

## **The Gospel's Missionary Journey: Doctrines Found in the Founding Documents: the Separation of Church and State: "The Pfefferian Inversion"; Doctrinal Conclusions**

### **The Pfefferian Inversion**

Leo Pfeffer \pfef'-er\, now rich in years and honors, has done more than anyone else to shape the law regarding religion and the state in America. School prayer, religious symbols in the classroom, aid to parochial schools—for forty years he has argued against them all before the Supreme Court and, more often than not, he has won. In a recent memoir, Pfeffer describes himself as an “absolutist for strict separationism.” For him the “wall of separation” between church and state can never be high enough. He knows that being an absolutist is an extreme position, but his idea of democracy is that absolutists on one side contend against absolutists on the other, and somehow something like justice emerges from the battle. Looking back, he seems puzzled that the absolutists on “the religious side” just weren’t there when they should have been. Again and again, his absolutism prevailed, as though by default.

Leo Pfeffer is not against religion. He is regularly to be found in synagogue. But for him religion is an exclusively private thing: what he is against is religion in public. But with the expansion of the modern state “public” and “governmental” are increasingly interchangeable. Therefore it is increasingly possible to construe the separation of church and state as the separation of religion from public life. As the government increasingly absorbs all public space, and a good deal of private space, religion gets squeezed into an ever tighter corner of privacy. In recent years we have witnessed a new assertiveness of religion in public. For example, the religious right and the Roman Catholic bishops’ pastoral letters have attracted widespread and often worried attention. Religion is struggling to get out of the corner in which it has been confined by Court rulings and by habits of mind that were, in large part, crafted by the formidable Leo Pfeffer.

Pfeffer sold the Court, important sectors of religious leadership, and almost the entirety of “enlightened” public opinion on one key idea. That idea might be called the Pfefferian Inversion of the First Amendment. Recall what the First Amendment says: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The record leaves no doubt that the Framers were concerned for religious freedom, including the freedom of conscience. They were adamant in their belief that the national government had no business messing with that freedom. One way the government might mess with it is by establishing one religion over others. The proscription of such establishment is designed to protect religious freedom. “Free exercise” of religion is the goal; “no establishment” is one important instrument in the service of that goal.

Now comes the Pfefferian Inversion. (Admittedly, he did not do it singlehandedly, and there were precedents on which he built.) Instead of a two-part religion clause (“no establishment” and “free exercise”), it was urged that there were two religion clauses, and they had somehow to be “balanced” one against the other. This ignored the fact that the two parts of the clause do not work against each other, “no establishment” is in the service of “free exercise.” The inversion was completed when lawyers became accustomed to talking about the religion clause as “the establishment clause.” Thus the means (“no establishment”) is given priority over the end (“free exercise”). An extreme expression of this inversion is to be found in the much used treatise on constitutional law by Laurence Tribe of Harvard. Professor Tribe writes that there is a “zone which the free exercise clause carves out of the establishment clause for permissible accommodation of religious interests. This carved-out area might be characterized as the *zone of permissible accommodation*.” One doubts if the Framers would be grateful to Professor Tribe for his gracious allowance of a “zone of permissible accommodation” for what was their entire purpose in the first place—the free exercise of religion.

Once we identify the Pfefferian Inversion, the Court decisions of the last forty years become easier to understand. The premise is that any government involvement in or support for religion violates the “no-establishment clause.” Therefore everything that government touches must be free of religion. And, of course, government increasingly touches everything. One consequence among many is that religious social agencies and colleges have in many cases traded their religious identities for governmental dollars. It is their shame that they did so; it is a great injustice that they were required to do so. Here and elsewhere, the Pfefferian Inversion has supported a government-imposed conformity against the genuine pluralism, including the religious pluralism, of our society. It is time to reassert the elementary truth that the purpose of the religion clause of the First Amendment is to protect, not prohibit, the free exercise of religion.<sup>1</sup>

- dd. But the Founding Fathers seemed very perspicuous when they wrote, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”
- ee. Simply put, the government can’t create a western Anglican Church and establish it as the national religion, nor can it prohibit the Anglican Church from freely exercising in the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard J. Neuhaus, “The Pfefferian Inversion,” *National Review*, May 13, 1988, 44.

- ff. It is very clear that government may have no restraint on religion in any way without prohibiting the free exercise of it.
- gg. To disallow the expression of biblical ideas in public school or anywhere else is first of all academic dishonesty and secondly, it is a prohibition of the free-exercise clause, not to mention free speech.
- hh. This does not imply that the schools should teach doctrine or theology.
- ii. The schools should teach academic subjects.
- jj. But when religion is an integral part of the subject matter, and when the opportunity for objective academic debate is permitted, then a student or teacher should be allowed to interject religious ideas into the discussion.
- kk. Furthermore, freedom of speech and free exercise of religion permit anyone at any time to say anything he wishes whenever men enter into public debate or dialogue.
- ll. These ten examples point out the extent to which Bible doctrine was incorporated into the founding documents of our Client Nation.
- mm. They have been the unseen power which has taken us through 238 years of freedom and prosperity.
- nn. However, they alone cannot maintain our freedom.
- oo. In order for our nation to survive, the Pivot must continue to grow in grace and pass down our Constitution's biblical heritage to each succeeding generation.

## VIII. Doctrinal Conclusions

The following should be apparent from our analysis of “Doctrines Found in the Founding Documents.” Modern constitutional experts view the separation of church and state so strictly that if their standards were applied to the Declaration and the Constitution those two documents would be found unconstitutional. George Will commented on this concept in his book, *Statecraft is Soulcraft*:

“If ‘right’ rests solely on agreement without reference to absolutes, then what is ‘right’ is determined by opinion. Change opinion and the people again agree but what is ‘right’ has also been changed. And so has the character and the mind of the people. Citizenship is a state of mind, so if the mind is changed enough, the people may still be citizens, but of a different nation.”<sup>2</sup>

Where the Protestant Reformation of 1517, inspired by Martin Luther, caused the Christian community to return to the absolutes of the Word of God, likewise a similar reformation is needed today whereby the Pivot of this Client Nation inspires a return to the absolutes of the Constitution of the United States of America.

This can best be done by living and applying the Word of God to our lives and standing fast with regard to our God-given rights.

The inclusion of these rights into the framework of the Constitution was not easily agreed to and we have Patrick Henry to thank for the clear delineation of them as found in the first 10 amendments.<sup>3</sup>

The culture of our Client Nation is reflected by the principles contained in our country’s founding documents. The doctrine behind those principles is contained in Scripture.

We are motivated and encouraged by the fact that truth endures through all generations of history, even into eternity.

Psalm 100:5 makes the point, “For the Lord is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.”

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<sup>2</sup> George F. Will, *Statecraft Is Soulcraft* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 153.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed study on this subject, consult the July 4th Special, *The Fight for Our Rights: Federalists v. Antifederalists*, at this link:

<http://www.joegriffin.org/Pages/ClassArchive.aspx?SeriesID=4J11&ArchiveTitle=4th+of+July+Special%3aThe+Fight+for+Our+Rights%3aFederalists+v.+Antifederalists>

The Word of God is said to be everlasting in **Isaiah 40:8**, “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.”

The immutable nature of God’s Word is mentioned in **Psalms 119:89**, “Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.”

The Word of God applied to life by members of the Pivot in a Client Nation is what preserves that nation in history.

Failure of the Pivot means divine discipline to the Client Nation.

**Hosea 4:1** - Listen to the word of the Lord, O sons of Israel, for the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land.

**v. 2** - There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed.

**v. 3** - Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky, and also the fish of the sea disappear.

**v. 4** - Yet let no one find fault, and let none offer reproof; for your people are like those who contend with the priest.

**v. 5** - So you will stumble by day, and the prophet also will stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother [ **mother country, i.e., Client Nation** ].

**v. 6** - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children [ **the succeeding generations** ].”

Also note:

**Matthew 5:13** - “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.”

The preservation of our Client Nation depends upon a restoration to the basic principles of Scripture, those found in the Laws of Divine Establishment, those enshrined in our Declaration of Independence and Constitution, and those found in the gospel and doctrines of New Testament truth.

Conveyance of this information is required by God of the entire Royal Family. For example, personal evangelism as mentioned in **2 Timothy 4:5** where we are all commanded to “do the work of an evangelist.”

This personal evangelism can be by verbal witnessing or by living the Christian way of life. The task of evangelizing the lost is being accomplished on a global level by the evangelists and missionaries of our day.

We have briefly examined the exploits of the pioneer missionaries of the first millennium of the Church Age:

1. Paul in Illyricum in the 1st century.
2. Ulfilas to the Goths in the 4th century.
3. Martin, Bishop of Tours at Gaul in the 4th century.
4. Patrick in Ireland in the 5th century.
5. Columba to the Scots in the 6th century.
6. Columbanus in France in the 6th century.
7. Boniface to Germany in the 7th century.
8. Cyril and Methodius to the Slaves of Bulgaria in the 9th century.
9. Ansgar to the Scandinavians in the 9th century.
10. Eric the Red and Leif Erikson to Greenland and North America in the 10th and 11th centuries.

We then studied the Protestant Reformation under the inspiration of Martin Luther beginning in 1517, followed by Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin.

Others who initially carried the colors of Truth to North America were the Pilgrims whose descendants became our Founding Fathers.

However, the job of preserving freedom and passing it on is never done; there are men on the spiritual firing lines today who have dedicated their lives to the project as the men just mentioned did in the past.

A few are listed in our church's Prayer/Bulletin as a reminder to petition the Father for all the provisions they need for life and godliness. These missionaries include:

Jonathan Brown (Brazil)  
Pat Cate (USA)  
Armando Garcia (Costa Rico)  
Mario Garcia (Mexico)  
Gary Horton (USA, American Freedom Assembly)  
Rick Hughes (USA, Rich Hughes Evangelistic Ministries)  
Max Klein (Thailand)  
Ralph LaRosa (Philippines)  
Nick Lipsi (Brazil)  
Tim McLachlan (Thailand)  
Tom Molinar (South Africa, Operation Molinar Mission)  
George Mueller (Cameroon)  
Jim Myers, (Ukraine)  
Nelson Rio II (Philippines)  
David Ross (England)  
Elmer Smith (Hoopa, CA, First Baptist Church)  
Gary Watson (USA, Philippi Freedom Ministries)  
East Ridge Bible Church (Shreveport, LA)  
Grace Evangelical Society (Corinth, TX)  
Joe Griffin Media Ministries (St. Charles, MO)  
Operations Grace World Missions (Houston, TX)  
R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries (Houston, TX).

These 17 missionaries and ten 501 (c) 3 organizations are taking the gospel of salvation and Bible doctrine to the barbarous nations of the 21st century including an ever increasing number of lost souls in our Client Nation.

There is a need for more men of doctrinal quality to feed those who are positive volition at God consciousness in many remote areas of the world.

Until the Lord provides messengers face to face, there are always MP3 disks and the Internet Web sites to sustain, instruct, and motivate the positive.



So, may we ever be aware of the importance of the mission, the ministry, and the challenge of historical impact assigned to every member of the body of Christ and especially to the *prómachoi*, the “front rankers” of the Church-Age Pivot.

**Romans 10:13** - Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

**v. 14** - Consequently, how shall they [ **unbelievers** ] call on Christ in Whom they have not believed? Furthermore, how shall they believe in Christ, about Whom they have not heard? Moreover, how shall they hear without a missionary?

**v. 15** - Finally, how shall they [ **missionaries** ] proclaim the gospel unless they are sent out? Just as it stands written [ **Isaiah 52:7** ], “How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim the good news about good things!”

**v. 16** - For not all have obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says [ **Isaiah 53:1a** ], “Lord, who has believed our message?”

**v. 17** - Consequently, faith comes from hearing a message, moreover that message comes through the agency of doctrine about Christ. (EXT)

May we, the Pivot, the unseen cause which serves as the lone criterion in Jesus Christ’s control of any client nation’s history, continue to sustain our advance in the grace plan of God.

Our spiritual advance is the only hope our beloved nation has left for establishment recovery.

The challenge to the Pivot:

**Philippians 2:15** - ... become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe,

**v. 16a** - as you hold out the Word of life .... (NIV)

No person can be punished for entertaining  
or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs ...  
—Justice Hugo L. Black  
*Everson v. Board of Education*