

North Carolina Constitution - 1776

Article XXXII. That no person, who shall deny the being of God or the truth of the Protestant religion, or the divine authority of the Old or New Testaments, or who shall hold religious principles incompatible with the freedom and safety of the State, shall be capable of holding any office or place of trust or profit in the civil department within this State.

Our Current State Constitution reads...

Article VI Sec. 8. Disqualifications for office.

The following persons shall be disqualified for office:

First, any person who shall deny the being of Almighty God.

Second, with respect to any office that is filled by election by the people, any person who is not qualified to vote in an election for that office.

Third, any person who has been adjudged guilty of treason or any other felony against this State or the United States, or any person who has been adjudged guilty of a felony in another state that also would be a felony if it had been committed in this State, or any person who has been adjudged guilty of corruption or malpractice in any office, or any person who has been removed by impeachment from any office, and who has not been restored to the rights of citizenship in the manner prescribed by law.

How could anyone deny that in the “embryonic” stage of America’s development that there was a passionate interest in worship, advancing the Christian faith, and religious freedom?

Next Sunday we plan to look closely at the signers of the **Declaration of Independence** and gain some understanding of their faith and devotion to God and His Word, as we look into... **For God and Country**: “The Labor and Birth of America”.

For God and Country “The Embryonic Stage of America”

Review from last Sunday...

*Columbus (1492) sailed to the Americas, his voyage being financed by Queen Isabella of Spain who hoped to see Christianity spread into new lands. Columbus himself, it seems, was a Christian, much devoted to prayer.

*The Protestant Reformation had its beginnings 25 years later in 1517 in Germany, the effects of which spread throughout the world.

*In 1560 and 1611 Bibles were translated into English and made available to the masses.

*In 1585 exploration of the new land came to N.C. (Roanoke and The Lost Colony).

*In 1607 came the Jamestown settlement in Virginia, with an Indian chief’s daughter, Pocahontas, converting to Christianity and being baptized (taking the Christian name “Rebekeh”).

*In 1620 the Mayflower sailed to Plymouth, with the Mayflower Compact being written and signed before they disembarked.

*In 1621 the first Thanksgiving was observed as the pilgrims gave thanks to God for His blessings.

Colonial America

New York Charter of Liberties and Privileges -1683

"That Noe person or persons which professe ffaith in God by Jesus Christ Shall at any time be any wayes molested punished disquieted or called in Question for any Difference in opinion or Matter of Religious Concernment"

Connecticut Colony Charter – 1662

"[O]ur said people, Inhabitants there, may bee soe religiously, peaceably and civilly Governed as their good life and orderly Conversacon may wynn and invite the Natives of the Country to the knowledge and obedience of the onely true God and

Saviour of mankind, and the Christian faith, which in our Royall intencons and the Adventurers free profession is the onely and principall end of this Plantacon."

[plantacon = a settlement in a new country or region, a colony]

Governor Argall's Decree (Virginia) -1617

"Every Person should go to church, Sundays and Holidays, or lye Neck and Heels that Night, and be a Slave to the Colony the following Week; for the second Offence, he should be a Slave for a Month; and for the third, a Year and a Day."

New York Charter of Liberties and Privileges – 1683

"THAT Noe person or persons which professe ffaith in God by Jesus Christ Shall at any time be any wayes molested punished disquieted or called in Question for any Difference in opinion or Matter of Religious Concernment"

Massachusetts Constitution - 1780

"Article II. It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly and at stated seasons, to worship the Supreme Being, the great Creator and Preserver of the universe. And no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience, or for his religious profession or sentiments. provided he doth not disturb the public peace or obstruct others in their religious worship.

Article III. And every denomination of Christians, demeaning themselves peaceably and as good subjects of the commonwealth, shall be equally under the protection of the law; and no subordination of any one sect or denomination to another shall ever be established by law.

Chapter VI. Article I. Any person chosen governor, lieutenant-governor, councillor, senator, or representative, and accepting the trust, shall, before he proceed to execute the duties of his place or office, make and subscribe the following declaration,

viz:

'I _____, do declare that I believe the Christian religion..."

Charter of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations - 1663

That our royall will and pleasure is, that noe person within the sayd colonye, at any tyme hereafter, shall bee any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinione in matters of religion, and doe not actually disturb the civill peace of our sayd colony; but that all and everye person and persons may, from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, freelye and fullye have and enjoye his and their owne judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments...

and to direct, rule, order and dispose of, all other matters and things, and particularly that which relates to the makinge of purchases of the native Indians, as to them shall seeme meete; wherebv oure sayd people and inhabitants, in the sayd Plantationes, may be soe religiously, peaceably and civilly governed, as that, by their good life and orderlie conversations, they may win and invite the native Indians of the countrie to the knowledge and obedience of the onlie true God, and Saviour of mankinde..."

South Carolina Constitution - 1778

1st. That there is one eternal God, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

2d. That God is publicly to be worshipped.

3d. That the Christian religion is the true religion.

4th. That the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are of divine inspiration, and are the rule of faith and practice.

5th That it is lawful and the duty of every man being thereunto called by those that govern, to bear witness to the truth."