

A NEW CITY UPON A HILL:  
PURITANS, CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTIONISTS,  
AND THEOCRACY IN AMERICA

by

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## ABSTRACT

### A NEW CITY UPON A HILL: PURITANS, CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTIONISTS, AND THEOCRACY IN AMERICA

TIMOTHY DAVID WARNER

Due to the sometimes contentious nature of church and state relations in the United States of America, teachers often hesitate to address the subject in the public school classroom. Yet, the relationship between religion and government is an important subject frequently discussed in the media and relevant to the lives of students. This project includes a three week curriculum for secondary students which examines the issues involved in the separation of church and state by utilizing critical thinking skills in the analysis of primary documents. Working through each lesson, students will achieve a balanced understanding of the influence of religion on lawmaking and enforcement in both an historical and a present context, understand the origins of the wall of separation metaphor and how the phrase is applied to the church and state relationship, and investigate historical and current controversies regarding these important matters.

To provide context for the analysis of church and state disputes, the project examines the development of Calvinist theocracy—the concept that God is the supreme ruler of a government—in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and compares it to a modern-day counterpart. In reaction to the perceived secularization of society and lawmaking, from the founders of the U.S. wrestling with religion’s role in the new government to recent Supreme Court decisions, Christian Reconstructionists are

working to reestablish a theocracy in North America. The curriculum provides an opportunity for students to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate the issues involved when religion and government intersect.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the United States of America the issue of separation of church and state is a contentious one that seems to divide our culture, incite passionate argument, and make news headlines on a regular basis. Modern controversies such as the display of the Ten Commandments in front of a courthouse or prayer in the public schools seem to inflame the ire of those who feel that America is a Christian nation in danger of losing its religious identity to secularists. In contrast, proponents of religious neutrality seek to make a space for all religious creeds in the sphere of popular culture and civic government by proposing more neutral ways of participating in public displays of belief. Meanwhile, many people believe that the Founding Fathers intended the U.S. government to be free from religious influence altogether and hope to make the wall of separation that divides religion and government large and insurmountable. Because of these disagreements, church and state issues are extremely controversial in nature and challenging to teach. How does the public school teacher address the personal convictions held by Americans and the many issues involved without appearing to endorse a particular viewpoint? From an historical perspective, what has happened to make the role of religion in the public sphere controversial, and how did this issue become so contentious in America?

The purpose of this Master's project is to illustrate the complicated issue of public religion in the United States by reviewing the historical literature written about this matter, and by comparing the theocratic ideas of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritans

of Massachusetts Bay Colony to the similar ideas of modern Christian Reconstructionists. This project helps teachers address church and state controversies in the classroom in a way that encourages critical thinking by allowing students to wrestle with ideas contained within primary and secondary documents.

Chapter Two, the Literature Review, discusses what the literature says about how the Puritans brought Calvinist theocracy to America, and how they worked to build a government based on Old Testament law that would become an exemplary City upon the Hill so successful that it would inspire the world's nations to do the same. The chapter continues by describing how the Founding Fathers wrestled with the issue of church and state as the Constitution is written and the government of the United States of America is established. Chapter Two also discusses how religion's role in the public sphere has been interpreted by the laws and courts since the founding of the country using specific examples from the historical record, including primary and secondary documents. And finally, the Literature Review addresses the historical and theological background of Christian Reconstructionists, which helps show how some groups hope to revive Old Testament-based theocratic ideas in America and move these ideas into popular culture. Although there aren't many academic resources discussing the beliefs of Christian Reconstructionism, the Literature Review discusses the few that exist, and references primary information from the voluminous publications of the most influential Christian Reconstructionist writers and thinkers.

Chapter Three, Methodology, outlines the early process of researching Christian Reconstructionism, and how this process lead to expanding this Master's project to include the Puritans and discussion of church and state issues from the dissolution of the Massachusetts Bay Colony into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This chapter also illuminates the motivation behind creating a two week lesson plan on the separation of church and state, and a justification for utilizing the learning lab structure--which includes primary documents--to help students become better historians and critical thinkers.

Chapter Four contains the two week, learning lab-based high school curriculum. The main goal of the Separation of Church and State Unit is to give students a chance to practice thinking like an historian by wrestling with a subject that generates conflicting opinions. Although most students seem to be familiar with the phrase separation of church and state, it seems that few understand the origin of the term or the issues associated with this controversial notion. The first week of the lesson plan is designed to address the concept of separation of church and state by providing primary and secondary documents for students to use as support while writing an essay. The students will choose one of three commonly held positions about separation of church and state, and use the primary and secondary documents provided as evidence to support the position they've chosen. Utilizing the learning lab model allows the teacher to give students some freedom in reading primary documents, which gives them a taste of working like an historian while also addressing the 11<sup>th</sup> grade California History Social Science Content Standards.

Providing the documents and positions from which students choose to write the essay creates scaffolding that prepares them to stretch their abilities so that they can conduct independent research in the second week of the unit.

Week Two expands on the skills the students practiced in Week One. In partners, students will choose a church and state controversy from a long list created when they bring in current events articles to share in class. Once a subject is chosen, the partners conduct research about the topic in order to find background primary and secondary documentation to help the class understand the controversy when shared with the class in the form of an oral presentation. Each presentation will also address both sides of the controversial issue. This portion of the learning lab allows students to gather evidence through the research process. It provides students with an opportunity to think critically, study all sides of an issue, and synthesize information in a presentable format. The presentations include visual aids, which can be as simple as a poster, or as complex as a PowerPoint presentation.

The unit is designed for students to practice skills used in future class lessons. Future lessons build on skills such as conducting historical research, synthesizing conflicting information, writing about history in a balanced manner, and presenting the research in a variety of ways so that students can complete a final project toward the end of the year on a subject of their choosing.

Chapter 5 concludes the Master's Project with an overview of the subject and a justification for the Separation of Church and State Unit Plan. The Conclusion also

addresses the limitations of the research presented in this project, and posits additional questions that should be answered with further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Introduction*

This literature review seeks to examine the conception of theocracy in the United States of America by comparing the historical theocratic government of 17<sup>th</sup> century Massachusetts Bay Colony led by the Puritans, to a modern group called Christian Reconstructionists who hope to install a future theocracy in the U.S. Such a review must be built upon a solid historical understanding of theocratic rule in colonial America and how such rule was eventually rejected as the belief in separation of church and state evolved through ideological and legal roadblocks. The review continues with a short history of the Puritans and Reconstructionists and an analysis of the similarities that the latter group claims to share with the former.

#### *What is a Theocracy?*

In order to understand the relationship between the theocratic state set up by the 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the theocratic goals of modern Christian Reconstructionists, it is useful to understand the concept of a theocracy and illustrate it with an example from history. The word theocracy translates from the Greek to mean God's rule (Stackhouse 1966). In a theocracy, the religious leaders of a community maintain important positions of civic power (Palmquist, 1993). In some theocratic states, the rule of that state is believed to be conducted by God using a divinely chosen spokesperson (Davis, 2010). In a strict

theocracy, the highest leader of a nation is also the supreme religious leader (Hirschl, 2010). Inspired by the relationship between God and the Old Testament Israelites, many societies throughout history have built theocratic states, attempting to create a God-led society (Davis, 2000; Plöger, 1968). One example which inspired both the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony and modern Christian Reconstructionists is John Calvin's theocracy in Geneva, Switzerland.

Although historians debate whether or not John Calvin advocated a theocracy in Geneva in the 1540s (Chenevière, 1937), it is commonly accepted that during Calvin's time, the Swiss clergy wielded power equal to that of the civil government (Naphy, 2004). As a principal minister in the city's Reformed church, John Calvin served on a committee that addressed the city's non-enforcement of so-called "moral laws" and subsequently drafted the quickly adopted ecclesiastical ordinances based on the Biblical law of the Old Testament (Ganoczy, 2004; Kingdon, 1972). These ordinances included the Genevan Consistory—the Protestant group of elected pastors and elders whose job was to expose and punish immoral behavior (Kingdon, 1972). Transgressions addressed by the Consistory included any religious practice that seemed too Roman Catholic, and gradually grew to include blasphemy, doctrinal error, insults to Calvin or the other Reformed pastors, and any kind of sexual immorality (Kingdon, 1972). If the transgressor did not repent when confronted by members of the Consistory, or the transgression was deemed serious enough, the case was referred to Geneva's City Council for discipline (Kingdon, 1972). These

punishments included public humiliation, a fine, a prison term, or sometimes, a death sentence carried out by drowning, strangling, hanging, burning, or decapitation (Kingdon, 1972). If the City Council found the Consistory's judgment too severe, the council would administer a milder punishment or release the offender altogether (Kingdon, 1995). When this occurred, the Consistory might choose the only punishment in its power: excommunication (Naphy, 2004). This punishment held great weight since excommunicated church members could not participate in communion, and as a result, the salvation of the excommunicated member was called into question, bringing with it the terrifying consequence of eternal damnation (Kingdon, 1972). Not only was the future of the guilty soul in peril, but oftentimes the excommunicated were cut off from family and friends or even banished from Geneva (Kingdon, 1995).

Calvin's ideas spread throughout Europe as Calvinist churches run by Geneva-trained missionaries opened in Germany, France, Scotland, and the Netherlands (Pettegree, 2004). In the 1550s and 1560s, Flemish merchants came to England as they brought their weaving skills and a devotion to Calvin's doctrines (Wertenbacher, 1947). In the face of frequently violent persecution, the Calvinist ideas that became known as Puritanism spread throughout England to challenge the established Anglican church and eventually made their way to the new world.

### *Puritans in England*

The Puritans, a group of Calvinist Protestants, brought the idea of theocracy

to colonial North America. The Puritans believed the Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church, was still too similar to Catholicism in ceremony and belief (Wertenbaker, 1947). They intended to purify the church from inside by insisting on reforms such as modifying the church's authority structure, terminating ceremonies and liturgies in worship that were similar to Catholicism, and adapting the Book of Common Prayer (Ellis, 1970; Wertenbaker, 1947). The Puritans were also concerned that the established church was too lenient with unregenerate, or unrepentant sinners who belonged to the church, and with the abundance of clergy who were corrupt (Labaree, 1979). The Puritans also believed in a decentralized church in which authority was derived directly from God through the Bible, and not from an established church government (Wertenbaker, 1947). This focus on the independent congregation, known as Congregationalism, proposed to de-emphasize the authority of the Church of England and reduce it to a loosely governing body which could give advice or support, but could not usurp the minister's guidance of the church members (Wertenbaker, 1947). The Puritans also believed that the authority to discipline and excommunicate members of each congregation should rest in the hands of the local pastor and congregational leaders (Labaree, 1979). These local church authorities were elected by the congregation and not appointed by a larger church government (Labaree, 1979).

The Puritans firmly agreed with Calvin's teachings about the role of religion in civil government. When Calvin wrote in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

that the role of government was “to foster and maintain the external worship of God, to defend sound doctrine and the condition of the Church, to adapt our conduct to human society, to form our manners to civil justice, to conciliate us to each other, to cherish common peace and tranquility” (Calvin & Beveridge, 2002, p. 1169), the Puritans concurred. They demanded that both the laws of the Church of England and those of the government rest on the teachings of the Bible (Wertebaker, 1947). In the Puritan view, the state’s authority should be derived from the Bible, and therefore the state should support only the Puritan faith (Wertebaker, 1947). English Puritans commonly believed that controlling the government was the most effective way to reform the church, since the government ultimately controlled the church (Labaree, 1979). These ideas met with resistance from Anglican Church authorities and Queen Elizabeth had the more outspoken Puritan reformers imprisoned and hanged (Wertebaker, 1947). In 1603, James I took the throne, and Puritan leaders began to make some progress toward reformation, even though King James was less sympathetic to their convictions than anticipated (Labaree, 1979). When Charles I became king in 1625, however, any such progress was dashed as he dissolved Parliament, jailed Puritans, and fired them from important leadership positions in churches, colleges, and the government (Labaree, 1979).

### *Puritans in North America*

Some Puritans began to consider leaving England and were encouraged by the reports from John Smith, who spent time at Virginia Colony of Jamestown and

had explored New England in 1614 (Labaree, 1979). Further encouragement came from the Separatists who had sailed on the Mayflower and settled Plymouth in 1620. Separatists believed that the Church of England was beyond reform, and that new, independent churches must be established (Labaree, 1979).

Following the lead of these religious dissenters, a group of mostly Puritan English businessmen formed The New England Company for a Plantation in Massachusetts-Bay in 1628 (Labaree, 1979). A royal charter obtained in 1629 allowed the respected Puritan, John Winthrop, to lead a small group of men who would form the Massachusetts Bay Company as a colony with both economic and spiritual goals (Wertenbaker, 1947). In order to retain control of both church and state in this new colony, Winthrop and his like-minded group did something unusual: they obtained the company charter with the intention of taking it to North America, giving them authority to manage the colony independently (Labaree, 1979). In 1630, John Winthrop set sail for the new colony with the company charter and eleven ships full of settlers, their cargo, and plans to create a government based on the Bible (Morgan, 1958; Wertenbaker, 1947). To the Puritans, the safe arrival of their ships symbolized proof that they were God's chosen people (Labaree, 1979). Their safe arrival and the establishment of both the Puritan Church and a religious government were signs of God's covenant, or contract with the Puritans. The covenant meant that the colony's success hinged on obedience to, and the establishment of, a government based on God's laws (Morgan, 2007). Prominent minister John Cotton wrote,

“Theocracy is the best forme of government in the common-wealth, as well as in the church” (Zakai, 1987, p. 311). John Winthrop realized that the success of the colony would become a model for other Christian communities: “We shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us” (Winthrop, 1630, p. 9). The success of the colony also signified a fulfillment of Puritan interpretation of the end times. This movement from the Old World to the New World was the beginning of a millennial transformation, where God’s will could be done through an ecclesiastical rule that would eventually influence the world to move the same direction (Zakai, 1994). Between 1630 and 1643 about twenty thousand settlers came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in a massive immigration of mostly English Puritans (Labaree, 1979).

In order for the colonial authorities to accomplish their goal of creating a city upon a hill, and to promote their beliefs in a purified spiritual kingdom based on the colony’s covenant with God, they adopted a system of strict Biblical law, combined with a court for trying crimes, and enforcement to punish criminals.

### *Puritan Law*

When the Puritans created the religious and civil framework of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, they were mindful of Calvin’s strict governance of Geneva (Dow, 1935). Like Calvin, the New England Puritans valued simplicity in all things including dress and manners, the direct application of the Bible’s teachings to everyday life, a keen eye for a neighbor’s sin, suspicion of frivolous amusements such as games and holidays, and the immense value of hard work for material gain

(Dow, 1935). Because of these values, the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony decided that the laws of both the church and government would be based on the Bible (Dow, 1935). “We chose not the place for the land,” wrote Edward Johnson about their new home in New England, “but for the government, that our Lord Christ might raigne over us, both in Churches and Common-wealth” (Johnson, 1910, pg. 146). During the first years of the commonwealth, the Court of Assistants, which consisted of the Governor, Deputy Governor, and their Assistants, held all judicial powers of the colony (Dow, 1935). Because there were no defined code of laws and no reliance on English court precedents, the court’s discretion and reliance on the Bible were the main guides for rulings (Dow, 1935). Occasionally, the court would confer with church elders or ministers for assistance in difficult cases (Dow, 1935). In 1635, concern over the court’s discretionary powers grew to the point that committees made up of magistrates and ministers met with the intention of drawing up a written legal code (Dow, 1935).

By 1641, Ipswich minister and former English lawyer Nathaniel Ward submitted a draft of about one hundred laws which would become The Massachusetts Body of Liberties (Dow, 1935). Taken mostly from the Old Testament, these laws were written with Bible chapter and verse in the margins to help with complicated legal decisions (Dow, 1935). Because the state enforced the laws of the church, the courts examined cases like breaking the Sabbath, neglecting a meeting, cursing the church, cursing a minister, and being involved in scandalous

activity on the Lord's Day (Dow, 1935). Punishments included confession before the local church, oftentimes while held in stocks in front of the congregation, whipping, ears cut off, tongues pierced with hot irons, branding, and imprisonment (Dow, 1935; Wertenbaker, 1947). Public executions were common and were considered a social occasion to gather and observe (Dow, 1935). For crimes such as adultery, witchcraft, and unrepentant heresy, the death penalty was ordered (Wertenbaker, 1947).

The Puritans were not interested in religious pluralism or tolerance for contrasting spiritual opinions (Wertenbaker, 1947). Even though persecution played a major part in the Puritan immigration to the New World, the more significant reason why they left England was to avoid the error of the established church (Wertenbaker, 1947). This overwhelming desire to practice religion properly pushed the Puritans to move away from a familiar life in their native land, and pulled them toward a strange new home full of wilderness and danger (Wertenbaker, 1947). Because of their strong religious convictions, the Puritans were less concerned with harm done to their bodies in this new place, and more concerned with harm done to their souls (Wertenbaker, 1947). Hence, in an effort to maintain purity of conviction, early arrivals to the colony were screened for conforming religious beliefs, with the official company recommendation being that libertines were punished or sent back to England (Brown, 1954). Later, when settlers with contrary religious beliefs reached the shores of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the response was direct:

Monsters in nature are eye sores. The face of death, that king of terrors the living man by instinct turns his face from. An unusual shape, a satanical phantasm, a ghost or apparition affrights the disciples. The vision of sin into a spiritual eye is an object of much more abhorrence than the former. But the face of heresy is of a more horrid aspect than all the aforementioned put together, as arguing some signal enlargement of the powers of darkness, as being in a high degree diabolical, prodigious and portentous. Heretical doctrine is not only a sin, but profession of a doctrine which is both all sin and a way of sin, the speaking of lies against the Lord and his truth, destructive of the souls of men. (Norton, 1660, p. 46)

Baptists, Quakers, and even close spiritual relatives like the Separatists were viewed as “malignant and assiduous promoters of doctrines directly tending to subvert both Churches and State” (Shurtleff, 1968, p. 451). Any heretic showing up in the Massachusetts Bay Colony was given the choice to leave in peace, but when the offender refused to leave or returned after being banished, ministers and magistrates resorted to stronger punishments (Wertenbaker, 1947). Stubborn non-conformists were held in prison until the opportunity arose to ship them back to England (Norton, 1660). Quakers who returned to proselytize in Massachusetts Bay after banishment were shown no mercy:

...every such male Quaker shall for the first offence have one of his ears cut off and be kept at work of correction till he can be sent away at his own

charge, and for the second offence shall have his other ear cut off...and every woman Quaker...shall be severely whipt and kept at the house of correction at work till she shall be sent away...and for every Quaker, he or she, that shall a third time herein again offend, they shall have their tongues bored through with a hot iron. (Shurtleff, 1968, p. 308)

If the heretics continued to return after being repeatedly punished and banished, eventually they would be put to death (Shurtleff, 1968). Although these measures were in place to keep the colony pure, the contrast between civil rights officially granted to English citizens and the limits on civil rights reported in Massachusetts would become a large part of the colony's undoing.

Tensions increased between the English government and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The colonists enjoyed the economic benefits of trade with England, as well as the protection afforded by the English Navy (Wertenbacher, 1947). Yet, when it came to offering traditional liberties of English citizens, including full voting and property rights to non-Puritans, the authorities of the colony were not willing to relent. Only freemen, a minority of male, landholding colonists who had passed a rigorous religious examination and had been admitted to the church, could vote. Because of the religious uniformity of the voters, Puritan leaders were able to keep tight control on who was elected and which laws passed (Bremer, 1995).

Although the government in England grew weary with the colonists' refusals to give up autonomy, the King needed the colony for resources and as a bulwark

against French intrusion in the area. England would soon become embroiled in internal and external conflict, including revolution, civil and foreign wars, and multiple major changes in government which allowed the colonists to avoid losing their charter for decades (Wertenbacher, 1947). Meanwhile, the ministers noticed a decline in the purity of Puritan conviction. Due to concerns about declining church membership and negative feelings by the non-voting majority over their lack of rights, the rules for church membership were slowly loosened. One controversial decision, called the Half-Way Covenant, allowed colonists who were baptized in infancy and had also led exemplary lives to be considered partial members of the church and have their children baptized (Labaree, 1979). Although non-freemen were allowed to vote in town meetings, act as town officers, and be jurymen, they still could not vote for Governor, Magistrate and Deputy, nor could they serve in military and civil offices since they would not pass the religious test necessary for these positions (Morgan, 1958; Wertenbacher, 1947).

In 1684, after many investigations into Puritan abuses by his and previous administrations, Charles II officially annulled the Massachusetts Bay Charter, removing Puritans from exclusive power and destroying their dreams of a theocracy in the New World. After almost a decade of interim rule and instability, King William III issued a new charter that folded Massachusetts Bay into neighboring colonies to form the Province of Massachusetts Bay, where the colonists were not penalized for unbelief or beliefs that contrasted with those of the Puritans

(Wertenbacher, 1947).

Even though the new charter in Massachusetts limited religious power in government, less than one hundred years later the Founding Fathers continued to struggle with the influence religion should have in the public sphere. Thus, the colonists' close relationship between church and state became a challenge for the founders who gradually adopted Jefferson's wall of separation.

### *A Wall of Separation*

Traditionally in the United States, the relationship between the church, or religion in general, and the state has been interpreted as ambivalence between two separate entities. The Constitution states in the First Amendment that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," while Article VI states, "No religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." James Madison, who was instrumental in writing the First Amendment and getting it passed through the First Congress, was a strong proponent of religious freedom (Labunski, 2006). In a letter, Madison explained some of his motivation in keeping religion and civil government separated:

Every new & successful example therefore of a perfect separation between ecclesiastical and civil matters, is of importance. And I have no doubt that every new example, will succeed, as every past one has done, in showing that religion & Govt. will both exist in greater purity, the less they are mixed

together. It was the belief of all sects at one time that the establishment of Religion by law, was right & necessary; that the true religion ought to be established in exclusion of every other; And that the only question to be decided was which was the true religion. (Madison & Koch, 1965, p. 466)

Later, Thomas Jefferson would refer to “a wall of separation between Church & State” in a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, illustrating the intent behind the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States (Jefferson, 1802). His letter possibly quoted James Burgh, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish dissenter and political reformer who called for “an impenetrable wall of separation between things sacred and civil” to avoid the church “getting too much power into her hands, and turning religion into a mere state-engine” (Burgh, 1767, p. 119). Jefferson may also have been mindful of Roger Williams, Baptist theologian and founder of the colony of Rhode Island, who discussed “[A] hedge or wall of separation between the garden of the church and the wilderness of the world” (Williams, 1963, p. 108). In 1636, over 170 years before Jefferson wrote his letter, Williams had been driven out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony because he disagreed with theocratic leaders about the authority of the charter and the intimate relationship between church and state. He subsequently formed the Providence Plantation, which later became Rhode Island, a colony known for religious tolerance (Wertenbacher, 1947). Williams would later address his concerns regarding a state too concerned with religion, and proposed toleration for worship that included Protestant

denominations, Catholicism, and even "paganish, Jewish, Turkish or anti-Christian consciences and worships" (Williams & Caldwell, 1867). Perhaps Madison, Jefferson, and Williams all foresaw the tensions to come, as future generations would become more diverse in belief and therefore forced to wrestle with the meaning of this wall of separation and how much it should actually separate religion from government.

The controversy has never truly diminished. Today, the idea that religious belief and governance of a nation ought to be independent endeavors is still hotly contested. According to a recent survey, 67% of U.S. citizens believe in a clear separation of church and state required in the First Amendment, while 28% disagreed with the statement (Dautrich & Policinski, 2011). Theories abound concerning whether the separation of church and state is a myth, or that it does not go far enough to keep religion out of government completely, and a myriad of shades in between (Barton, 1992; Blumenthal, 2009 ). Even the U.S. government seems inconsistent in its interpretation of the Establishment Clause (Merriam et al., 2008). In fact, the notion of church and state separation has been interpreted by the Supreme Court in many ways (Merriam et al., 2008). The court has upheld the right of states to enforce blue laws—traditional statutes that prohibit particular shopping or recreational behaviors on Sunday—to use public voucher money for private, religious education, and to fund transportation to parochial schools (First Amendment, 2010). In most cases, the concept of ceremonial deism, displays such as

prayers before a legislative session or the inclusion of the phrase under God in the Pledge of Allegiance are deemed constitutional (Merriam et al., 2008). In contrast, the court has ruled to disallow prayers at public school or allow public funding for a holiday nativity scene inside a county courthouse (Establishment Clause overview, 2011). Even the Supreme Court's own guidelines on how to interpret the Establishment Clause have evolved over the years (Establishment Clause overview, 2011). In most cases, neutrality toward religious practice is the main goal, even though Supreme Court Justices might vary on how neutrality is interpreted (Establishment Clause overview, 2011). In *Everson v. Board of Education*, the U.S. Supreme Court Justices wrote,

In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect 'a wall of separation between church and State'... That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach. (*Everson v. Board of Education*, 1947)

To some modern Christians though, neutrality is not viewed as a positive position, but one that denies the essential Christian background of America's roots (North, 1989). Other critics say that because the state decides—through court decisions and laws—where the boundaries and functions of religious belief end, the wall of separation is single sided. The state is then able to contain religious belief and isolate it from influencing the duties of the state (Dreisbach, 2002). Further complicating this issue of separation between church and state are the historical and

contemporary beliefs of the millennialists.

### *Millennialism*

Millennialism is the belief that approximately one thousand years of hope and peace will precede the final judgment of God (Brown, 1952). The roots of millennialism reach back into Zoroastrianism's teachings of a struggle between good and evil, culminating in the vanquishing of evil from the earth (Case, 1918). Similarly in Judaism, the Old Testament's Book of Daniel described Daniel's vision of the future, including freedom for the Hebrews and eternal destruction of their enemies (Olson, 1982). Likewise, Christianity includes a longstanding, rich tradition of millennialism (Tuveson, 1968). In the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are commonly called the Gospels, plus the book of Revelation are interpreted as eschatological works—that is works which predict the coming events of the end times (Olson, 1982).

Most millennialists divide themselves into two camps regarding the return of Christ: premillennialists and postmillennialists (Brown, 1952). Premillennialists tend to believe Christ's return will be cataclysmic and occur before the millennium, removing Christians from the world before the tribulations of the end times begin. Postmillennialists usually believe Christ will come back after the millennium, during which the nations of the world are made acceptable or perfected through human betterment (Brown, 1952).

The millennial beliefs of the Puritans evolved to become more postmillennial.

Puritan belief during the time of the Massachusetts Bay Colony leaned toward an urgent, premillennial form of apocalypse. Christ's return and judgment of unrepentant sinners was a concern addressed in the best-selling poem by Minister Michael Wigglesworth called *The Day of Doom*. In this poem published in 1662 and popularly read and memorized by Puritans all ages, "the Son of God most dread" comes "proclaiming th' Day of Doom" and condemns a long list of transgressors to an end "pain'd with everlasting fire" (Wigglesworth, 1867). These common beliefs would soon change in subtle ways.

Influenced both by the Great Awakening, a time of early 18<sup>th</sup> century religious revivalism in the U.S., and the influence of Daniel Whitby's commentaries on Revelation, Calvinist minister Jonathan Edwards seemed to change in his eschatological beliefs from the more immediate premillennialism to a more hopeful postmillennialism (Goen, 1959). Though he is widely known for a harsh and grimly detailed sermon of damnation entitled *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, toward the end of his life Edwards believed Christ would only come after

...the whole heathen world should be enlightened and converted to the Christian faith...without any remainders of their old delusions and superstitions, and this attended with an utter extirpation of the remnant of the church of Rome, and all the relics of Mahometanism, heresy, schism and enthusiasm, and a suppression of all remains of open vice and immorality, and every sort of visible enemy to true religion, through the whole earth, and

bring to an end all the unhappy commotions, tumults, and calamities occasioned by such great changes, and all things so adjusted and settled through the world... (Edwards, 1881, p. 493)

This move toward postmillennialism created a “future-oriented optimism...on which American optimism and utopianism has been standing. The formation of 19<sup>th</sup> century secular progressivism depends on this subject” (Onishi, 2004, pg. 26). Advances in science and technology, the progressive urge to improve society through reform like temperance and abolitionism, mainstream churches’ zeal for missionary work, and even the founding of new religions such as the Latter Day Saints and Jehovah’s Witnesses were signs of 19<sup>th</sup> century postmillennial optimism (Brown, 1952; Onishi, 2004).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century though, a new movement arose in reaction to the liberalization of Christianity and Biblical interpretation, the reformist Social Gospel, and the secularization of science: Fundamentalism (Boyer, 1992; Brown, 1952). Premillennialist fundamentalists, in sharp contrast to the more popular postmillennialism of the day, sought to fight modernism—what they called the alarming trends with which they disagreed—and began to systematize long-held beliefs such as biblical inerrancy, and Christ’s physical and premillennial return to earth (Boyer, 1992). As fundamentalist ideas took hold in the United States, so did the belief in premillennialism (Boyer, 1992). Toward the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, one historian noted “the subtle shift from a

postmillennial (Do-it-yourself) approach to saving the world to a premillennial (trust-in-God) approach” (McLoughlin, 1983, pg. 102).

Calvinism, pre- and post-millennialism, fundamentalism—all historical aspects of American Christianity—helped shape the religious world of the colonies, the early republic, and the American West. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these beliefs played a diminishing role in American life. However, in the 1970s, a small but vocal group of Americans turned to these historical doctrines as they looked for a way to bring America back to God.

#### *Modern U.S. Theocracy*

Dominion theology is the broad term, coined in the 1980s, that denotes the belief by some Protestant Christians that believers in Christianity should occupy every civic area of the secular realm, especially the government (Berlet, 2011; Diamond, 1995). Dominionists take their name from the verse in Genesis that states: “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28 King James Version).

Dominionists often refer to the Puritan-founded Massachusetts Bay Colony, with its Biblically based laws and enforcement, as the ideal political model (Clarkson, 2005). Dominionists are generally divided into two categories. Soft dominionists believe the United States, founded by Christians as a Christian nation,

should return to its roots by adherence to a strict, traditional interpretation of the U.S. Constitution as a Christian document, and a return to Biblical morality. Hard dominionists believe that the U.S. Constitution is a secular document written by humanist philosophers, and should be replaced by a rule of law based on the Old Testament (Clarkson, 2005).

One subset group of hard dominionist believers, Christian Reconstructionists, promote the long-range, postmillennial transformation of the US (and eventually the world) through the judicial codes and methods of enforcement as interpreted from Old Testament Biblical law (Diamond 1995; Shupe, 1997). Christian Reconstructionists are strident postmillennialists, defending their end times beliefs against premillennialists and other critics in a myriad of polemical books and articles (Shupe, 1997). Postmillennial beliefs are clearly the minority in the modern evangelical Christian world, but Reconstructionists are bolstered in their convictions by the Calvinist theological tradition of predestination, which states that when God wills something to occur, humans cannot resist it or change its course. In this way, Reconstructionists can rest assured in a long-range view of the future, believing that even if it takes thousands of years, the United States, and eventually the world, will be brought into the submission of God's laws and under the dominion of Christians (Barron & Shupe, 1992).

Rousas John Rushdoony, the leading proponent and founder of the Christian Reconstruction movement, majored in Education at the University of California at

Berkeley and served as a Presbyterian minister and missionary to the Chinese in San Francisco, and the Western Shoshone and Paiute tribes in Idaho and Nevada (Edgar, 2001; North, 2001). Rushdoony was highly influenced by the ideas of Cornelius Van Til, a Dutch theologian at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Van Til wrote about Biblical inerrancy and the irreconcilable differences between believers and unbelievers due to a contrast in fundamental beliefs (Barron, 1992). Rushdoony agreed with these points, opposing any theological premise based in secular reasoning (Edgar, 2001; McVicar, 2007). He wrote about many subjects throughout his life, including Christianity's imperative role in the founding of the United States, the application of Calvinist theology, and the misplaced trust in a publicly funded, secular education system (North, 2001; Rushdoony, 1964; Rushdoony, 1995; Rushdoony, 1963). His views on public education led him to believe that private schools, and especially home schooling, were superior options for educating Christian children (Ingersoll, 2010). Because of his opposition to secular education, he was known as the father of the American home schooling movement (Edgar, 2001).

Rushdoony's two-volume *Institutes of Biblical Law* (1973), influenced by John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536) in both content and title, outlines the conversion of US judicial law and enforcement from its current Constitution-based form to an Old Testament, Mosaic law-based system (Diamond, 1995; Rushdoony, 1973). The main reason Rushdoony and other Reconstructionists

look to Calvin's writings for guidance in governing is Calvin's leadership in the theocratic government of 1540s Geneva, Switzerland. They see Calvin's model as a blueprint for their own future domination (North, 1990; Rushdoony, 1952). Like Puritan John Winthrop, who called Democracy "the meanest and worst of all forms of government," (Winthrop & Winthrop, 1869, p. 430), Rushdoony also saw democracy as anti-Christian. He looked to the Massachusetts Bay Colony's Calvinist civil government as the ideal model:

In colonial New England the covenantal concept of church and state was applied. Everyone went to church, but only a limited number had voting rights in the church and therefore the state, because there was a coincidence of church membership and citizenship. The others were no less believers, but the belief was that only the responsible must be given responsibility. One faith, one law, and one standard of justice did not mean democracy. The heresy of democracy has since then worked havoc in church and state, and it has worked towards reducing society to anarchy. (Rushdoony, 1973, p. 100)

Like the Puritans in Massachusetts Bay, Christian Reconstructionists do not believe that those who hold contrasting religious beliefs should take part in the mechanism of government. Reconstructionists plan to promote their interpretation of Christian values in society by rebuilding the current systems of government, economics, education, and law (Shupe, 1997). These ideas for changing the world's systems come from the concept of Theonomy; the idea that Old Testament laws are

immutable, that is unchanging, and valid for guiding every area of life, including the greater systems of civic law, relationships within families, and attitudes toward neighbors (Chismar & Rausch, 1984; North, 1990). The main way in which Reconstructionists plan to change secular society is through enacting and enforcing a Christian theocracy (Diamond, 1995). Rushdoony believes that if America's political system isn't transformed into one based on biblical law, the country "places itself on death row: it is marked for judgment" (Davis, 2010; Rushdoony, 1984, p. 4).

Reconstructionists are not an organized, monolithic group like a church or sect, but more like a few diverse theorists, pastors, and philosophers who write books, disseminate newsletters, and maintain websites that promote Reconstructionists ideas and plans (Shupe, 1997). Their followers are a decentralized group from a wide range of Christian denominations and backgrounds (Clarkson, 1994).

In their plan for a theocratic, reconstructed society modeled after the Massachusetts Bay Colony, religious pluralism would not exist. In Massachusetts Bay, the voters—called Freemen—were chosen for their righteous lives and devotion to the Puritan Church. Although other male land owners could vote in town meetings on less important decisions, electing governors, assistants, and deputies, as well as community decisions of great weight was solely the realm of the Freemen (Wertenbacher, 1947). In the beginning, almost all of the adult men, excluding servants, were made Freemen. But it wasn't long before immigration would make

the Freemen in most villages a non-representative minority who made decisions according to personal and Biblical conviction, and not according to the will of the populace (Morgan, 2007; Wertenbacher, 1947). Similarly, while Reconstructionist writers differ on the consequences of unbelief or belief in another religion besides Christianity, they all agree that those who do not hold traditional Christian beliefs would have no part in civil government in a Reconstructionist theocracy (Bahnsen, 1991; Rushdoony, 1973). Some Reconstructionists would even say that unbelievers in the United States should be denied citizenship and the property ownership and voting rights that go with it (North, 1989).

In a Reconstruction-run civic government, punishment would be similar to those in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. While the Puritans outlined Bible based laws in *The Body of Liberties*, Reconstructionists look to Rushdoony's *Institutes of Biblical Law* for guidance on how to punish offenses ranging from idolatry, witchcraft, adultery, and open rebellion to one's parents. Because both documents draw from Biblical law, both Puritans and Reconstructionists believe that conviction of these offenses would result in the death penalty (Morgan, 2007; Olson, 1998; Rushdoony, 1973). In fact, some Reconstructionists openly promote public stoning as the primary method of execution (North, 1990).

One example where Puritans and Reconstructionists agree about capital punishment is in the case of adultery. The Massachusetts Body of Liberties, written in 1641, includes a list of Capitall Crimes including the Old Testament verses from

which the law has been inspired. The punishment for adultery is very clear: “If any person committeth Adultery with a married or espoused wife, the Adulterer and Adulteresse shall surely be put to death” (Ward, 1996). Although only two executions for adultery are recorded in 1655, adultery was one of the most common crimes in court records (Onishi, 1999). The convicted were more often whipped, humiliated by a public marking, or banished from the colony (Morgan, 1958).

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel *The Scarlet Letter* tells the story of a woman who must wear a red letter pinned to her dress for the rest of her life which denotes the sin she has committed (Hawthorne, 1892). The *Annals of Salem* contains this entry from 1694:

A memorial was received, signed by many clergymen, desiring the Legislature to enact laws against prevailing iniquities. Among such law, passed by this session, were two against Adultery and Polygamy. Those guilty of the first crime were to sit an hour on the gallows, with ropes about their necks— be severely whipt not above 40 stripes; and forever after wear a capital A, two inches long, cut out of cloth coloured differently from their clothes, and sewed on the arms, or back parts of their garments so as always to be seen when they were about. The other crime, stated with suitable exceptions, was punishable with death. (Felt, 1827, p. 317)

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Christian Reconstructionists have also called for the death penalty in cases of adultery. Rousas Rushdoony wrote that because “Biblical law is

designed to create a familistic society...adultery is thus placed on the same level as murder, in that it is a murderous act against the central social institution of any healthy culture” (Rushdoony, 1973, p. 395). Because family is the most important institution of society, and adultery is an attack on the family, severe penalties should be imposed for this crime. Rushdoony’s writings are very clear: “The penalty for adultery is specified as death” (Rushdoony, 1973, p. 394). Although current laws do not call for the death penalty for adultery in the U.S., Rushdoony is confident that, when Reconstructionists are in charge “a godly law-order will restore the death penalty” for sins such as adultery (Rushdoony, 1973, p. 399).

Although calling for Old Testament capital punishment for a sin like adultery is one distinctive attribute of Christian Reconstructionism, these are not the views of most Protestants in the United States. A survey conducted in 2007 reported that 51% of U.S. citizens consider themselves Protestant Christians (PSRAI, 2007). More specifically, Christian Reconstructionist leaders estimate that only a small fraction of Christians read Reconstructionist books, subscribe to periodicals, or directly agree with their theological goals (Shupe, 1997). This makes sense, considering that Reconstructionists are a small fringe group whose extreme beliefs don’t always agree with mainstream Protestant Christianity (Shupe, 1997). Even though the movement’s numbers are relatively few, the leaders of Reconstructionism are prolific writers and lecturers, and specific Reconstructionist ideas have spread into mainstream religion and politics (Barron & Shupe, 1992; Diamond, 1995; Ingersoll, 2010; Ingersoll,

2011; McVicar, 2007). Leaders in the movement are convinced that if mainstream Christians adopt even a few of the most important Reconstructionist beliefs—such as the idea that America is a Christian nation needing to return to its roots, or the end times beliefs of postmillennialism—then eventually these individuals will grow to accept all of the important tenets of Reconstructionism (Diamond, 1989). If enough people adopt their beliefs, Christian Reconstructionists hope to be closer to their goal of bringing theocracy back to America.

### *Conclusion*

The story of theocracy in North America began in 1540 with John Calvin's religious influence in the governance of Geneva. By the 1560s, some of his ideas about the importance of Biblical law in civil government were adopted by a small group of people in England who would be called Puritans. They believed that the Church of England was too similar to the Catholic Church in belief and practice, and therefore wished to reform it from the inside. Puritan ideas about religion led to their persecution under the monarchy in England. When an opportunity arose to establish a colony in North America, Puritan leaders gathered a small group of likeminded people and set sail for what would become the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Once in North America, the Puritan leadership set up an autonomous government which relied on Biblical law for guidelines on crime and punishment, including the adoption of *The Massachusetts Body of Liberties*. Their goal was to create an exemplary city upon a hill that would serve as a model for all future Calvinist

theocratic governments in the world. Puritan intolerance for divergent religious beliefs led to the persecution and expulsion of anyone seen as a heretic, including Quakers, Baptists, and Separatists. In addition, trade conflicts and the unwillingness to grant basic civil rights under English law to those who did not pass a religious test or belong to the Puritan church began to create tension with the monarchy in England. Eventually, the charter of the colony was revoked, and Puritan law rescinded.

Even though the Puritans were not in power, religion still played a very important role in colonial life. Less than one hundred years later, the Founders struggled with the role religion should play in the government of the United States. A strong belief in religious freedom compelled them to include this guarantee in the First Amendment to the Constitution known as the Establishment Clause: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Later, Thomas Jefferson would refer to “a wall of Separation between Church & State” in the U.S., establishing a metaphor that would become important in its description of the religion’s role in government. This concept would prove to be controversial, as the Supreme Court has been inconsistent in its interpretation of the Establishment Clause. In the last century, the court has leaned toward neutrality in its relationship with religion, frustrating those who believe that the United States was not founded on neutrality toward religion, but on Christian principles.

The millennial beliefs of some Protestant Christian groups have further complicated this issue. While Puritan belief in the colonies tended to be more urgent and premillennial, these beliefs would later evolve under the influence of Jonathan Edwards into a more hopeful postmillennialism. This belief in the postponement of the apocalypse led to a more optimistic view of the end times, including the idea that society could be improved in the meantime.

In reaction to the liberalization of Christianity and the secularization of science, Christian fundamentalists sought to systematize their fundamental beliefs, and emphasize Christ's premillennial return to earth. As fundamentalism became more popular, postmillennialism began to wane. In the 1970s, a small but vocal group of believers turned to historical Calvinist doctrines and postmillennialism under the name Christian Reconstructionists.

Led by Rousas John Rushdoony and influenced by the theocratic governments of Geneva and the Massachusetts Bay Colony, these prolific writers and thinkers would emphasize a return to Old Testament Biblical law as the mandate for civil rule in the United States. Like Geneva and the Massachusetts Bay Colony, crimes such as idolatry, witchcraft, adultery, and open rebellion to one's parents would be considered capital offenses resulting in the death penalty. Under a Christian Reconstructionist led government, religious pluralism would not exist, and unbelievers could not hold political office.

Although Christian Reconstructionists are a small minority of Protestant

Christians in America, their hope is to influence individual Christians and the larger arena of politics. They hope to sway society toward Reconstructionist ideas with the proliferation of their books and ideas to promote the long term goal of pushing society toward their beliefs. Reconstructionists believe that once they gain more supporters, they can begin to work toward their theocratic goals:

We need to *infiltrate* the bureaucracies in order to secure a foothold in the existing social order's transmission belts of power. We must be prepared to *misdirect* bureaucratic efforts against Christian organizations, and also to smooth the transition to Christian political leadership, thereby cutting short any attempted resistance movement within existing bureaucracies against such a transition of power to the Christians. Christians must begin to organize politically within the present party structure, and they must begin to infiltrate the existing institutional order. (North, 1981, pg. 45)

In this way, Christian Reconstructionists hope to bring Calvinist theocracy back to America, and build a new city upon a hill for the entire world to see.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Introduction*

I first became interested in the teachings of Christian Reconstructionism in late 1999. During this time, individuals and institutions were frantically updating computer programs in fear that worldwide computer failure was fast approaching. Many people believed that because the date was recorded in most computers as two digits instead of four, the year 2000 would be mistakenly recorded as 1900 and cause massive computing problems. Since computers were fast becoming an integral part of governmental and economic infrastructure, the effects on society could be disastrous. This issue was named The Millennium Bug, or Y2K. Fearing the imminent collapse of the U.S. economy due to a worldwide computer crash brought on by the Y2K computer problem, many turned to websites written by computer experts. Those who worried that the problem could not be solved by fixing software feared the worst for the future and turned to individuals with expertise in survival.

A friend of mine forwarded *Gary North's Y2K Links and Forums* website so that I could be sufficiently prepared for the dangers to come. Not only was I unconvinced that the Y2K problem would have the wide-ranging effects Gary North warned about on his site, but I sensed he had an ulterior motive. As I read more about Mr. North and his beliefs, I realized he was part of a group called Christian Reconstructionists. Not only did Mr. North's website link to articles predicting

difficult times due to the Y2K problem, but he also gave advice on how to survive it. He also hoped that the Y2K problem would bring an economic collapse that would give Christian Reconstructionists an opportunity to influence government and economic systems toward the reconstruction of society into a theocratic state. Gary North said:

The Y2K crisis is systemic. It cannot possibly be fixed...I think the U.S.A. will break up the way the U.S.S.R. did. Call me a dreamer. Call me an optimist. That's what I think. This will decentralize the social order. This is what I have wanted all of my adult life. In my view, Y2K is our deliverance. (English, 2003, p. 109).

To North's surprise, not only were the effects of Y2K minimal for companies and organizations that had spent a lot of money and work hours preparing for the worst, but the effects were the same for those that didn't prepare at all (Glasner, 2000).

### *The Research Questions*

While I was not surprised that a doomsday prediction had not come to fruition, I was taken aback by the teachings of Christian Reconstructionists such as Gary North and began to ask questions. Why would a group of Christians want to remove such important elements of U.S. life such as religious pluralism? Where did they get their ideas about the role of religion in society? Had any group with beliefs like those of Christian Reconstructionists ever existed in North America before?

*The Research Process*

As I researched Christian Reconstructionist beliefs, I read books by R. J. Rushdoony, Gary North, and other important authors to the movement. Even though these authors did not agree on every point, they did agree that John Calvin was an important source for specific religious beliefs, including predestination, and the role of religion in civil government. I began to see the theme of theocracy echoed in nearly every Reconstructionist work. I also began to notice Rushdoony's discussion of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

I had certainly heard of the Puritans, but as I read more about their movement from England and persecution to North America, and how they set up a government based on Old Testament law, I saw stark parallels. What Christian Reconstructionists seemed to desire were the same goals as the Massachusetts Bay Puritans: To create a Christian nation that would become an example of righteousness and prosperity to the nations of the world. In other words, both groups saw America as the potential city upon a hill, raised up for all to see.

The evolution of my research moved from reading solely about Christian Reconstructionists to researching the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony. Once I saw the parallels in belief, I understood that this notion of creating a theocracy in the United States was not a new idea. Yet, in this modern age we do not live in a theocratic society. How did the government that was established by the Founding Fathers seem to prevent one dominant religious view from pushing out the others?

Important figures like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison worked to keep a wall of separation between church and state. One of the key ways of accomplishing this goal was to address the issue in the Constitution. The Bill of Rights states: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Article VI, paragraph 3 of the Constitution says: “...no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.” Even though these statements seem clear, all law is open to interpretation. Societies are evolving entities, with changing attitudes and beliefs toward issues such as church and state relations. Because of this, my research led me to studying the many cases and phases of interpretation by the Supreme Court as the judges wrestled with knowing how much religion in government was too much, and how much government should interfere with religious matters.

As I wrestled with these issues, the question I was attempting to answer with my work also evolved. My initial question focused largely on Christian Reconstructionist beliefs, and how they were related to Puritan beliefs: “How are Christian Reconstructionists the intellectual and spiritual heirs of Puritan doctrine and deed, and how are the goals of Christian Reconstructionists similar to and different from the goals of the colonial Puritans in early America?” Because of the small quantity of academic research published regarding Christian Reconstruction beliefs, answering my question became increasingly difficult. I had primary documents like R. J. Rushdoony’s influential tome *Institutes of Biblical Law* and

Gary North and Gary DeMar's book *Christian Reconstruction: What it is, and What it isn't*. But these books were written to instruct those who already believed in Rushdoony's ideas, or to defend these beliefs to outsiders. Anson Shupe's chapter entitled *Christian Reconstructionism and the Angry Rhetoric of Neopostmillennialism*, as well as Shupe's collaborative chapter with Bruce Barron called *Reasons for the Growing Popularity of Christian Reconstructionism: The Determination to Attain Dominion* helped me understand some of the history and basic beliefs.

While conducting internet research, I discovered that Professor Julie Ingersoll, Associate Professor at University of Northern Florida, was currently writing a book called *Building the Kingdom of God: Christian Reconstruction and the Religious Right in America*. When I emailed her to inquire about articles and books she might suggest, she confirmed that research on Christian Reconstruction was scarce.

Researching the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony did not present the same challenges. Whittling down the sheer quantity of books and articles written about the Puritans to a manageable number of essential works became my goal. Benjamin Labaree's *Colonial Massachusetts: A History* provided an extensive overview of the Puritans in North America, including their establishment of a religious-based government, and the struggles to maintain independence as an English colony. Edmund Morgan's *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John*

*Winthrop* helped me appreciate the religious motivation behind the Puritan immigration to North America. When I wanted to understand the structure of religion in society in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, I utilized Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker's book *The Puritan Oligarchy*.

As I continued reading and researching, I realized that the story in which I was most interested involved three parts: how the Puritans brought the concept of theocracy to the colonies of North America, how the Founding Fathers and early government of the United States wrestled with the relationship of religion in government, and how the government—and especially the Supreme Court—evolved in its interpretation the Constitution's two references to religion.

Finally, I had historical context for Christian Reconstructionism, since their beliefs were a reaction to the secularization of society and an attempt to push America back to what they believe was the intent of the Puritans and the Founders: A Calvinist Christian governed America.

#### *Justification for the Curriculum*

The Puritans in America, the separation of church and state, and theocratic designs for governing are all important matters, but how would I teach these concepts to high school students? As I wrote my lesson plans, I decided to keep my focus on the question, "What is the separation of church and state, and what does it mean in the United States of America?" After all, this is an important question with

current relevance to a myriad of current events in the news. The tension between those who disagree about the role of religion in government is a longstanding one.

### *Curriculum Development*

My goal in creating this curriculum was twofold: Give the students a solid background in the history of church and state in America, including the background of terms like wall of separation, or separation of church and state, and help students understand that this is a current controversy that reflects the tensions between those who disagree about this issue. The news media is filled with daily examples.

Included in each week's lesson plan is the use of academic language. It is important for students to not only understand the definition and spelling of words that relate to the topic being taught, but to use those words in discussions and assignments. I believe that when students use academic language in its proper context, they understand the content of the lesson in a much deeper manner than if they were simply quizzed on the words on a test.

My first lesson was designed as a learning lab, where students analyze primary and secondary documents related to the separation of church and state they will choose from a list. Students synthesize the information they find to support one of three teacher-created theses. Students practice skills like handling the sometimes difficult language of historical documents, using primary and secondary documents to support an argument, thinking critically about historical and current issues, and conducting online research. These skills will be useful in the next piece of my lesson

plan, when students come up with their own theses based upon independent research for primary and secondary documents.

What I found in my research is that there have been a wide variety of opinions and documents over the decades since the Founding Fathers wrestled with religion's role in government and society. Documents like Thomas Jefferson's *Letter to the Danbury Baptists* and *The Treaty of Tripoli* seem to point toward a total separation of religion from the civic realm. But how does one justify the religious overtones of George Washington's *Inaugural Address*, or John Adams's *Proclamation Recommending a National Day of Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer*?

This next lesson allows the students to analyze their own biases regarding church and state relations and possibly modify those biases after seeing a variety of documentation about the subject. Once the students have reflected on both the documents and their own beliefs about the subject, they write a persuasive paper using the documents provided as evidence to reinforce the position thesis they've chosen. Allowing students to choose a thesis statement, and the documents from a list to support that thesis, provides a scaffold to build the skills needed for the lesson of week two.

During the second week, students utilize many of the same analytical skills from week one's lesson, only with greater independence. Taking controversial topics culled from current and historical events, students will work in pairs to conduct research. They look for primary and secondary documents that will show the various

side of the controversy. This research will also provide the historical background to help understand why this topic is controversial. Finally, the partners give an oral presentation to the class that shows all sides of the controversy utilizing a visual aide such as a poster or Power Point presentation to help illustrate the topic.

### *Overview of Instructional Delivery*

I was able to teach the first week's lesson as a guest teacher to the high school U.S. History class at a local charter school. The twelve students were immediately enthusiastic about the idea of doing the work of historians. In our discussion about primary and secondary documents, and the instructions for the first day's lesson, students asked questions like, "So this is how historians get their information?" and "How do we know if we have the right answer, like what actually happened?" This led to a very engaging discussion about how history is interpreted and how individual perception and bias can lead to a variety of historical interpretations.

Before students began to read the documents I provided, we discussed the three most common positions on church and state relations:

- a. There should be an absolute "wall of separation between church and state." The government should not promote or endorse any religion or support religious practice whatsoever.
- b. The government should support a general religious morality as long as it doesn't support a specific denomination or religion.

c. As long as the government doesn't establish a state religion, promoting religion is OK. It doesn't hurt to have prayer in school or celebrate religious holidays.

Most of the students seemed to already have a tendency toward one of these positions, and some seemed adamant that their position was the only right position. Once the students began to read the documents, I could hear them quietly sharing essential or surprising pieces of information with a neighbor, and the room was electric with the palpable excitement of discovery. Some had questions about words or phrases in the documents, which I answered with context clues and short explanations. Toward the end of class, we discussed the possibility of students changing the thesis they had chosen due to new information gleaned from the documents, and while no students expressed a complete change in opinion, some had modified their opinions. One student stated, "I had always thought that the separation of church and state was totally cut and dried. I had no idea that there were so many interpretations of this idea, and that people disagreed so much. I feel a little less sure of what I thought before." Another said, "I didn't know where most of these ideas came from. I thought the wall of separation of church and state was in the Constitution."

Unfortunately, I was not able to teach the second or third week sections of my curriculum.

*Conclusion*

Separation of church and state is a timely topic with a long history of misunderstanding and controversy that has yet to be resolved in the United States of America. Student cannot engage in well-reasoned debate about the issues involved in this topic without analyzing the documents used in interpreting its meaning. Students also cannot understand why the subject of church and state relations is contentious if they haven't examined the background behind the specific controversies involved. The curriculum that follows provides students an opportunity to analyze primary and secondary documents, form opinions, present those opinions with well-reasoned evidence, and evaluate the opinions of others so as to increase the depth of understanding about the topic. My hope is that as students increase their knowledge and ability to analyze and synthesize the ideas contained in this curriculum, they will then be able to apply these skills to any subject that they may tackle in the future.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONTENT

#### **The Separation of Church and State**

##### *Materials Needed*

- Copies of all Power Point presentations, worksheets, rubrics, and primary source lists provided in the Appendix
- Computer and projector with speakers and access to the Internet, particularly Youtube.com
- Final Projects: Computers for students to complete final project or poster board, scissors, glue, and markers

##### *Introduction to the Teacher*

This two week unit is designed for a high school US History class. This thematic unit, not including homework, oral presentation time, and reflection should be about six hours long.

This unit focuses on the idea of separation of church and state and the controversies regarding this subject. The first week utilizes the learning lab model by outlining the three main positions on the topic, giving the students practice analyzing primary documents and thinking about their meaning, adopting a position, and writing a paper that justifies the reasons for that position. The second week allows the students to find a historical or current separation of church and state controversy and create an oral presentation with a partner to present to the class.

Please refer to the Annotated Chronology [Appendix A] for detailed information to better understand the topic.

### ***Grade Level and Standards***

This lesson is especially focused on topics related to California standards for 11<sup>th</sup> grade, but with modification may also be used to help 8<sup>th</sup> grade students understand the topic [Appendix B].

### ***Goals***

The student will be able to:

1. Remember what a historian does, and how the job is accomplished, and the goals of a historian.
2. Understand the concept of separation of church and state, and comprehend why the concept is controversial.
3. Understand the difference between primary and secondary source materials, and be able to sort materials into each category.

### ***Objectives***

1. Understand and be able to summarize the three main positions regarding the separation of church and state.
2. Read and analyze primary documents.
3. Adopt one of three positions on the separation of church and state, and use primary and secondary source analysis to write a persuasive paper justifying that position.

4. Conduct independent research regarding controversies surrounding separation of church and state.
5. Work with a partner to create an oral presentation.
6. Give an oral presentation to the class complete with a visual aid.

### ***Academic Language***

In each lesson, words and phrases have been included to help the students understand the lesson and the concepts presented. These words will appear under the heading Academic Language Vocabulary in each lesson.

### ***Prior Content***

This lesson can fit very nicely at the beginning of the school year since it addresses the Founding Fathers' ideological and philosophical beliefs, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights (See History-Social Science Content Standards 11.1). I chose to teach it about midway through the year as we turn toward the 20<sup>th</sup> century and discuss the *Scopes v. The State of Tennessee* trial. Teaching the lesson later in the year gives the teacher time to set the stage for discussing controversial subjects in class, and clearly establishing what historians do to study and record history. Students should have background on the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the First and Second Great Awakenings, new religious sects such as Mormons and Seventh Day Adventists, the Social Gospel movement, and the reaction to it in Christian fundamentalism.

**Part One: Learning Lab*****Lesson One – The Separation of Church and State (one 90-minute session or two 45-minute sessions)****Academic Language Vocabulary:*

Church

State

Public trust

Separationist

Accommodationist

Non-Preferentialist

Parochial school

Sectarian

Theocracy

Democracy

Federalist

*Introduction:*

“What does the phrase ‘separation of church and state’ mean? In the next two weeks, we will be discussing the controversial subject of the separation of church and state. As you know from our previous discussions, the founders of the United States addressed the issue in the Constitution in the No Religious Test clause, which states, ‘...no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or

public trust under the United States' (U.S. Constitution, Article VI, paragraph 3). The Bill of Rights, also states that, 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof' (U.S. Constitution, Amendment 1). Because the Constitution does not address the issue of religion in any other way, the relationship between religion and government has been interpreted in a variety of ways."

"This week we will analyze some documents that are important to the interpretation of this relationship, and try to draw conclusions from what they seem to say. At the end of the week, you will have chosen a position, and written an essay discussing why you believe this position to be the most likely one. Next week we will analyze several specific controversies, and then you will conduct research with a partner and give an oral presentation on what you've found. Your grade for the next two weeks will be based on classroom participation, your paper, finding current events articles, and the final oral presentation."

"Today, we will begin by reviewing the job of the historian, briefly discuss the idea of separation of church and state, watch videos of specific statements made about the subject, and categorize them according to their main idea. I will give you homework at the end of class."

1. Review: "You are the Historian!" Discuss the job of historians, what they do, and how they do their work. This is review information. You have covered this at the beginning of the year.

Ask: “What does a historian do? What kinds of information do they work with? How do historians come to conclusions about a topic or a period of history?”

Some sample answers might include:

“Historians try to find out what happened by gathering evidence and piecing it together for form a narrative.”

“Historians conduct interviews and read documents to find information.”

“The historian is like a detective solving mysteries of the past.”

2. Discuss students’ initial perception of the phrase “separation of church and state.”

Ask: What do the terms “church” and “state” mean in this context?

Some answers might include:

“Church might mean religion. It might mean a specific belief group.”

“State might mean a literal state, like California. Or it might mean the broader system of government.”

Ask: Where have you heard the term used?

Some answers might include:

“I’ve heard people argue about the separation of church and state. I’ve heard it on TV.”

Ask: What does the term mean?

Some answers might include:

“It means religion and government should be totally separate.”

“It means that the government can’t force people to be only one religion.”

Ask: Where does it come from? How is it applied? What are the controversies?

Answers will vary.

Say: “Now we will watch three short video clips and discuss three interpretations of the separation of church and state. We will categorize each video according to what it seems to say on the subject.”

*Hook:*

Play these three videos. Discuss each one after viewing.

**Video One:** “This is a CHRISTIAN nation”

{[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2NOi31\\_-84](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2NOi31_-84)}

(Entire video or short clip of your choosing)

Write responses from students as short phrases on the board under the heading “Video One” as you discuss these questions:

- What do the people who made this video believe about the US?
- What is the place of religion in government?
- According to the maker of the video, what were the intentions of the Founding Fathers?
- Analyze the name of the poster (TheAtheistAntidote) and the music/images. What are they saying?

**Video Two:** “Sarah Palin on Fox News Sarah Palin 'America is based on Judeo Christian beliefs'”

{<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5O8Rwoo-Lqs>}

(Play 1:40-3:36)

Write responses from students as phrases on the board under the heading “Video Two” as you discuss these questions:

- What does Sarah Palin believe about the intentions of the Founding Fathers?
- Is she saying exactly the same thing as the previous video? Why or why not?
- What does she mean when she discusses the Chinese Americans and their non-Christian beliefs?

**Video Three:** “Thomas Jefferson Pwns Sarah Palin & Her God”

{[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5j5ncmZizJ0&feature=results\\_video&playnext=1&list=PL7F5B45B7089F06F8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5j5ncmZizJ0&feature=results_video&playnext=1&list=PL7F5B45B7089F06F8)}

(Play 0:46-2:26)

Write responses from students as phrases on the board under the heading “Video Three” as you discuss these questions:

- What is Keith Olbermann’s response to Sarah Palin’s beliefs?
- Compare the quotes used in the first video to the Jefferson quotes used by Olbermann. How are they different?
- How can Jefferson seem to say two opposite things?
- What do you think Olbermann would say about the place of religion in government?

*Transition:*

Read summary of the three major positions concerning the separation issue. The article is found here: {<http://candst.tripod.com/tnppage/view3.htm>}

Show article on overhead. Discuss and summarize attributes of each position:

Separationists are against:

- allowing government to organize, encourage, or discourage prayer in the public schools;
- using government funds to aid parochial schools (e.g., voucher programs);
- religious displays (e.g., crèches, crosses, menorahs) on government property when these displays convey government support of religious beliefs.

Accomodationists are for:

- allowing government to require prayer in the public schools;
- using government funds to aid parochial schools (e.g., voucher programs);
- religious displays (e.g., crèches, crosses, menorahs) on government property, even when these displays convey government support of religious beliefs.

Non-Preferentialists are for:

- allowing supports or promotion of religious belief and practice as long as it does not favor one religion or sect over another.
- allowing government to promote non-sectarian, general prayer in the public schools.
- allowing religious practice and holiday celebrations in government that are non-sectarian.

As a class, orally review each video. Then place each video in the category in which it fits. Video One is Accommodationist. Video Two is Accommodationists with Non-Preferentialist leanings. Video Three is Separationist.

*Content:*

Instruct students to choose a position thesis from the list. Say: “You will now choose a position from these three options. Once you have done so, take notes on your handout as to why you’ve chosen this position. Each of you will circle the thesis statement you would like to support on the handout I’ve given you. Then, you will list, in complete sentences, three well-reasoned supporting sentences as to why you’ve picked this particular thesis. You don’t necessarily have to agree with the position you’ve chosen, but you do have to have good reasons, based on evidence as to why you’ve picked it. Tomorrow, we will look at some primary documents that may support your choice, or may cause you to pick a different choice.” Students will turn this in at the end of class.

- a. Separationist: I believe there should be an absolute “wall of separation

between church and state.” The government should not promote or endorse any religion or support religious practice whatsoever.

b. Non-Preferentialist: I believe the government should support a general religious morality as long as it doesn’t support a specific denomination or religion.

c. Accomodationist: I believe that as long as the government doesn’t establish a state religion, promoting religion is OK. It doesn’t hurt to have prayer in school or celebrate religious holidays.

*Assessment:*

Homework: “For homework tonight, I would like you to bring in three recent articles from print or online sources that support your thesis position.”

***Lesson Two - Separation of Church and State Learning Lab (one 90-minute session or two 45-minute sessions)***

*Introduction:*

Review what was learned in Day One. Ask:

- What is the separation of church and state?
- What are the three main positions regarding this issue?
- If you’d like to share, what position did you choose as your thesis statement, and why did you choose it?

*Hook:*

“We will watch a short video clip about the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Pay attention so you can answer these questions: Who were the Puritans? Why were they in North America? What kind of government did they have?” This should be review information from early in the year, and from 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Play video: “The Massachusetts Bay Colony, Founded in 1629”

{ [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-\\_uDYYhHpK&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_uDYYhHpK&feature=related) }

Ask:

- Why do you think I played this video clip?
- Who were the Puritans?
- Why were they in North America?
- What kind of government did they have?
- How did they deal with the issue of church and state?
- How do the opinions expressed in the current events articles you brought in today compare to the religious government of the Puritans?

*Transition:*

1. Discuss current events articles and how they fit into these positions. Have students save these for Part Two.

2. Review the differences between primary and secondary sources. This information was covered early in the school year.

*Content:*

1. Give students worksheet called “Church and State Learning Lab,” including

links to primary and secondary documents about separation of church and state [Appendix C]. Show “Jefferson’s Letter to the Danbury Baptists” (with transcription) on overhead. Model reading primary document using “Jefferson’s Letter to the Danbury Baptists.” If you’d like more background on the letter and its context, this website has some useful information:

‘A Wall of Separation:’ FBI Helps Restore Jefferson's Obliterated Draft by James Hutson {<http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danbury.html>}

Say: “Many people think the phrase ‘wall of separation between church and state’ is in the Declaration of Independence, or the Constitution. Some wonder where the term originates. When the Supreme Court later used this phrase to describe the relationship between religion and government in America, they were referring to this letter. Let’s take a closer look at the letter and see what it really says.”

Important item to emphasize:

Federalists had recently accused Jefferson of atheism because he refused to proclaim days of prayer and thanksgiving. He implies that prayer and thanksgiving are private matters, not to be promoted or hindered by government.

Ask these questions:

- This letter was published in national newspapers. Why do you think letters to

private organizations were published publicly?

Possible answers:

“No television, radio, internet for communication.”

“To clarify political questions. To attack political opponents.”

- What does Jefferson mean by, “...the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions...”?
- Why do you think Jefferson ends his letter with what seems to be religious sentiment?

Say: “Now, you will have time in class to read the other primary documents on your list. Keep in mind which separation of church and state thesis you’ve chosen, and see which of these documents supports or refutes your thesis.”

1. Using class laptops, allow students to explore primary documents from list, reminding them that they will be choosing at least two primary sources and two secondary sources to use in a paper. They may use two or more of the articles they brought in for homework.

2. Discuss impressions students have of primary sources. Help with language and context issues. As a review, model research skills like reading timelines for context and dictionary skills for vocabulary.

3. Assign paper: “Write a persuasive paper of two or more double spaced

pages which contains each of the following: a thesis statement, a defense of the thesis based on direct quotes from one or more of the primary source documents, a rebuttal of the thesis based on direct quotes from one or more of the primary source documents, your response to the rebuttal, and a conclusion.” Hand out and discuss Persuasive Essay Rubric [Appendix D].

4. Spend the rest of the class working on papers. Try to spend class time checking in with each student, giving guidance, and answering questions. (If possible, create a “check-in schedule” so that each student gets an equal amount of time if they need it.)

*Assessment:*

Use Persuasive Essay Rubric [Appendix D] to score essays and provide feedback to each student.

## **Part Two: Oral Presentations – Controversies**

*Academic Language Vocabulary:*

Establishment clause

Evolution

Controversy

Home Schooling

Theocracy/Theocratic

*Lesson Three: Separation of Church and State Controversies (one 90-minute session or two 45-minute sessions)*

Separation of church and state papers due.

Review Part One and answer any questions.

*Introduction:*

“Last week we covered three main opinions about the separation of church and state, read primary and secondary documents about the subject, and wrote papers defending one of these opinions. This week, we will be focusing on some of the controversies regarding this subject. Because the meaning of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, and Jefferson’s words “...wall of separation between church and state...” are hotly debated, the role of religion in government is interpreted in a variety of ways. What are some of the controversies you saw while researching your articles? What are some current historical church/state controversies you have heard about?”

*Hook:*

“What about the battle over teaching evolution in schools? Last week we covered the Scopes trial. Will someone please summarize that trial? We will watch a clip from the movie *Inherit the Wind* to illustrate this controversy.”

Play movie clip: “*Inherit the Wind* – Spencer Tracy Speech”

{[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S\\_DQUAuNUvw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_DQUAuNUvw)}

*Transition:*

“Teaching evolution in schools is only one church/state controversy. What are some of the other controversies you found when researching articles last week?”

Make short list on board.

Say: “Using the articles you brought in last week, you will share the controversies presented with a partner. Together, you will come up with a controversial topic related to the separation of church and state, conduct research on the topic, and present both sides of the controversy to the class. In creating your presentation and visual aid, I would like you to use at least two primary documents, and two secondary documents. Last week I provided those for your paper. This week, you will conduct research and find documents with your partner. Your visual aid can be a poster or PowerPoint presentation. This presentation will be presented in front of the class, and will last between 5 and 10 minutes. Before class is done today, you and your partner will share with the class which topic you’ve chosen.”

*Content:*

1. Pair students in the manner you’ve established to discuss controversies in church and state to present to the class for discussion. Students should refer to current events articles for topics, or you can suggest a topic to those students who need one.

2. Make a list of current and historical controversies during the discussion.

Some potential topics include:

- History of the Pledge of Allegiance

- “One Nation Under God” Added to Pledge of Allegiance and Money
- Religious Displays in Public Places
- Prayer/Religious Instruction in Public Schools
- Evolution in Science Classes
- History of Home Schooling
- Christian Reconstructionism/theocratic groups
- Puritan Theocracy in Massachusetts Bay
- Supreme Court Cases

Allow students to discuss topics, ask questions, and summarize perceptions of topics. Guide students toward presenting both sides of the controversy in the fairest way possible.

3. Hand out Church and State Controversies Oral Presentation Assignment worksheet [Appendix E], including Oral Presentation Rubric [Appendix F], for church and state controversies oral presentation. Students will conduct research and give a ten minute oral presentation on chosen topic, including technology or visual support (Power Point, short audio/video clips, primary document, poster backdrop, costume, etc.), at least two primary source documents, and two secondary source documents.

4. Discuss grading. Final grade for project will include points for historical research, use of primary and secondary documents, technology/visual supports, presentation, and notes taken during other students’ presentations. Notes on other

presentations will be turned in with presentation outline for teacher to review and grade. Review rubric with class [Appendix F].

5. Have students research and bring articles and documents about topic for homework.

***Lesson Four: Separation of Church and State Controversies (one 90-minute session or two 45-minute sessions)***

*Introduction:*

Review Day One discussion and topics. “Earlier in the week, we discussed some of the controversies surrounding the relationship between religion and government. We also chose topics for our oral reports. Today, we will continue this process by using class time to work with our partners, and research more documents to support our presentations. We will also discuss the details of the presentation, go over the rubric so you understand what is expected, and talk more about separation of church and state controversies. But first I have a question for you: Should the Ten Commandments be displayed in a government courthouse? Why or why not?”

*Hook:*

“In this video, citizens are returning a display of the Ten Commandments to the wall of the courthouse.”

Play video: “Ten Commandments Reposted Inside Ky. Courthouse”

{<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dL9whBS4nyg>}

Say: “In the United States, the state and federal courts seem to sway back and forth on this topic. Are the Ten Commandments considered religious text? Why or why not? Do you agree with the older gentleman when he asserts that ‘...America and God go together?’ Why or why not?”

*Content:*

Answer topic and research questions. Using class computer/projector, model online research for documents and media. Using Google, search: “Timeline of church state” and scroll down to PBS.com link entitled “God in America: Timeline – Faith in America” and click on it. Link is here:

(<http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/timeline/>)

Say: “Notice how this timeline begins at 1598 with Spain coming to New Mexico to spread Catholicism, and continues to the modern day? This is a fantastic place to see short summaries of particular events that might be controversial. For example, on the left where it says ‘Jump To,’ drop that date to 1920, and scroll a little to the right. At 1925, you’ll see the Scopes Trial. If you click on the plus button ‘+’, you will see a short synopsis, along with links to interviews. This site might be helpful in finding basic information about your topic. Is this a primary or secondary source? Secondary. But it may lead you to the primary documents you need. You can also search the Library of Congress or the National Archives, which have many documents online. Any questions? Now you may use class time to conduct research with your partner. Be sure to create a bookmarks file folder for this project and save

your useful links like I showed you before.”

1. Using class laptops, allow students to work in pairs as they continue research on topics and begin taking notes and saving links for presentations.

2. Troubleshoot technology, research, organizational and behavior issues as needed.

3. Review Church and State Controversies Oral Presentation Assignment worksheet [Appendix E], including Oral Presentation Rubric [Appendix F] and answer questions.

4. Give students deadlines on oral presentations, and schedule presentation time slots for Part Three.

***Lesson Five: Oral Presentations and Conclusions (two 90-minute sessions or four 45-minute sessions)***

*Introduction:*

“Over the past four lessons, we learned about the separation of church and state, analyzed primary and secondary documents relating to the relationship between religion and government in the United States, and discussed current and historical controversies. Beginning today, you will have an opportunity to share with the class what you learned about the controversy you chose to research.”

*Content: Oral Presentations*

*Conclusions:*

After students give oral presentations, which will take most of the week, wrap up the lesson with reflection on what was learned.

Say: “During this unit, we learned about the separation of church and state by examining some of the documents addressing the issue going all the way back to the founding fathers. You wrote a paper with a thesis that is either for the complete separation of church and state, for a civic government that is unspecific and positive, or a total blend of religion and government. Then, we discussed some of the historical and current controversies surrounding the relationship between government and religion. Finally, in pairs you gave presentations to the class covering these conflicts. Now it’s time to reflect on these lessons and what you learned. I want you to think of a question to ask your peers about the separation of church and state. These questions can be about any part of the last two weeks, and can be specific to a pair of presenters if you have additional questions for them about their subject. You have five minutes to think of a question and write it down. Remember what makes a good question? Open ended questions are best. For example, I could ask: ‘What did you find the most interesting about the founders’ ideas about religion and government?’ The answer is open to the individual and could vary wildly. After you’ve written your question, I will randomly call on you to ask your question to the class.” (Use whatever method you’ve established to call on students.)

Start the discussion with your example question. “What did you find the most interesting about the founders’ ideas regarding religion and government?” Allow students to discuss each question. This is a good time for students to review and emphasize memorable details in Separation of Church and State unit.

## APPENDIX A

## ANNOTATED CHRONOLOGY

This chronology focuses on the movement of a Calvinist, theocratic style of government, based in Old Testament law, as its adherents move from Geneva Switzerland in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century to England, then to North America with the Puritans in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the King had removed the Puritans from power and folded the Massachusetts Bay Colony into the larger Province of Massachusetts Bay. As the United States of America gains independence from England in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Founding Fathers consider the role of religion in civil government as they write the Constitution and other important documents. These founding documents are interpreted in a variety of ways over the following centuries, with results ranging from a tacit acceptance of religion's role in government to ambivalence about religion in government. Some interpretations will reference Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" between church and state as a metaphor for keeping the two realms separate. In reaction, those who believe that religious ideas should be reflected in the legal code of the U.S. have been dissatisfied with what they consider to be a secularist approach to interpreting church and state relations. One group's reaction has been to call for a return to the Calvinist theocracy of the Puritans, where modern laws are taken directly from Old Testament law. The Christian Reconstructions seek to build a new city upon a hill, a theocratic government that will reflect their interpretation of religious values and serve as an

example of a Christian nation to the world.

1536 John Calvin publishes *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*

*The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which was revised several times before his death, contains Calvin's theological views on God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church's place in the world. One section of the book details Calvin's ideas about the Christian's place in civil government, and government's role in supporting religious practice. These ideas were instrumental as the colonial Puritans formed the government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Rousas Rushdoony also drew heavily from Calvin's theological writings as he formed the ideas that would be the basis for Christian Reconstructionism.

1541 John Calvin in Geneva

The city council of Geneva, Switzerland passes the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) to support John Calvin's calls for reform. A portion of these new laws outline a plan for the clergy's involvement in civil government, and create a society where religious codes were strictly enforced by the courts. If a criminal is found guilty of breaking these Old Testament-based laws, they could be punished severely, including excommunication, expulsion, public humiliation, a fine, a prison term, or sometimes, a death sentence carried out by drowning, strangling, hanging, burning, or decapitation.

### 1550s to 1600s Calvinism Arrives and Grows in England

Calvin's ideas spread throughout Europe as Calvinist churches run by Geneva-trained missionaries open in Germany, France, Scotland, and the Netherlands. Flemish merchants arrive in England bringing weaving skills and a devotion to Calvin's doctrines. In the face of frequently violent persecution, the Calvinist ideas that became known as Puritanism spread throughout England to challenge the established Anglican Church.

### 1628 The Massachusetts Bay Colony

Due to persecution in England, many Puritans seek to practice their religion in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Because John Winthrop is able to obtain the royal charter, the company's board of governors meets in the actual colony, not in England like the other royal colonies. This gives the Puritans more independence to pass and enforce laws that were in line with their religious beliefs. Governor John Winthrop's vision is that the colony would become a city upon a hill, an example for other religious colonies in the future.

### 1631 Voting in the Colony

The council of assistants decides to give voting rights only to a small group of males who are upstanding church members called freemen. In order to gain the vote, a potential freeman has to be rigorously questioned by members of the church

leadership to determine the veracity of their religious beliefs and experiences.

Because of the religious uniformity of the voters, Puritan leaders are able to keep tight control on who is elected and which laws are passed

#### 1641 The Massachusetts Body of Liberties

The colony's first code of laws, written by Nathaniel Ward, draws heavily on Old Testament law to codify behavior and punishment. This document is also heavily influenced by John Calvin's writings, and includes portions of an early draft written by John Cotton. While the laws are influenced by Judeo-Christian tradition, they also include many important individual rights that are later included the Bill of Rights, including the rights of due process, freedom of speech, and a jury trial.

#### 1659-1661 The Boston Martyrs

Many people were whipped, humiliated, driven out of the colony, or executed for crimes such as lack of church attendance, adultery, and conflicting religious beliefs. Early Quakers were whipped, imprisoned, or driven out of the colony. In 1659 two Quakers, William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson, are executed for refusing to leave Massachusetts. In 1660, Mary Dyer is also hung when she returns to Boston soon after being expelled. In 1661, Parliament orders the Massachusetts Bay Colony to release all Quakers from imprisonment and allow them to leave, and punishment for dissenters is suspended.

### 1684 Loss of Charter

After many investigations into Puritan abuses by his and previous administrations, Charles II officially annuls the Massachusetts Bay Charter, removing Puritans from exclusive power and destroying their dreams of a theocracy in the New World. King William III issues a new charter that folds Massachusetts Bay into neighboring colonies to form the Province of Massachusetts Bay, where the colonists are not penalized for unbelief or beliefs that contrast with those of the Puritans.

### 1747 A Postmillennial Direction

Famous Puritan minister Jonathan Edwards writes *A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, Pursuant to Scripture Promises and Prophecies Concerning the Last Time*. This tract explicitly sets Edwards apart from most church leaders before him concerning the eschatological views of the coming millennium. Before Edwards, most Protestants believe that Christ's return will happen before the millennium, but after a time of harsh trial and persecution of the church. Edwards suggests that the millennium will come before Christ's return, which gives the church approximately 1,000 years to prosper, flourish and grow, thereby preparing the Earth for near-universal conversion to Christianity and Christ's return at the end. This is a shift

away from premillennialist (or a-millennialist, as is the case with most of the Christian creeds) views toward a postmillennialist view that will become more popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Postmillennialism will influence many religious denominations and new sects, including 20<sup>th</sup> century Christian Reconstructionist ideas about political and religious changes that must happen in the United States before Christ can return.

#### 1787-1791 U.S. Constitution Adopted, Bill of Rights Ratified

The Constitution is adopted by the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. The Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, is ratified by three fourths of the states. The First Amendment to the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," while Article VI states, "No religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." James Madison is a strong proponent of religious freedom and is instrumental in writing the Bill of Rights, including the First Amendment. He is instrumental in getting the Bill of Rights passed through the First Congress.

#### 1802 Thomas Jefferson Writes an Influential Letter

Worried about religious liberty and the establishment of a state religion, the Danbury Baptist Association sends a letter of concern to President Thomas Jefferson.

Jefferson's response letter would refer to "a wall of separation between Church & State." This letter will later be interpreted as illustrating the separationist intent behind the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

#### 1800-1900 A Century of Hope

Stemming partially from postmillennialist religious ideas concerning the perfection of humankind, and secular progressivist theories of social optimism and justice, a theme of hopefulness marks the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many religious denominations and new utopian societies join the fray, including Protestants like the Presbyterians, the Disciples of Christ, Josiah Strong and the Social Gospel movement, and new utopians like the Harmony Society, the Oneida Community, and the Owenites. Many new religions are started, like the Christian Scientists, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Jehovah's Witnesses.

#### 1880s to 1920s Fundamentalism Becomes Popular in the U.S.

From a term coined by Baptist editor Curtis Lee Laws in 1920, fundamentalism is a movement rather than a specific Christian denomination. Laws usage of term begins after he read a series of essays published between 1910 and 1915 called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. The fundamentalist movement arises in reaction to the liberalization of Christianity and Biblical

interpretation, the reformist Social Gospel, and the secularization of science. Fundamentalists seek to fight modernism—what they call the alarming trends with which they disagree—and begin to systematize long-held beliefs such as biblical inerrancy, the literal creation account from Genesis, and Christ’s physical and premillennial return to earth. This evangelical Christian movement remains popular in the United States well into modern times.

#### 1947 *Everson v. Board of Education*

In a Supreme Court case discussing public funds for students transported to private, religious schools, justices agree on a sharp separation between church and state: “In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect ‘a wall of separation between church and State’... That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach.” This case is influential on future interpretation of the Establishment Clause.

#### 1954 God Added to the Pledge and Money

Francis Bellamy’s original Pledge of Allegiance contained no reference to God, so beginning in the mid-1900s, various groups try to change the pledge to include “under God.” Finally, in 1954, President Eisenhower signs the bill into law. Proponents argue that a belief in God is part of America’s patriotic fabric, and opponents argue that a belief in God and government should be kept separate. The

refusal of individuals to take the Pledge of Allegiance for a variety of religious and philosophical reasons has created controversy and court cases for decades.

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#### 1916 Rousas John Rushdoony is Born, Educated

Rousas John Rushdoony, the founder of Christian Reconstructionism, is born in New York City to Armenian immigrants. He learns English in the California public school system, and continues his education at University of California, Berkeley, where he earns a B.A. in English (1938), a teaching credential (1939), and a M.A. in Education (1940). He also attends Pacific School of Religion where he becomes ordained by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1944), and later receives an honorary doctorate. Rushdoony is influenced by Westminster Theological Seminary's professor of apologetics Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987), who argued that Christian believers and unbelievers had little in common because there was no philosophical middle ground on which both could agree.

#### 1959 Rushdoony Begins Publishing

In 1959, Rushdoony writes his first book, *By What Standard?*, an introduction to Van Til's theology. In the years to follow, Rushdoony authors many books on subjects such as the American public education system, U.S. history, Sigmund Freud, science and philosophy, law, and over population. He also begins

the Christian Reconstructionist publishing house and think tank Chalcedon Foundation in 1965, which includes writing for a monthly newsletter, *The Chalcedon Report*.

#### 1973-2001 Rushdoony's Endeavors and Christian Reconstructionism

In 1973, R.J. Rushdoony publishes his magnum opus, a highly influential book called *The Institutes of Biblical Law*. In it, he details the application of Biblical legal code to modern day situations, including a guideline for establishing laws and the punishments for breaking those laws. He purposefully names his book after John Calvin's *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, even though he does not believe Calvin goes far enough in requiring the state to fully submit to and enforce Biblical law. *The Institutes of Biblical Law* is hugely influential on the beliefs of Christian Reconstructionists, a group of conservative Christians who practice Dominion Theology. Christian Reconstructionists hold the postmillennialist belief that the United States government (and eventually the world) should be run as a theocracy in order to perfect society and help usher in Christ's eventual return. In other words, society should be reconstructed under Biblical principles, and Old Testament punishments for crimes should be instituted. For example, death by stoning would be appropriate for crimes such as homosexuality, adultery, idolatry, kidnapping, and public blasphemy. Due to his suspicions regarding the secular goals of the public school system, Rushdoony also becomes an advocate for home schooling. He writes

books and articles both promoting the philosophy, and guiding parents through the practice of removing children from public school and educating them at home using Christian curriculum. Rushdoony dies in 2001 at 84 years old.

#### 1942-Present Gary North

Gary North receives his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of California, Riverside in 1972. A prolific writer, North publishes over 50 books covering topics such as Christian economics, Christian Reconstructionism, public education, Biblical law, and theology. He is the founder of the Institute of Christian Economics, and a follower of Van Til and Rushdoony. In fact, Gary North marries Rushdoony's daughter Sharon, but later falls out with him over theological matters. North is perhaps most widely known for his predictions of impending doom because of the inability of computers to change over from 1999 to the year 2000. According to North's website, this supposed "Y2K Bug" will cause most government and banking computers to fail, implementing the collapse of both federal and state governments, and international banking systems. North's plan is to somehow move the United States toward a theocracy when this happens. When virtually no important computer systems crash at the New Year, Gary North apologizes and changes his emphasis to economic theory and advice.

APPENDIX B  
HISTORY–SOCIAL SCIENCE CONTENT STANDARDS KINDERGARTEN  
THROUGH GRADE TWELVE FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OCTOBER, 1998

***Grade Ten: United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century***

*11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.*

1. Describe the Enlightenment and the rise of democratic ideas as the context in which the nation was founded.
2. Analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers' philosophy of divinely bestowed unalienable natural rights, the debates on the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, and the addition of the Bill of Rights.

*11.2 Students analyze the relationship among the rise of industrialization, large scale rural-to-urban migration, and massive immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe*

7. Analyze the similarities and differences between the ideologies of Social Darwinism and Social Gospel (e.g., using biographies of William Graham Sumner, Billy Sunday, Dwight L. Moody).

*11.3 Students analyze the role religion played in the founding of America, its lasting moral, social, and political impacts, and issues regarding religious liberty.*

1. Describe the contributions of various religious groups to American civic principles and social reform movements (e.g., civil and human rights, individual responsibility and the work ethic, antimonarchy and self-rule, worker protection, family-centered communities).
2. Analyze the great religious revivals and the leaders involved in them, including the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, the Civil War revivals, the Social Gospel Movement, the rise of Christian liberal theology in the nineteenth century, the impact of the Second Vatican Council, and the rise of Christian fundamentalism in current times.
4. Discuss the expanding religious pluralism in the United States and California that resulted from large-scale immigration in the twentieth century.

5. Describe the principles of religious liberty found in the Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment, including the debate on the issue of separation of church and state.

***Grade 8: United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict***

*8.1 Students understand the major events preceding the founding of the nation and relate their significance to the development of American constitutional democracy.*

1. Describe the relationship between the moral and political ideas of the Great Awakening and the development of revolutionary fervor.
2. Analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights”).

*8.2 Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.*

4. Describe the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution as specified in the

Federalist Papers (authored by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay) and the role of such leaders as Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson in the writing and ratification of the Constitution.

5. Understand the significance of Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom as a forerunner of the First Amendment and the origins, purpose, and differing views of the founding fathers on the issue of the separation of church and state.
6. Enumerate the powers of government set forth in the Constitution and the fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights.
7. Describe the principles of federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, the nature and purpose of majority rule, and the ways in which the American idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights.

## APPENDIX C

## CHURCH AND STATE LEARNING LAB

**Topic:** Some people assert that the Founding Fathers intended an absolute separation of government from all things religious. Others think that the “separation of church and state” is a myth, and that the Founders were religious men who believed we should be governed by the values of Christian morality. In this learning lab, we will try to understand the current controversy surrounding the separation of church and state by analyzing documents from the past.



[From: [http://apps.americanbar.org/publiced/constitutionday/topics\\_est3.html](http://apps.americanbar.org/publiced/constitutionday/topics_est3.html)]

1. Read the following article explaining the main positions of those in favor and against the separation of church and state:  
<http://candst.tripod.com/tnppage/view3.htm>
2. Choose a thesis statement:
  - a. There should be an absolute “wall of separation between church and state.” The government should not promote or endorse any religion or support religious practice whatsoever.
  - b. The government should support a general religious morality as long as it doesn’t support a specific denomination or religion.
  - c. As long as the government doesn’t establish a state religion, promoting religion is OK. It doesn’t hurt to have prayer in school or celebrate religious holidays.
3. Read at least two primary sources and two secondary sources from the lists below.

What is the difference between a primary and secondary source?

4. Revise your thesis. You can change the wording if you'd like. After reading more about the issue, what do you think? Do you still agree with the thesis you've chosen?

5. Write a persuasive paper of two or more pages which contains each of the following: a thesis statement, a defense of the thesis based on direct quotes from one or more of the primary source documents, a rebuttal of the thesis based on direct quotes from one or more of the primary source documents, and a conclusion.

### **Primary Sources:**

What guarantees "Freedom of Religion?" *Bill of Rights (Amendment 1)*  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill\\_of\\_rights\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html)

What does the Constitution say about religion and political leaders? (*Article VI: Clause 3*)  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html)

Virginia's *Statute of Religious Freedom* (1777)  
<http://www.pbs.org/jefferson/archives/documents/ih195802.htm>

Madison's *Memorial and Remonstrance* (1785)  
[http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/madison\\_m&r\\_1785.html](http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/madison_m&r_1785.html)

George Washington's *Inaugural Address* (1789)  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american\\_originals/inaugtxt.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/inaugtxt.html)

John Adams's *Proclamation - Recommending a National Day of Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer* (1799)  
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65675#ixzz1pWInzzhM>

Thomas Jefferson's *Letter to Danbury Baptists* (1802)  
<http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html>

*Treaty of Tripoli (Article 11)* (1796)  
[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/bar1796t.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/bar1796t.asp)

*Does the display of the Ten Commandments in a county courthouse violate the Establishment Clause?* (2004)  
[http://www.oyez.org/sites/default/files/cases/2000-2009/2004/2004\\_03\\_1693/briefs/mccreary\\_us.pdf](http://www.oyez.org/sites/default/files/cases/2000-2009/2004/2004_03_1693/briefs/mccreary_us.pdf)

*Religion and the Founding of the American Republic*

(Two pages of links to primary documents)

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel06.html>

**Secondary Sources:**

*Texas Education Board Refuses to Require Religious-Freedom Lesson*

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/headlines/20100312-Texas-education-board-refuses-to-require-3409.ece>

*Washington Wants a Say Over Your Minister*

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204138204576603221206193838.html>

*Christine O'Donnell: "Where in the Constitution is the Separation of Church and State?"*

[http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544\\_162-20020015-503544.html](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20020015-503544.html)

*Texas Court says Bible display un-Constitutional*

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/front/4119997.html>

*Suit Against Air Force Dismissed*

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2006/oct/27/20061027-112923-9536r/?page=all>

General Information (beware: Wikipedia!)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation\\_of\\_church\\_and\\_state\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation_of_church_and_state_in_the_United_States)

CA Educational Standards:

**11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.**

2. Analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers' philosophy of divinely bestowed unalienable natural rights, the debates on the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, and the addition of the Bill of Rights.

**11.3 Students analyze the role religion played in the founding of America, its lasting moral, social, and political impacts, and issues regarding religious liberty.**

1. Describe the contributions of various religious groups to American civic principles

and social reform movements (e.g., civil and human rights, individual responsibility and the work ethic, antimonarchy and self-rule, worker protection, family-centered communities).

5. Describe the principles of religious liberty found in the Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment, including the debate on the issue of separation of church and state.

## APPENDIX D

## PERSUASIVE ESSAY RUBRIC

## Research Report : Separation of Church and State Learning Lab Paper

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Relating to Chosen Thesis	Information clearly relates to the chosen thesis. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the chosen thesis. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the chosen thesis. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the chosen thesis.
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings. Your conclusion is very clear and relates to your thesis.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs. Your conclusion is clear and mostly relates to your thesis.	Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed. Your conclusion is somewhat clear.	The information appears to be disorganized. Your conclusion does not exist or is difficult to understand.
Use of Primary Documents	Paper includes more than one primary document that supports your thesis, and more than one document in rebuttal to your thesis. All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented in the desired format.	Paper includes one primary document that supports your thesis, and one primary document in rebuttal to your thesis. All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented, but a few are not in the desired format.	Paper includes one primary document. All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented, but many are not in the desired format.	Paper does not include any primary documentation. Some sources are not accurately documented.
Writing Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	A few grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.

APPENDIX E  
CHURCH AND STATE CONTROVERSIES  
ORAL PRESENTATION WORKSHEET

U.S. History

Assignment: With a partner you will come up with a controversial topic related to the separation of church and state, conduct research on the topic, and present both sides of the controversy to the class. In creating your presentation and visual aid, I would like you to use *at least* two primary documents, and two secondary documents. Last week I provided those for your paper. This week, you will research these on your own. Your visual aid can be a poster or PowerPoint presentation. This presentation will be presented in front of the class, and will last between 5 and 10 minutes.

You will be graded on the following:

- Historical Research: Is your information accurate and balanced? Do you refer to specific people and dates to support your ideas?
- Sources: Do you use at least two primary and two secondary documents? Are they cited in your bibliography?
- Presentation: Is your presentation engaging, interesting, and informative? Is your information clear and organized? Shoot for a presentation that lasts from 7 to 10 minutes.
- Visual Aid: Is your Power Point or poster eye pleasing and informative? Does it include at least 2 primary documents? Is it organized to help the class understand the topic?
- Teamwork: How well did you work together and share the labor with your partner? Did you split the presentation up so you both had equal talking time?

## APPENDIX F

## ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

**Oral Presentation Rubric : Controversies in the Separation of Church and State**

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Historical Research	Information is very accurate and well balanced. Important dates and people are specifically discussed in detail.	Information is mostly accurate and somewhat balanced. Some important dates and people are discussed.	Information is sometimes accurate and occasionally balanced. Important dates and people are rarely discussed.	Information is inaccurate and biased. Important dates and people are left out of presentation.
Sources	More than two primary and two secondary sources were used. Sources are cited in bibliography.	Two primary and two secondary sources were used. Sources are cited in bibliography.	At least one primary and one secondary source were used. Sources are cited in bibliography.	One primary or one secondary document was used. Sources are cited for presentation.
Presentation	Presentation is engaging, interesting, and informative. Information is clear and well organized. Presentation is between 7 and 10 minutes.	Presentation is mostly interesting and informative. Information is mostly clear and well organized. Presentation is about 7 minutes.	Presentation is somewhat interesting and informative. Information is sometimes clear and organized. Presentation is about 5 minutes.	Presentation is not very interesting and does not cover any new information. The topic is not very clear or organized. Presentation is under 4 minutes.
Visual Aid	Visual aid is eye pleasing and informative. It includes more than 2 primary documents. It is well organized and helps the class to understanding the topic.	Visual aid is mostly eye pleasing and informative. It includes 2 primary documents. It is mostly well organized and can help the class to understanding the topic.	Visual aid is somewhat eye pleasing and informative. It includes at least 1 primary document. It is occasionally organized and sometimes helps the class to understand the topic.	Visual aid is not eye pleasing and informative. No primary documents are included. It does not help the class understand the topic.
Teamwork	Students always worked well together, shared the labor, and presented as a team.	Students mostly worked well together, shared the labor, and presented as a team.	Students sometimes worked well together, shared the labor, and one student presented more than the other.	Students did not work well together. One student completed most of the work or not much was accomplished. One student talked the whole time.

APPENDIX G  
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## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS

The story of theocracy in North America is an old and largely unknown one. The common misconception that the Puritans arrived in North America seeking religious freedom is partially true. The Puritans sought religious freedom for the Puritans, but not for any group that disagreed with their specific brand of Calvinist Christianity. Mix this intolerance for religious plurality with a healthy dose of Old Testament based theocratic government, and the result is the expulsion and torture of many who disagreed with these Puritans. Settlers such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, as well as Quakers, Baptists, and Separatists were forced to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony because of theological differences, or disagreements over religion's role in government. In 1636, Roger Williams fled the Massachusetts Bay Colony to start Providence Plantation, a safe haven for non-Puritan religious groups. In 1644, he would write about "[A] hedge or wall of separation between the garden of the church and the wilderness of the world," (Williams, 1963, p. 108) which would later be referenced in Thomas Jefferson's *Letter to the Danbury Baptists*. Jefferson's allusion to "a wall of separation between Church & State" sent to Baptists worried about the encroachment of government into free religious practice seemed to clarify the intent behind the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment (Jefferson, 1802). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. Supreme Court would call Jefferson's

wall “high and impregnable” (Everson v. Board of Education, 1947). Of course, not everyone agrees with this point of view.

With a firm conviction that the United States needs to return to its Christian roots, and a specific plan for how that should be accomplished, 20<sup>th</sup> century Christian Reconstructionists reacted to the secularism of the era. With a barrage of books and periodicals that persists into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many Reconstructionists continue to espouse beliefs suspicious of democracy, religious pluralism, and the separation of church and state, and call for a return to the theocracy of the Massachusetts Bay Puritans. These Calvinist Christians hope to influence modern culture in the hopes that a postmillennial America will be a city upon a hill for the rest of the world to see. In this Christian America, one group of believers who hold very specific beliefs will determine the laws, judge those who break the laws and punish them, determine who is a citizen, and even who is a genuine Christian.

### *Creating the Curriculum*

Why should students learn about these issues in school? Knowing the history of theocracy in America, and the variety of ways in which the relationship between church and state has been interpreted helps students to gain a wider understanding of why these issues still create conflict. Since the problems that have been created when issues of church and state collide are common and contentious, students should be able to hold well informed and well-reasoned opinions about such matters.

In creating a curriculum that attempts to illuminate some of the history behind the relationship between religion and civil government, this Master's project seeks to accomplish many goals. By the end of the unit, students should not only understand the three primary positions in regard to separation of church and state, but also be able to utilize primary and secondary documents to support each position. Students should also understand many of the historical and modern controversies regarding the relationship between religion and government, and be well informed—through primary and secondary documentation—about the history of these controversies. By utilizing primary and secondary documents with an emphasis on critical thinking and interpretation, students will have a greater understanding of the importance of studying history and conducting the work of an historian. Instructing students in critical thinking skills in history class will help support critical thinking across all subject areas. Students will also have met History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools for 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### *Limitations of the Curriculum*

When I taught the first week's lesson of this curriculum, the students gave me some helpful feedback. While reading and comparing primary documents was helpful in understanding the roots of the church and state controversy in America, the language of these documents seemed archaic. Spending a little more time deciphering the language of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century English would have been very helpful. I also observed that the students spent a lot of time typing the URL

addresses into the computer to retrieve primary and secondary documents, sometimes misreading the addresses by one character and creating minor frustration. If this lesson was housed on a website and these documents were accessed by clickable links, the lesson would go that much smoother.

This curriculum relies on technological literacy on the part of both the students and teacher, and access to class computers or a school computer lab. If the teacher is not comfortable with technology, or the students have had no experience working with computers, the lesson and its parts could be printed as hard copies. If the school has no access to class computers or a computer lab, accessing the documents for analysis will be difficult. In the school lacks access to technology, the teacher could print the text versions of each document and supply these documents in hard copy for the students. One cannot overstate the convenience of accessing these documents online.

Another technological aspect of the curriculum is access to videos using YouTube. If the school has no access to the internet, or YouTube is blocked, the videos could be downloaded and burned to a CD-R or DVD-R to show in class, but this will entail specific technological knowledge and time.

#### *Limitations of the Research*

Regarding the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the issues surrounding the relationship between church and state in America much has been written. The challenge I faced was paring down these subjects to a manageable

amount of material. But the opposite was true for the subject of Christian Reconstruction.

For the most part, the story of Christian Reconstructionism is missing from the academic literature. Although they are mentioned in passing, or even have chapters dedicated to their beliefs in books about millennialist groups, theocratic sects, or Christian fundamentalists, no academic works dedicated to the beliefs of Christian Reconstructionists could be found. Of course, Reconstructionist authors have published many books about what they believe, but these lack any attempt at an objective viewpoint. Julie Ingersoll, an associate professor at University of Northern Florida, has many articles about Christian Reconstructionist influence on politics in the United States. She is currently working on a book length project called *Building the Kingdom of God: Christian Reconstruction and the Religious Right in America* that will hopefully address the influence of Reconstructionist thought on right wing political leaders and ideologies.

#### *Recommendations for Further Research*

At the end of this project, I was left with many questions that were left unanswered. How much influence do Rushdoony's ideas have on mainstream politics? The articles I read varied wildly in how much the author believed Christian Reconstructionism had influenced the popular politics of the religious and secular right wing. I hope Professor Ingersoll will address this question in her book. I only wish the book was completed before I began this undertaking.

Additional research is needed into the history of this somewhat obscure group. I found very little biographical information about R.J. Rushdoony, the leader and founder of Christian Reconstructionism, or his prolific son-in-law Gary North. What caused Rushdoony to begin this journey, synthesizing volumes of knowledge and research into the three volume work that began the movement, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*? Many articles mentioned a theological falling-out that happened between Rushdoony and North. If this is true, I'm intrigued.

More importantly, what exactly is the Christian Reconstructionist plan for the United States? How do Reconstructionists plan to bring theocracy back to North America, and how would they maintain such a government? Would their Libertarian, small-government leanings conflict with the enforcement of an Old Testament-based legal code on a massive scale? How do Reconstructionists plan to rebuild the Calvinist city upon a hill as an example to all, and eventually affect the politics of the world?

For now, these questions are out of the scope of my research and could not be addressed in this thesis.

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