthropology.

That is, understanding theology by way of our own human, rational endeavors, and so forth. And so, there was kind of an exaltation of human beings here. Okay, now, what we want to take note of is that this is a direct turning point for the Puritans.

So, think back to the Puritans. Think back to Boston, the city set on a hill. Think back to the pilgrims in Plymouth.

Think back to Roger Williams in Rhode Island. Think back to the high Calvinism of the Puritans. Their theology was not an exaltation, and it was not by way of anthropology.

Their theology was by way of revelation of God in the scriptures and in Christ. What you have now is a whole turning, a tremendous turning, in a sense, of both public life and religious life toward a kind of anthropology. Away from the high Calvinism of the early Puritans, the first Puritans went toward more of an Arminian theology, more of a freedom of the will theology of human beings.

So, there has been a major turn in American public life, philosophical life, and religious life. This is pretty major, since the pilgrims landed in 1620. So, we are not even 200 years old when this turn is taking place.

So, you could easily contrast the pilgrims, Puritans, pilgrims, and the framers of the Declaration of Independence, for example, the Founding Fathers. That would be the easy contrast between a kind of high Calvinism on the one hand and an Arminianism and a growing interest in freedom of the will on the other hand. So, there it is.

So, there you have got a whole different world going on here, and that would come into the next century. What is the final result of this deism in American public and religious life? Let me just say what that is. Let me give four or five things here, and then I want to open this up for a few minutes to see if you want to talk about this.

But what is the result of this? If I am right, and I am not trying to make you believe that I am right, I am just trying to present the case here. But, if I am right, if deism was the kind of religious viewpoint that got this whole thing going. Oh, I also meant to say, too, notice how important Rousseau was in all of this.

These people are reading Rousseau, and what does Rousseau say about government? Of course, there is no divine right of kings. Governments are formed by the will of the people. Governments are not formed by, you know, on down, even though I think George Washington probably wanted to be king rather than president.

That is my own feeling, anyway, but I think he really wanted to be a king. But, governments are not formed on the top down. Governments are formed by the will of the people.

So, you see how important Rousseau was. Okay, having said that, what are some final results of deism in America? Let me just click them off for you. The number one final result is an emphasis on natural revelation and natural theology.

An emphasis on natural revelation by way of natural theology, looking at the world around you and making some theological deductions from what you see in the world around you. That is completely different from a special revelation taught by the Puritans. God has specially revealed himself in the scriptures and in Christ, especially in Christ, of course.

That is different. So, that is one thing. Okay, number two, the second kind of result of all of this is the laws of the universe.

God has established the laws of the universe, but he does not meddle in the laws of the universe. The laws of the universe work themselves out by a preconceived kind of rationality here, by a natural theology. That is how we understand the laws of the universe.

We do not understand God, as deists would say. We do not understand God as breaking into the universe in any way and kind of interfering with the natural law that he has established. So, that is number two.

Okay, number three, we have already mentioned before, but it bears repeating. Jesus is a good moral example. So, Jesus is a good moral person, a good moral example, and we should follow his example.

We mentioned the other day how C.S. Lewis put the lie to that in a sense. You cannot have Jesus as a good moral person. He is either Lord or he is a liar.

So, he is one or the other, but you cannot take a middle ground on Jesus. You either see him as Lord, or you see him as a liar. He is just deranged.

He is calling himself God. So, that is number three, okay? Number four, with this exaltation of human reason, this ability to reason, this rational ability that people have, even in a sense to control the universe through scientific means, a growing scientific means, nothing like we have today. With that, then, you do have the outright denial of original sin and even a denial of radically sinful actions.

These people didn't really believe in sin. They certainly didn't believe in original sin. They certainly didn't believe in some inherited depravity or something like that.

They didn't really believe in sinful actions so much. They were pretty good people, pretty virtuous people. We recognize there are some problems and so forth.

So, there was that that came as a result of that. And then number five, the fifth thing that came as a result of this was kind of salvation by works for these people. The ethical is exalted.

You are saved by the good deeds that you do. God is going to look favorably toward the good deeds that you are doing. So, there was that that came as a result of all of this as well.

Okay, so what do we have in America? We have a deism in America, a revised deism that is exemplified in the formation of this civil government under which we live, and exemplified in the religious life of deism, which eventually evolved into Unitarianism. Alright, that's my case for America. What are we going to do with this case for America? I'm not asking you to buy it, but yeah.

In terms of its relation to Puritanism, were a lot of the Founding Fathers more from the Southern colonies where Puritanism was? Yeah, that's a good question. The Founding Fathers came from various religious traditions. Some of them had Puritan lines to them, but many of them, many of the Founding Fathers, actually came from a British Anglican tradition.

And the British Anglican tradition out of which they came already was turning deists, Unitarian in England. So, it's pretty natural they come over there bringing that with them. So, a lot of, and especially the South, because the Anglican Church was quite large in the South.

So, it wasn't after the war because most Anglicans went back home because they were British, so they supported the monarchy and not the revolution. But a lot of them came from that South, in flowering deism. So then, I mean, what did the Puritan colonies look like at this point? The Puritan colonies by this time, the Puritan colonies, remember in the lecture we talked about, last lecture we talked about growing commercialism making them less evangelical, less religious, or they became less evangelical, less religious, so they grew the commercialism, that kind of thing? Well, that's taking full flower now.

At the time of the revolution in America, many of the congregational churches were turning toward Unitarianism. So, they were deistic; they weren't yet Unitarian in the legal sense because, as I said, the first church didn't become Unitarian until 1785. But they're certainly moving in that direction.

So, that's what it kind of looks like on the scene. During the revolution, a lot of people who had been religious were no longer religious. They turned away from religion in pretty strong numbers during the revolution.

And I expect the reason for that is because they became so involved in political causes that they didn't have time for religion. So, you've got a lot of very fervent political focus at the time of the revolution and a less religious focus. And then it does get complicated with people like Thomas Jefferson forming his own Bible, or it gets complicated with George Washington, who, as far as we can tell, attended church very, very little.

He was Anglican and did go to an Anglican church when he went to church, but he wasn't what you would call a churchman, a person who was really involved in the church and wanted to contribute to the church and so forth. Does that help at all? There's a similar book called *The Light and the Glory*. I'm more familiar with *The Light and the Glory*.

But go ahead. Right. Right.

Right. Are you asking my opinion about that? Because that's also in *The Light and the Glory*, books like *The Light and the Glory*. There's no evidence of that.

That's the problem. There's no historical evidence of that; that's why he did that. The evidence seems to weigh the other way, that he was a deist, that he didn't believe in the miracles.

All these things are, that's right, absolutely debatable, arguable, no doubt about that. There's a book called *The Light and the Glory*; years and years ago, I read that, and that's the same thing. It's kind of the, you know, calling into question professors like Roger Green at Gordon College.

I mean, he didn't actually, you know, but professors who teach that these people were deists. So, he believes that they were evangelicals and so forth. The problem is the record doesn't sustain that argument.

And then, if that were true if these people were evangelicals, the Declaration of Independence should have read completely differently from the way it read. It should not have appealed to self-evident arguments or philosophical arguments. We hold these truths to be biblically, it should have said.

Now, if the Puritans had written the Declaration of Independence, that's exactly what the Puritans would have said. Puritans if we had fought the revolution back in 1650 or something, Puritans would have said, we hold these truths to be biblically revealed to us by God the Father, that all people are created equal, they're endowed by God the Father through Christ our Lord, our Redeemer God, that, you know, God has given to us, you know, these virtues and we should live out these virtues. And we can see all this in the Bible.

I mean, if the Puritans had read and written the Declaration, it would have been completely different. But the written material of these people is the deistic language that they're using. But no, I absolutely agree with your point.

And not everybody believes this. Not everybody at Gordon College, I would say, would hold to what I hold. But the good thing is at Gordon, we're free to teach as we, you know, see it.

But we understand, on this issue, that there are certainly not everybody who sees it the same way. Is it possible that language was used because they believed in a separation of church and state, and that language kind of identifies that separation of church and state? That's true, absolutely. Right, right.

They did put the Creator a lot in the story. So, God as Creator is there a lot. Yeah, that's a good point.

I would see, we've already got evangelicals who believe in the separation of church and state, Baptists who came over here. They were very strong in the separation of church and state because the state had been so oppressive in the old world. So, separation of church and state was a belief shaped, which I mean not only shaped, but was held in common by Deists and Baptists.

So that was something a lot of people held in common, no matter what their kind of religious viewpoint was. So I think they definitely are trying to strike common ground, no doubt about that. My feeling is they're doing it from their own point of view, basically, especially in the narratives that we have.

Yeah, go ahead. And then also in terms of original sin, if you read the Federalist papers and stuff, they clearly have a negative viewpoint of humans, in that they're incapable of doing the right things, which is why they put so many safeguards in place. That's a good point.

They do believe in sin. That's true. They do believe that people get off the rails. They do believe in sin because they believe so heavily in free will. So, the freedom of the will is a basic theological component.

And as long as you've got freedom of the will, it means you can say no to God. But that's a good point, that's right. They're putting safeguards in for us because they do realize that there are people around who do bad things.

Yeah, that's a good point. But they do it by their own free will. They don't do it because they have some inherited depravity or something like that.

Right, yeah. The term Episcopal wasn't used until after the Revolutionary War. The reason it was used after the Revolutionary War is that if we use the term Anglican, it sounds real British, you know, and we can't have that.

We've got to use the term Episcopal. You do get a picture of Washington kneeling in the snow and praying to God. So, the question is, was this very much part of his life? But that's a good point, that's right.

I want to be as fair as I can on this because it's so easy for professors to be very heavy-handed on something they, you know, really are passionate about. And I'm not here to do that. I'm here to just give that point of view and get you thinking about it.

And I'm not here to indoctrinate you on this. I have to be really careful of this when I teach this. I also teach a course in American Christianity, so I've got to be careful when I teach it in that course as well.

Well, is there anything else here that's worth discussing? No doubt about it. I doubt that. And Jason, you worked with a pastor who was upset about people teaching this, that these people were deists.

It wasn't like that. I don't think it was the same thing. Right.

It's from their Presbyterian Church that has a strong view of America being a Christian nation, meaning to return to that. Right. It's like he read that and was like, David Byrne, the author, his whole point is trying to return to what our nation was founded on.

Right, right. But it's interesting because I'm just looking it up now, and so apparently, the book got a lot of negative responses. There are a lot of people saying it wasn't credible, so Thomas Nelson actually stopped publishing it. Now, he has published a 20-page response to all the critics.

Right, right. It's a debate. It's up in the air.

It's a debate. And it's a debate, and it's not a debate limited to the liberals versus the evangelicals because I'm evangelical, and so there are many evangelicals who would espouse what I'm espousing here, no doubt about that. And of course, we have to just ask ourselves, I mean, it's worth asking, does God deal? It seems to me that in the Old Testament, he dealt with a nation, with the nation of Israel.

But then, once you see this revelation of God in the scriptures, don't you see him now dealing with the church, the body of Christ, his body here on earth, which to me

is universal? It's not limited to America. It's in every place where the living word of God is.

There's the church. There's the body of Christ. So, is it that God deals with a nation, as he did with Israel, or is he dealing with the church, and the church is universal, and the church is across all nations? I think that's a worthy question to ask.

So I was in Zambia, ministering in Zambia just quickly a few years ago, and I was surprised. You know, Christian nation, I'd always heard it here in America, but I'd never heard it in other contexts. And the president of Zambia, when I was there, was preaching about Zambia as a Christian nation, that Zambia was God's chosen nation, and to do God's work in this world and so forth.

Very, very interesting that he had this Christian nation kind of identity for Zambia. I mean, I had never heard it applied to other countries, but probably the last place I would think I would hear it would be Zambia. I mean, who would guess? But there it was.

Anything else here? Okay, I'm going to close up in a minute. Let me just do this. Let me just tell you where we're going to be going, just from page 13 of your syllabus, and then we'll pick this up on Monday.

What we are now going to see in the next lecture, lecture number 6, Evangelical Resurgence in the Church, what we are going to see now in the 18th century, 19th century, we're going to see a turning of the pendulum back to orthodoxy, back to the church, back to historic Christianity, back to the roots of historic Christianity. So what we've seen in this lecture, lecture 5, is a movement away from those things, kind of a turning away from those things in places, in Western Europe especially. And now in the next lecture, we're going to say there were people who said, nope, we've got to return back to our roots.

And we're going to look at three pretty major movements. We're going to look at pietism in Germany. In America, we're going to look at the Great Awakening.

And then in England, we're going to look at the Wesleyan Revival. These were three major resurgences in the church. And so, it takes us. This next lecture is a fairly long lecture because it takes time to work out these three evangelical responses to the way the world was going in Western Europe and America.

So that's just by way of introduction there. Just for the sake of time, I'm not going to start that lecture today. We'll start that on Monday.

Have a great weekend. We'll see you on Monday.