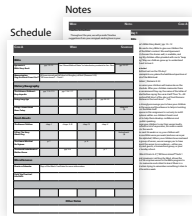


# Instructor's Guide Quick Start

The Sonlight Instructor's Guide (IG) is designed to make your educational experience as easy as possible. We have carefully organized the materials to help you and your children get the most out of the subjects covered. If you need help reading your schedule, see "How to Use the Schedule Page" just before Week 1 begins.

This IG includes an entire 36-week schedule, notes, assignments, readings, and other educational activities. For specific organizational tips, topics and skills addressed, the timeline schedule, and other suggestions for the parent/teacher see **Section Three**. What helpful features can you expect from the IG?

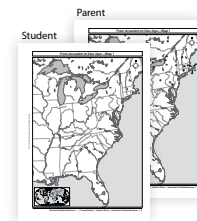


## Easy to use

Everything you need is located right after the schedule each week. If a note appears about a concept in a book, it's easy to find it right after the schedule based on the day the relevant reading is scheduled.

## Same View Maps

Students will plot map locations on their blank maps, while you check their answers with your answer keys of the same view.



## To Discuss After You Read

These sections help you hone in on the basics of a book so you can easily know if your children comprehend the material. The questions are numbered to help you reference between the Parent Guide and the Student Guide.



## Vocabulary

**orphan:** a child whose parents are dead.  
children's homes: an orphanage.

## Vocabulary

These sections include terms related to cultural literacy and general vocabulary words in one easy-to-find place.


## Notes

When relevant, you'll find notes about specific books to help you know why we've selected a particular resource and what we hope children will learn from reading it. Keep an eye on these notes to also provide you with insights on more difficult concepts or content (look for "Note to Mom or Dad").



## Instructor's Guide Resources and New User Information

Don't forget to familiarize yourself with some of the great helps in **Section Three** and **Section Four** so you'll know what's there and can turn to it when needed.

Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Bible					
God and Politics	pp. ix–3	pp. 4–7 (through third para.)	pp. 7–11 (through first para.)	pp. 11–14 🕒🌐	pp. 17–19 🌐
Memorization	Romans 13:1–2				
History/Civics and Historical Fiction					
Basic American Government	pp. 61–67		pp. xi–xii, 3–10 (through second para.)	pp. 10–15	
The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics		chap. 1			chap. 2
Current Events	Parents and Students: Please read the notes for <b>Current Events</b> in the Notes for Day 1 this week. 				
Other Notes					

## Day 1

## Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. ix–3

**Note:** *God and Politics: Four Views on the Reformation of Civil Government* ties in directly with other books in 420 that address civics and American government. What is the relationship between Christianity and government? How should Christians go about influencing political culture? What does the Bible have to say about civil government? Given that we live in a culture made up of all kinds of viewpoints, to what extent should Christians seek to influence government? This book presents four different perspectives including Theonomy, Principled Pluralism, Christian America, and National Confessionalism. This is not to say that these are the only four perspectives one can take on Christianity and government, but they thoroughly cover a lot of ground.

What's particularly helpful about *God and Politics* is the fact that it is written by many contributors who don't always agree with one another. Not only do individuals

authors get to present and defend their position, the book also provides contrasting viewpoints and criticisms from opposing perspectives. Lest you think that these Christians can't seem to agree on anything in relation to faith and politics, Appendix B offers a nice summary of agreements and disagreements.

*God and Politics* is not always easy reading. Big ideas often require a certain level of complexity to get through. But, again, the rewards are many. Having a handle on various options about faith and government will prepare your children to find their place wherever God leads them and be able to intelligently engage the world.

**Foreword**

By "Reformed Christians" (p. ix), the author of the Foreword is referring to Protestant denominations that adhere to theological beliefs in the traditions of reformers such as John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli. Examples include various Presbyterian traditions, Dutch Reformed churches, etc. Reformed traditions stress God's sovereignty, the glory of God, the Lordship of Christ over all, and an emphasis on cultural transformation in efforts to redeem society. Although the broad context of *God and Politics* is on Reformed approaches to civil government, much of what is

discussed in the book is relevant to all Christian traditions, especially as they seek to understand the relationship between the church and government. By the way, beginning on page 10, Smith will provide a brief summary of the history of the Reformed tradition in the U.S. since 1800.

The Latin phrase, “Soli Deo Gloria” (p. x), means “Glory to God Alone” or “To God Alone Be Glory.”

#### Introduction

H. (Helmut) Richard Niebuhr is not to be confused with his brother, Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), who was also a theologian.

Smith outlines one Christian perspective on culture, including government, when he mentions the Anabaptists (p. 1). This viewpoint shuns “cultural and political life because these activities are corrupted by sin.” Obviously, the contributors to *God and Politics* disagree and instead argue for different kinds of engagement between the church and civil government.

#### To Discuss After You Read

1. What do you make of the Anabaptist approach to Christianity and government?
2. How do you think Jesus related to the government of his day?
3. Do you think Christianity can “create a righteous society in the world through political action”? Why or why not? (p. 1)
4. Do you think the “Christ above culture” approach can be reconciled with the concept of separation of church and state, which calls for government and the church to remain in separate spheres? (p. 2)

**Notes:** The Gnostics were an early heretical sect of Christianity. They believed that only spirit is truly good and that all matter, including the flesh, is evil. As a result, they denied that Jesus was truly incarnate and instead viewed him as spirit only. Gnostics also believed in salvation through secret or esoteric knowledge (*gnosis* means knowledge in the Greek). (p. 2)

Page 2 presents a summary of the viewpoint Niebuhr called “Christ the transformer of culture.” In short, this perspective sees Christians as “Christ’s ambassadors in the world.” Despite human depravity, this viewpoint calls Christians to serve God “in every area of life, including politics.” This view seeks to integrate the Christian worldview (view of reality) into all of life.

*City of God* by Augustine and *Institutes of the Christian Religion* by Calvin are both important works in the history of Christianity. Augustine lived prior to the Protestant Reformation, while Calvin was involved in it as a key figure. Both works, however, contain an abundance of insight applicable to Christians of all kinds of traditions, not just Reformed.

In contrast to Calvinism is the theological system of Arminianism (p. 3), which rejects predestination—that God has predetermined who the “elect” are—in favor of an emphasis on individuals freely choosing God, and

the position that salvation can be lost. It is named after Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). Modern Arminian traditions include, for example Wesleyan and Nazarene traditions.

#### Memorization | Romans 13:1–2

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### Introductory Comments

Welcome! I’ve designed this study of the United States government to be as comprehensive as possible, while staying within the parameter of 18 weeks. I [Amy] left my high school government class without much understanding of anything; I hope that when you finish this course, you’ll have a working knowledge of the three branches of our government (executive, legislative, and judicial), as well as the presidential election process, the importance of the Supreme Court and why so many legal decisions are decided in close votes, the inner workings of Congress (including the federal budget, how to pass a bill, the various committees, impeachment).

For those of you, like my husband, who have a logical, methodical mind, you will probably find this course at least interesting, if not easy. For those, like myself, who enjoy fine literature, this course will probably be more of a struggle. I’ve done what I can to make it interesting and painless, but, on some level, the study of contracts and court cases simply is not as gripping as a good book with a plot.

Also, the language itself might feel challenging, especially in the beginning. Have you ever seen a Shakespeare play? Usually, even when I’m familiar with the story, the first five minutes I spend hoping I won’t feel so lost the whole way through. But then my brain adjusts to Shakespeare’s English and cadence, and I can follow the play (maybe not get all the finer puns and such, but certainly understand the gist).

Similarly here: even though the text is in English, it isn’t easy reading. Many words will be new to you.

I read a study once about how the brain quickly processes common words, but words that you don’t use on a regular basis take longer for the brain to process. So give yourself some grace. If the reading feels overwhelming at first, it will get easier.

It would also be prudent to fully understand the vocabulary as you go. If you come to a word or phrase that you don’t know (like “bill of attainder”), don’t keep reading without figuring out what it means. These notes have vocabulary definitions. The Glossary on pp. 497–508 of Carson’s text has definitions. If those aren’t sufficient, check online. But just like you need some special vocabulary when you study chemistry (acid and base, molecule, the periodic table of the elements), you will need some special vocabulary in government.

Let me give you a sneak preview of what you’ll be reading this semester: I think you’ll enjoy these seven books very much.

### *Basic American Government*

I love this book. We receive some comments about the dryness of the text, and I can understand that: author Clarence B. Carson, with a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt, writes densely. I totalled my time reading this text: it took me about 35 hours. There are few books I've read in my life that took 35 hours to finish. Pen in hand, marking as I went, there were few paragraphs that don't have underlining. Carson makes his words pay. Some of the books I reviewed described themselves as "a breezy overview." This is not breezy. To read successfully, you'll need to focus, to think. I think you'll be amply rewarded.

Why include such a demanding text?

I looked for others. But I kept coming back to Carson. I liked that he uses ample footnotes. Some of the programs or books I reviewed (and some of the other books in this program) have no footnotes.

For a work of scholarship, a scholar should include source material. Carson does.

Several of the recommended texts made me want to throw the book across the room after a single page or two. I remain leery of government intrusion, and the majority of these texts assume greater government involvement to be a good thing. Carson does a superb job explaining both the Founding Fathers' perspective on the government and how widely the 20th Century government diverged from the founders' ideas.

I haven't assigned the entire book: about 20% covers the full history of government thought in Europe from ancient time to the start of the United States; though interesting, I think there are more pertinent things to cover in this semester course.

The remaining 80% is a fabulous overview of our government and Constitution, followed by a fascinating history of our country and the various amendments and changes that have happened since that time.

It is not just a "facts" book: Thomas Jefferson was the third president. It is an "idea" book: why was Jefferson's view of government different than John Adams before him? How was Jefferson's Democratic party different than the Democrats today?

The notes and questions are wide-ranging, often incorporating outside information or thought questions, as well as basic overview and comprehension questions.

John Holzmann, one of the founders of Sonlight, wrote the original 400 Government program in 2000 and 2001. "My purpose for including the following questions is partially in order to give you a means to review . . . . They provide a tool for evaluating how well Son or Daughter has grasped the key points of the texts we will be reading."

I, Amy Lykosh, am John's daughter, and I updated this course in 2012. I edited and clarified the notes for *Basic American Government*, but overall, the changes were minor. The notes for the other books are mine. But in *Basic American Government*, "I" refers to John, while in the rest of the program, "I" refers to Amy.

### *The Complete Idiot's Guide to U.S. Government & Politics*

One complaint about Carson's text is that it doesn't cover more recent politics, and that although it gives great historical information, it doesn't really cover how Washington works today. What about lobbyists, the bureaucracy, the Cabinet? What roles and responsibilities does the President have?

This book fills in such gaps in Carson's text. It is easy to read and should give a good overview of United States politics.

There are few questions in this book, mostly notes to clarify or modify the text.

### *Selecting a President*

Every four years we elect a president, and during that year, the news turns to election politics. What's the difference between a caucus and a primary? Why have a convention? How does the electoral college skew campaigning? What happens on election night?

This book offers a clear, concise guide to the most widely reported part of government. Readable, fun, and informative, I think it's learning at its best.

### *Congress for Dummies*

If you want to make your voice heard, Congress is the most accessible place to do so. Written specifically for those who want to effect change, I don't assign the whole book. While the first half presents a clear, detailed overview of how Congress works, the second half deals with things such as hiring a lobbyist (should that need arise in your life, you'll know where to go for guidance).

I appreciated learning about the fiscal year, the differences between working in the Senate and the House, and how challenging it is to get anything accomplished in Congress.

It left me thankful not to be in the Beltway, but also empowered me to contact my representatives there.

### *The U.S. Supreme Court*

What an absolute gem! Some consider the Supreme Court the most powerful branch of government. How does the Court work? How has it changed over time? Why are so many decisions decided so closely?

A brilliant combination of analysis, case studies, and reporting, this is a great, short introduction.

The notes for this book are primarily comprehension and review questions. The Supreme Court such a large role in our government today, the hope is that the student (and, perhaps, the parent) will be thoroughly conversant in the functions and operations of this judicial body.

### *Are You Liberal? Conservative? or Confused?*

This is an interesting, fast read that explains the differences between liberals and conservatives, and why there is (or should be) another alternative.

Most government courses seek to cover the Civil Rights movement. As I reviewed books about the history of the movement, though, I found nothing stirred me so much as *Black Like Me*, about a white man who dyes his skin and goes about the South as a black man. The terror he feels, the constant minor abuse, the tension and discomfort: this is a powerful book.

\* \* \*

For myself, I began to look at this course with a very limited understanding of government. As I've read the Carson text and revised notes, and chosen supplemental books and written notes, I feel like my understanding of current events has come into focus. In the last week, I read about a House committee in a magazine and I have an idea of what they are doing. I got an email about a federal appeals court case that might go to the Supreme Court, and I know what that will look like, and how the federal court system is different than the state court system.

As you follow the news from now on into adulthood, this course may be one of the most practical, helpful classes you take in high school.

Please begin now to follow the news. If the State of the Union Address is coming up, listen to it (at least in part). Read some articles weekly about what's happening in Washington (if you don't have a good source already in your home, I'd recommend *The Week* online: intelligent and informative, and wonderfully brief!). Any elections happening now? Start to follow them.

\* \* \*

On a large scale, the scope of the course runs as follows. Introduction, overview of the Constitution and the three branches of government, history of the government of this country, and ending with a more in depth look at some specifics of the three branches of government today: the Supreme Court, whose decisions affect us all; Presidential campaigns; and finally the legislative, the branch that you can influence the most.

We begin the first five days with a biblical perspective on government. Next we move to the general definition of government, then to the importance and glory of the Constitution right before we dive into the overview of the Constitution.

### **Basic American Government** | pp. 61–67

#### **To Discuss After You Read**

5. How does Carson summarize the Judeo-Christian (i.e., biblical) influence on American government? ➡

**Notes:** At the bottom of p. 61, Dr. Carson turns your attention to Article VI, paragraph 3 of the Constitution. This paragraph states that no religious tests will ever be required in order to hold office in the United States government.

You should realize that at least 11 of the 13 original colonies, at the moment this section of the Constitution was being written, had very *explicit* religious tests.

Delaware's constitution read,

Art. 22. Every person who shall be chosen a member of either house, or appointed to any office or place of trust, before taking his seat, or entering upon the execution of his office, shall ... make and subscribe the following declaration, to wit:

"I, A B, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore; and I do acknowledge the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration."

And all officers shall also take an oath of office. The Constitution of Vermont in 1777 was not much different:

Section IX .... [E]ach member [of the house of representatives], before he takes his seat, shall make and subscribe the following declaration, viz.

I do believe in one God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and punisher of the wicked. And I do acknowledge the scriptures of the old and new testament to be given by divine inspiration, and own and profess the protestant religion.

And no further or other religious test shall ever, hereafter, be required of any civil officer or magistrate in this State.<sup>1</sup>

In the North Carolina ratification debates of 1788, Henry Abbott said, "If there be no religious test required [in the United States Constitution], pagans, deists, and Mahometans might obtain offices among us, and ... the senators and representatives might all be pagans."<sup>2</sup>

Was he correct? What kind of leadership do we find in the United States today? What kind of *law* do we find on the books (or, more importantly, in practice) today? How is Christian faith and practice being treated in the United States today? Neutrally? With prejudiced favoritism? Prejudiced malignancy?

St. Augustine spoke of "a persecution of unrighteousness, which the impious inflict upon the church of Christ; and ... a righteous persecution, which the church of Christ inflicts upon the impious ..."<sup>3</sup>

Or, to paraphrase Gary North: "It is never a question of liberty for some vs. liberty for everyone. It is always a question of *whose* liberty." Or, put another way, "It is never a question of Christian law vs. no law, or Christian law vs. neutral law. It is always a question of *whose* law."

*Someone* must rule. *Someone's* law must have precedence. If it is not God's law, then it will be someone else's law.

1. Both of these quotes are from Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner (eds.), *The Founders' Constitution*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), V, p. 634; quoted in Gary North, *Political Polytheism* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), pp. 384–385.

2. Henry Abbot, North Carolina ratifying convention: *Elliot's Debates*, IV, p. 192, quoted in North, pp. 390–391.

3. Quoted in Jean Comby, *How to Read Church History*, Vol. 1 (Crossroad Publishing, 1985), p. 74.

Charles Hodge, an American theologian of the late 1800s, wrote:

Thousands have come among us, who are neither Protestants nor Christians. Some are papists, some Jews, some infidels, and some atheists. All are welcomed; all are admitted to equal rights and privileges. All are allowed to acquire property, and to vote in every election, made eligible to all offices, and invested with equal influence in all public affairs. All are allowed to worship as they please, or not to worship at all, if they see fit. No man is molested for his religion or for his want of religion. No man is required to profess any form of faith, or to join any religious association. More than this cannot reasonably be demanded. More, however, is demanded. The infidel demands that the government should be conducted on the principle that Christianity is false. The atheist demands that it should be conducted on the assumption that there is no God, and the positivist on the principle that men are not free agents. The sufficient answer to all this is, that it cannot possibly be done.<sup>4</sup>

Hodge is right, of course, that “it cannot possibly be done.” He is wrong, however, about “more than this cannot reasonably be demanded.” Based on atheistic principles, it is absolutely reasonable to demand that government should be “conducted on the principle that there is no God.” Based on an anti-Christian belief system, it is absolutely reasonable to demand “that the government should be conducted on the principle that Christianity is false.” If your thinking is steeped in Christian faith, then it is also reasonable to demand that “only church members should be allowed to vote.”

Douglas Wilson carries this argument into the context of public education today:

If it is permissible to tax a secular humanist to support a school where prayer is officially encouraged, then why isn't it permissible to tax a Christian to support a school where blasphemy is officially encouraged? ... When secularists took control of the schools, the more traditional expressions of religious belief, prayer included, were forced out. But when this happened, the secularists were only doing *what had previously been done to them*. They had learned their lesson well .... Because education cannot be neutral about certain basic issues (What is man? What is society? Where did we come from?) and because in a pluralistic society people disagree on such issues, it is impossible to impose state education on the entire society without putting these various groups into conflict.

If the educational system refuses to address these basic issues, then it is refusing to educate. But if the questions are addressed, they will be addressed in the light of a certain worldview. Promoting a worldview can be done in public schools only if it is legitimate to violate the rights of the groups who do not agree and are not in control.<sup>5</sup>

So we are thrown back once more to the question of *which* law, *whose* law, should take precedence.

\* \* \*

One woman wrote to me,

If the Constitution of the United States had required a religious test for office-holding, would this not have been the *end* of religious freedom? Would we not soon have deteriorated into what our European ancestors were? Perhaps we would not have had an official State church, but persecution and intolerance of non-Christians would have followed. Worse, it would probably have led to the deterioration of the Christian church (maybe worse than it actually is!), judging from the Congregational Church's “Halfway Covenant” issue which allowed unconverted people to belong to the church just so they could hold office.

I can think of lots of other implications—for example, politicians dissemble enough already. Why give them something else to lie about in order to gain power? Also, what would our position have been in WWII? Perhaps we would have joined the Axis powers and advanced the persecution of Jews! If we were a one-religion country, what right would we have to criticize Iran or Libya or Nepal for persecution?

I remember a few years ago when some Christians where I lived discussed a possible boycott of the Marriott Corp. Why? Because they were Mormon-owned. It's not like they were running Bible bookstores or anything, they just wanted to boycott them for being Mormon! That's persecution, in my books. And speaking of Mormons, they and Jehovah's Witnesses would pass the religious test for office-holding with flying colors, as they both profess to believe in Jesus Christ and the Bible. So we should keep out the Muslims and Deists, but welcome the cultists with open arms? ...

I wrote back:

Ultimately, I believe that law is—and cannot *but* be—religiously-based. No law can possibly be completely neutral. So then the question is: whose religion—*what* religion—should rule?

Just one lousy example: A civil government must establish and enforce laws concerning murder ... When those who worship Molech (and Molech, you will recall, is the biblical name for the “god” or demon who demands child sacrifice—see, for example, Leviticus 18:21; 20:2–5) ... —When those people's sense of moral right comes into conflict with Christians' sense of moral right (and the two *should* come into conflict, since Christians believe that children ought *not* to be sacrificed for the sake of material prosperity: i.e., therefore, they believe that abortion is immoral) ... whose law—whose *religion*—should take precedence? ...

Some questions for us to consider:

—Is the Bible in favor of or opposed to religious freedom?

—If it is *opposed* to religious freedom, should the teachings of the Bible be set aside for the *sake* of religious freedom? ... Put another way (and this is a *very* difficult question for most modern American evangelicals to answer): should religious freedom trump all else?<sup>6</sup>

4. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1874), pp. 345–346.

5. Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), p. 40.

6. My opinion: I think the Bible *is* opposed to absolute religious freedom. The “religious freedom card” ought *not* to “trump all else.”



The material Carson touches upon on this page is often cited by “Christian America” advocates as showing the founding fathers’ “Christian” worldview.

Let me state right off: there is no question that the founding fathers of the United States were far friendlier to Christianity and the Christian religion than it seems most public figures are today. *However*, we ought not to trick ourselves into thinking most of these men were evangelical believers. Notice how George Washington speaks of “religion”: it is a *support* to political prosperity. As someone else has commented, it is *instrumental* rather than *essential*, a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

## Current Events

Do three reports; at least two of international concern.

### Current Events—Notes for Students

We believe you need to learn that world affairs—matters of social, political, economic, and cultural concern—are appropriate for your interest: you should be informed about these matters, and ought to be forming biblically-appropriate opinions about them. As citizens of God’s Kingdom, you are called upon to be gracious (and, therefore, informed) ambassadors to the peoples and kingdoms of this world.

The “textbook” for your study of current events should be articles found in current newspapers and magazines.<sup>7</sup>

Why study current events? There are many reasons. One is to help you become familiar with the names and events that are in the news. When you become familiar with these names and events, you are better able in the future to read articles about the same people or the same or related events. This in turn allows you to know what our brothers and sisters are experiencing throughout the world, and what they might appreciate us praying about—to pray knowledgeably and effectively for our brothers and sisters elsewhere around the world.

Another reason: by reading news from other parts of the world, we get to see our local situation in a broader context. It’s similar to what we gain by studying history. We see, for instance, that we are not alone in some of our experiences: “We don’t have it so bad.” Then again, we see that some people enjoy certain blessings that we do not. As the Apostle Paul said concerning the Jews as they looked at the Christians, perhaps we will be stirred to a righteous envy. Then again, a study of current events may help us see that we enjoy certain blessings that others don’t. Perhaps we will learn to keep our mouths shut when we think we “have it so bad.” Finally, a study of current events—as a study of history in general—can give us the opportunity to learn from other people’s mistakes.

7. Many people wonder what magazines or newspapers we might suggest that could provide a broader, more well-rounded perspective on current events than those to which they are currently subscribing. See Section Three for a brief listing.

**Note to Student or Parent:** Though you may make these written assignments, it is not *our* expectation that you or your children will be required to write these reports. We have always simply required *oral* presentations . . .

## Day 2

### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 4–7 (through third paragraph)

#### Vocabulary

**New Deal:** Franklin Roosevelt’s economic plan designed to respond to the Great Depression, which involved extensive public works programs, loans, and an effort to reduce unemployment. [p. 6]

**Fascism:** an authoritarian form of government, adhered to by Italy during World War II. [p. 6]

**Prohibition:** the legal government prevention of the making, sale, or consumption of alcohol in the United States from 1920 to 1933. [p. 6]

#### To Discuss After You Read

6. What do the letters in the TULIP acronym summarizing Calvinism mean? ➡

**Note:** The editor of *God and Politics* writes, “our nation has never been thoroughly or consistently Christian” (p. 5). Look for proponents of the Christian America position to address this viewpoint later in the book. Given what he’s written here, Smith appears to favor the Principled Pluralism approach.

**Memorization** | Romans 13:1–2

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

**The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics** | Chapter 1

#### To Discuss After You Read

**Note:** Chapter One begins with the statement that the United States is “the world’s oldest constitutional democracy” (1). Carson will make the point that we are actually a constitutional federated republic. What does that mean? Stay tuned!

7. What is government? ➡
8. What is politics? ➡
9. Which of the theories on the rise of the nation-state do you prefer? Or do you have a theory of your own? ➡

**Note:** Carson also deals with “Forms of Government” when he summarizes Plato (75). Plato says that there are three possible forms of government: rule by one, rule by a few, and rule by the many. Plato claimed that legitimate rule by one is monarchy, while illegitimate is tyranny. An

aristocracy is legitimate rule by a few, while oligarchy is the illegitimate form. Democracy was what he called the legitimate form of rule by many; he didn't give an alternative name for a perverted form.

10. This text asks, "Who governs in a society and what are their goals?" At the outset of this course, write down your answer. We'll ask this again on the last day, and see how your answer may have changed.

## Current Events

### Day 3

#### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 7–11 (through first paragraph)

#### Vocabulary

**Soviet:** refers to the now-defunct communist Soviet Union (USSR). [p. 10]

**Nadir:** the lowest point. [p. 11]

#### To Discuss After You Read

11. Smith writes, "unfortunately many Christian legislators have not developed a consistent biblical worldview to guide their analysis of political presuppositions, processes, and programs." How can a Christian worldview help us better understand, respond to, and transform culture? [p. 9]

**Note:** Consider this a statement of the theme of *God and Politics*: "Our book seeks to encourage Christians to think seriously about what the Scriptures teach about government and politics and to develop biblically based views to guide their own assessment of these matters." In other words, *God and Politics* will not tell you what perspective is the right one to take in relation to faith and civil government. But it will offer up several competing viewpoints. [p. 9]

12. What do you think of Smith's statement that, "Christians are God's ambassadors and stewards—the force He uses to renew the world"? [p. 11]

**Memorization** | Romans 13:1–2

#### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

**Basic American Government** | pp. xi–xii, 3–10 (through second paragraph)

#### To Discuss After You Read

13. According to Carson, what is true about the observance of the Constitution in politics and law today? [pp. xi–xii] ➔
14. What should you expect to learn about during your studies of Carson's book? [pp. xi–xii] ➔

15. Please paraphrase this quote;

"The political crisis of our times has been caused by the fact that peoples have been grotesquely misinformed about the nature and character of government. They have not had clearly in mind the inherent limits of government as a beneficent instrument for the concentration and exercise of power. They have not been well informed about how to limit, restrict, and restrain government. On the contrary, the main means of informing people have been used to convey distorted notions about the potentialities and possibilities of the use of government" (4).

It is one of the key points of Carson's text. [pp. 3–10] ➔

16. What two primary illustrations of "government run amok" does Carson use? [pp. 3–10] ➔
17. What are some of the characteristics of international Communism? [pp. 3–10] ➔
18. "Communism is a prescription for the most extensive and intensive use of government power to dominate and control populaces" (7). What does this mean? [pp. 3–10] ➔
19. Has dictatorship and corruption of government been solely a factor in "left-wing" (i.e., Communist or socialist) societies? [pp. 3–10] ➔
20. Carson claims that all countries in the world have a tendency towards what form of government? [pp. 3–10] ➔
21. Historically, have "democracies" restrained the government? [pp. 3–10] ➔

**Note:** Carson says, "Those with higher incomes are taxed at much higher rates" (8), what is known as a "graduated" or "progressive" tax (higher incomes pay proportionally higher rate than those with lower incomes). Some alternative taxes are **regressive taxes**, which impact lower-income persons more heavily than those with higher incomes; **proportional taxes** impact all income levels on a perfectly proportional basis.

22. What is the price for a welfare state? [pp. 3–10] ➔
23. What does "nationalization" mean? [pp. 3–10] ➔
24. What concepts, truths, or ideas particularly struck you about the history of the advance of socialism in Sweden and the United Kingdom? [pp. 3–10] ➔

## Current Events

### Day 4

#### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 11–14

#### Vocabulary

**Shalom:** Hebrew for "peace." [p. 12]



## Timeline and Map Activities

- 🕒 **H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962)**
- 🕒 **Martin Luther (1483–1546)**
- 🕒 **Thomas Aquinas (1225?–1274)**
- 🕒 **Peter Abelard (1079–1142)**
- 🕒 **Augustine (AD 354–430)**
- 🕒 **John Calvin (1509–1564)**
- 🕒 **John Knox (1514?–1572)**
- 🕒 **Puritans were members of a religious and social movement of the 1500s and 1600s**
- 🕒 **Heidelberg Catechism (1563)**
- 🕒 **Synod of Dort (1618–1619)**
- 🕒 **Enlightenment (1600s–1700s)**
- 🕒 **John Locke (1632–1704)**
- 🕒 **Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755)**
- 🕒 **Second Great Awakening (1800–1830)**
- 🕒 **Billy Graham (1918–present)**
- 🕒 **Jerry Falwell (1933–2007)**
- 🌐 *Europe; America; Iran; Vietnam; Central America; South America (map 1)*
- 🌐 *Plymouth; New England; Massachusetts; Washington, D.C.; Lynchburg, Virginia (map 2)*
- 🌐 *Israel; Geneva; Zurich; Switzerland; France; Germany; Holland; Scotland; England; Poland (map 3)*

## Memorization | Romans 13:1–2

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

## Basic American Government | pp. 10–15

### Vocabulary

It became a **shibboleth**, and is now not even serviceable as such ...

The current bemusement with “democracy” owes much to Dewey’s **obfuscations**.

### To Discuss After You Read

25. Did Socialism in Britain succeed? ➡

**Note:** Carson says, “Over the past five years, Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has disintegrated.” That would be 1988–1993.

26. With Socialism discredited, why is it a threat? ➡
27. Why are “democracy” and “capitalism” mere “buzz words”? ➡
28. What is the common meaning of democracy? ➡
29. At the bottom of p. 11, Carson mentions the “main, if not only proper, function” of government. What is it, and do you agree that that is the main function of government? ➡
30. What do the words “capital” and “capitalism” mean? ➡
31. What is the common meaning of capitalism? ➡
32. According to Carson, do democracy and capitalism tend to limit government powers? ➡

33. What are the three basic elements of economic production? ➡
34. Is the United States a democracy? ➡
35. What are Carson’s goals for studying the United States Constitution? ➡
36. What is the relationship between states and general government supposed to be according to the United States Constitution? ➡

## Current Events

### Day 5

### Bible

## God and Politics | pp. 17–19

### Part One: Theonomy: Introduction to Theonomy

In addition to theonomy and reconstructionism, sometimes those who adhere to this position are also referred to as supporters of dominion theology (p. 17).

Presuppositional apologetics (p. 17) is discussed in more detail in *Christian Apologetics* (chapter 3, pp. 62–64). In short, this approach to the defense of Christianity claims that all belief systems rest on presuppositions. Rather than offering evidences or arguments for God, presuppositionalists typically assume the truth of the Christian worldview and focus on pointing out the shortcomings of other worldviews including their contradictions and internal tensions.

Postmillennialism (p. 17) is a theological position that believes the Christian church will essentially “Christianize” the world through its ministry efforts and, thus, establish a millennial kingdom on earth prior to Christ’s return. Other views include amillennialism, which denies a literal millennial kingdom, and premillennialism, which believes the world will get worse and worse until Christ returns to establish his literal millennial kingdom. All of these views fall within the theological area known as eschatology, which addresses the end times, last things, and our final state (what happens after we die).

### Vocabulary

**abrogate:** to repeal, do away with, or override. [p. 17]

### To Discuss After You Read

37. Given the editors brief description of presuppositional apologetics on page 17, what do you make of it? Do you find it convincing? Biblical?

**Notes:** The editor writes, “presuppositionalists make no attempt to prove these axioms by appeals to religiously neutral or independent criteria” (p. 17). Some presuppositionalists, such as contemporary theologian John Frame, are more open to incorporating arguments that are not typically viewed as presuppositional into their methodology.

By republican (p. 18), theonomists do not mean the official Republican party, but use the term broadly for a republic form of government where the power is held by the people and those they elect.

38. The editor describes the theonomy position as holding to the view that, “Education would be a responsibility solely of parents” (p. 18). This obviously fits well with the home education perspective, but what about the role of the church in educating children? Do you think parents should be “solely” responsible for the education of children? What about parents who are unable or unwilling to educate their children?
39. Currently numerous government relief agencies exist, supported by taxes. The theonomy position would like to eliminate taxes and allow “churches and other private agencies” to “provide relief and welfare to the poor” (p. 18). Do you think this approach is feasible? Why or why not?

#### Timeline and Map Activities

- 📍 *Vallecito, California; Tyler, Texas; Orange County (California) (map 4)*

#### Memorization | Romans 13:1–2

#### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### ***The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics*** | Chapter 2

#### To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** This is a whirlwind tour of both the history leading up to the Constitution, the challenge of ratifying the Constitution, and some of the specifics of the Constitution itself. We’ll cover much of this again, in greater depth.

John Locke argued that people have “natural rights given to them by God, including the right to life, liberty, and property” (13). In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson revises that to read “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The “pursuit of happiness” is quite vague compared with the sturdy “property” of Locke. And while I might believe that property rights are necessary to the “pursuit of happiness,” not everyone would agree.

This chapter has several references to “popular sovereignty,” which it defines as “[g]overnment by the consent of the governed” (13). Carson, as you will see in a few weeks, disagrees with the term “sovereignty” for our system of government: “[t]he concept of sovereignty is alien to our system of government.” He argues that our government is limited, with the Constitution to check the government, the states to check their citizens, the citizens to vote representatives into office. No one has absolute, unchecked authority in our system, but sovereignty implies such absolute power. I think Carson is correct, but today’s reading covers current usage, and current usage defines “popular sovereignty” as government by the consent of the governed.

This text assumes that “Informal Methods of Constitutional Change” are necessary and proper, “a result of the flexibility of the Constitution to adapt itself over time to events and concerns of the citizens” (25). This sounds reasonable, but as we will read in Carson, the Founding Fathers would not necessarily have agreed with this.

#### Current Events ■



Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
	6	7	8	9	10
Bible					
God and Politics	pp. 21–25 (up to break)	pp. 25–29 (through second para.)	pp. 29–34 (through first para.)	pp. 34–37 (through third para.)	pp. 37–41 (up to break)
Memorization	Romans 13:3–4				
History/Civics and Historical Fiction					
Basic American Government	pp. 17–24	pp. 24–27; The Constitution: Preamble and Art. I, Sec. 1–4 pp. 534–536		The Constitution: Art. I, Sec. 5–10 pp. 536–539	
The Complete Idiot's Guide to U.S. Government and Politics			chaps. 10–11		chap. 9
Current Events	Three reports this week.				
Other Notes					

## Day 1

## Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 21–25 (up to break)

Greg Bahnsen, the author of this chapter, passed away in 1995 at the age of 47, as a result of ongoing medical conditions.

In footnote 1, Bahnsen speaks of special revelation and natural revelation. The latter is also referred to as general revelation. This is knowledge about God that may be gleaned from nature or moral conscience and need not be specially revealed as through the Bible. [p. 21]

Notice that the contributors to this volume often quote or reference Scripture in support of their perspectives. If this is the case, why are there disagreements about the relationship between Christianity and government? It's not that the Bible doesn't speak to these issues, and it's not that we can supposedly make the Bible say whatever we want it to say. Rather, it's often a matter of interpretation, which results in theology. Keep in mind that there's a

theological principal known as the *perspicuity* of Scripture. The word comes from the Latin for "transparent" or "clear." Perspicuity means that the Bible is clear when it comes to essential doctrines and teachings. Everyone, then, can understand the clear biblical teachings about God, Christ, salvation, human nature, etc. But there are areas that are not as clear and are more complicated to understand and/or apply today. One of those areas has to do with the relationship between the church and government. So it's not just a matter of which authority quotes the most Scripture, but it's also a matter of interpreting the passages in context and seeking to apply them properly. That's not always an easy task!

**Vocabulary**

**A priori:** based on reasoning rather than direct observation or study. [footnote 7, p. 24]

**To Discuss After You Read**

1. Given Bahnsen's 12 points, is there one in particular you strongly agree or disagree with? Why? [pp. 23–24]

**Memorization** | Romans 13:3–4

## History/Civics and Historical Fiction

In Days 6–10, we begin with a definition of our government, then spend the rest of the time on the legislative branch, or Congress, with its two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate. And we'll work through Article I of the Constitution. If you find that answering the questions pertaining to the actual Constitution difficult, please at least read through the questions and answers: they should clarify the language and give greater understanding of the text.

### **Basic American Government** | pp. 17–24

#### Vocabulary

Laws will be **promulgated** ...

... the business of government, hereditary, **appointive**, and elective means ...

"Let us not make it a blank paper by **construction**."

"But let there be no change by **usurpation** ..."

... which shall be made in **pursuance** thereof ...

... no civil rulers are to be obeyed when they **enjoin** things ...

#### To Discuss After You Read

2. What three words does Carson believe best summarize the United States government? ➡
3. According to Carson, does "constitutional" mean "written document"? ➡
4. Please paraphrase Thomas Jefferson's comments in a letter to his friend (18). ➡
5. Please paraphrase George Washington's words in his Farewell Address (18). ➡
6. Why did the founders favor a "government of laws and not of men" (19)? ➡
7. What were the two kinds of ordinary law known to the founders? ➡
8. For whom is the Constitution supposed to serve as a legal guide? ➡

**Note:** The *Marbury vs. Madison* decision will come up again in this course. Marbury wanted a writ of mandamus, a writ (or written command) issued by a superior court to make a government officer perform his duties correctly. Marbury wanted the Supreme Court to force Madison to give him his commission. The Supreme Court claimed that, per the Constitution, the Supreme Court was not the proper court to issue a decision.

9. Why is the *Marbury vs. Madison* Supreme Court decision so important? ➡
10. What law did many of the founders believe transcends even the Constitution? ➡

11. According to Jefferson, which branch of the general government had the primary responsibility to interpret the Constitution? ➡

### **Current Events** | Three reports this week

## Day 2

### Bible

### **God and Politics** | pp. 25–29 (through second paragraph)

#### Vocabulary

**concomitantly:** naturally accompanying or associated with something. [p. 27]

#### To Discuss After You Read

**Note:** Interpretations of the exact meaning, application, and implications of "kingdom of God" in the New Testament are many. The phrase itself is not in the Old Testament, but this does not mean that it's basic message has no place in the Old Testament. As Creator, God sovereignly rules over all, and may also be said to be king of his people (Israel and/or the Church, depending on one's theology), as well as king of all the nations of the world. Some view the kingdom as applicable now, while others see the thrust of God's kingdom coming in the future ("Thy kingdom come," in the Lord's prayer, for instance). Still others may see it as a combination of present and future, or perhaps as coming in phases. The relationship between the church and God's kingdom is also a matter of some debate, with some identifying the kingdom with the church and others believing that the kingdom age is yet to come. [p. 25]

### **Memorization** | Romans 13:3–4

## History/Civics and Historical Fiction

### **Basic American Government** | pp. 24–27; The Constitution: Preamble and Article I, Sections 1–4 pp. 534–536

#### Memorization

Please memorize the Preamble. It states the fundamental purposes of the general government as envisioned by the founding fathers. [p. 534]

#### Vocabulary

... may be considered the **innovative** powers ... [pp. 24–27]

And most of those powers are **enumerated** ... [pp. 24–27]

... including **excises** and **duties** ... [pp. 24–27]

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure **domestic tranquility** ... [p. 534]

The Senate shall choose their other Officers, and also a **President pro tempore** ... [pp. 534–536]

#### To Discuss After You Read

12. Why does Carson object to calling the general government of the United States “the federal government”? [pp. 24–27] ➡
13. What do the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government do? [pp. 24–27] ➡
14. What is the form of the United States’ legislative branch? [pp. 24–27] ➡
15. When the Constitution was written, what were the requirements for a Senator? [pp. 24–27] ➡
16. What were the requirements for a Representative? [pp. 24–27] ➡
17. Are there any differences between the two houses of Congress in terms of what they can do? [pp. 24–27] ➡
18. On what grounds does Carson say that Article I, Sections 8 and 9 of the Constitution are “the most important parts of the Constitution”? [pp. 24–27] ➡
19. “We the People of the United States”: With whom or what does ultimate sovereignty under the United States Constitution supposedly rest? [p. 534] ➡

**Note:** Before the Constitution, the thirteen states had the Articles of Confederation (which we’ll cover later). Under the Articles, ultimate sovereignty resided with the delegates of the states “in Congress assembled.” Under the Constitution, the source of sovereignty shifted to “We the People.” Madison “considered the difference between a system founded on the legislatures only, and one founded on the people, to be the true difference between a *league* or *treaty*, and a *constitution*.”<sup>1</sup>

20. “... in order to form a more perfect Union ...” etc.: What are the stated purposes for establishing the Constitution? [p. 534] ➡
21. “All legislative Powers ... shall be vested in a Congress”: practically speaking, what does this mean? [pp. 534–536] ➡

**Notes:** “The Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.” Most states had more than one legislative branch (i.e., “House” and “Senate”). The voting requirements for electing members of the various houses of the state legislatures differed, and the requirements for electing representatives in the “most numerous branch” were usually less restrictive than those for the less numerous branch, and those were the requirements for the Electors.

1. Elliot, Jonathan, ed. *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, 5 vols. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1901, 4:38, quoted in W. Cleon Skousen, *The Making of America*, Washington, DC: The National Center for Constitutional Studies, 1985, pp. 234–235.

22. How were the representatives to be apportioned among the states? [pp. 534–536] ➡
23. How often are the representatives supposed to be reapportioned among the states? [pp. 534–536] ➡
24. What is the minimum number of people that any one representative may represent? [pp. 534–536] ➡
25. Besides representation, what else is to be apportioned among the states according to the decennial census? [pp. 534–536] ➡
26. Why is the clause about “each State shall have at Least one Representative” necessary? [pp. 534–536] ➡  
  
As of 2011, Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming each have just one representative.
27. Who is responsible for replacing Representatives if their offices are vacated (say, for death, or some other cause)? [pp. 534–536] ➡

**Note:** The name “Speaker” of the House of Representatives is a carry-over from British parliamentary usage where the Parliament would elect one of its members to speak to the king on its behalf. The “Speaker” also presided over Parliament when it was in session. The Speaker of the House of Representatives in the United States fulfills the same kinds of controlling functions in the House that the British Speaker does in Parliament.

28. What is the responsibility of the House when it comes to impeachment? [pp. 534–536] ➡
29. Since Senators are elected once every six years, why are Senators around the country being elected every two years? [pp. 534–536] ➡
30. In the Constitution as originally written, what was supposed to happen if a Senatorial seat was vacated? [pp. 534–536] ➡

**Notes:** Today, if a Senatorial seat is vacated, the state executive is supposed to issue “writs of election” (i.e., legal orders for an election to take place) to replace the Senator; at the same time, the state legislatures may, if they want, empower the executive to appoint a Senator until an election can take place.

In October 2000, the former governor of Missouri, who was campaigning for Senator, was killed in a plane crash. In November, when it was time to elect Missouri’s next Senator, the late (i.e., dead) former governor received the majority of votes. The governor of Missouri then appointed the dead man’s wife to represent Missouri in the Senate. (Did this appointment match the Constitution’s provisions? To be honest, I don’t know.)

31. Who serves as the Senate’s alternative to the House’s Speaker? [pp. 534–536] ➡
32. Does the Vice President get to vote in the Senate? [pp. 534–536] ➡



The VP is not normally in the Senate. The official United States Senate page says this: "From John Adams in 1789 to Alben Barkley in 1952, presiding over the Senate was the chief function of vice presidents, who had an office in the Capitol, received their staff support and office expenses through the legislative appropriations, and who often were not invited to participate in cabinet meetings or other executive activities. In 1953, Vice President Richard M. Nixon changed the vice presidency by moving his chief office from the Capitol to the White House, by directing his attention to executive functions, and by attending Senate sessions only at critical times when his vote, or ruling from the chair, might be necessary. Vice presidents since Nixon's time have followed his example."<sup>2</sup>

**Notes:** "Unlike the vice president, the president pro tempore is a duly elected member of the Senate, able to speak and vote on any issue . . . . (The vice president is not at liberty to address the Senate, except by unanimous consent. Nor should any senator speak while presiding, other than to make necessary rulings and announcements or to maintain order.)"<sup>3</sup>

33. What is the Senate's role if or when someone is impeached by the House? [pp. 534–536] ➡

In the 1990s, President Clinton was impeached, but he wasn't thrown out of office because he wasn't convicted of the crimes for which he was impeached. People brought accusations against him, but two-thirds of the Senators did not agree to convict him.

34. Who presides over the Senate in case the president is impeached? [pp. 534–536] ➡

35. If people are convicted of impeachable offenses, what can the Senate do to them? [pp. 534–536] ➡

36. But what if they have done something to private citizens? [pp. 534–536] ➡

37. Who controls when elections for Senators and Representatives are to be held? [pp. 534–536] ➡

Some comments about Congress' right to override the state legislatures' wishes in electing legislators for the general government:

Congress left this provision untouched until 1842 . . . . Up to that time it had been the custom to allow voters to have a 'general ticket' on which were listed ALL of those who were running for the House of Representatives [from that state] . . . . This procedure operated to the distinct advantage of the strongest political party, since the party could elect its candidates on a statewide ticket when some of them could not have been elected in their own districts. Consequently, the strong party [would win] all the seats for that state. The Congress decided that the states should divide themselves into congressional voting districts with one representative being elected from

each. Thus, the Congressmen from the same state might belong to different parties.

In 1866 the Congress again intervened to compel state legislatures to meet on a certain day and stay in session until they had elected Senators . . . . [Prior to that time some of the legislatures would reach an impasse with both houses stubbornly deadlocked. No candidate could be elected and the state would be without a Senator. The new procedure was designed to prevent any legislature from adjourning until they had performed this function.

In 1872 Congress declared a general election day for all of the states. It was set up to take place on Tuesday following the first Monday in November of the even years.

Another change was the use of voting machines, which became legally acceptable in 1899.<sup>4</sup>

38. According to the Constitution as originally written, how often and when must Congress meet, according to the Constitution? [pp. 534–536] ➡

## Current Events | Three reports this week

### Day 3

#### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 29–34 (through first paragraph)

#### Vocabulary

**hermeneutical:** relating to the science and art of interpretation of written texts (hermeneutics). [p. 32]

**anachronistic:** out of proper historical context. [footnote 12, p. 32]

#### To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** Bahnsen mentions the concept of "holy war" in the Old Testament. This is in no way similar to the militant forms of the Islamic holy war (jihad). In the Old Testament, God in very specific circumstances sanctioned war against pagan nations. The New Testament method of evangelism is rooted in persuasion and prayer, not any sort of military force or holy war. [p. 31]

Bahnsen makes a good point when he encourages to look for "the underlying principle" in Old Testament laws that we may think are not relevant to us. In fact, we may also find elements of teachings in the New Testament that may not, at first glance, seem relevant in our day. However, there are instances where God is seeking to instruct us ethically on the basis of the underlying principles of teachings rather than wanting us to make a direct comparison. Bahnsen's application of the parable of the Good Samaritan is a good example of seeking the underlying principle in a teaching. Sometimes critics reference obscure Bible passages in the hopes of pointing out that the Bible is

2. Senate Briefings: President Pro Tempore," [www.senate.gov/learning/brief\\_8.html](http://www.senate.gov/learning/brief_8.html), November 11, 2000.

3. Ibid.

4. W. Cleon Skousen, *op. cit.*, pp. 322–323.

ancient and irrelevant, but they often miss the point of underlying principles of instruction. [p. 33]

At the bottom of page 33 Bahnsen mentions the unique role of the Holy Spirit in empowering Christians to conform their internal nature into what God desires (virtuous people). In other words, Christianity does not ask its followers to merely try real hard to obey God's ethical expectations, but grants believers the power of the Holy Spirit to do so. This is a unique development in the history of religion.

**Memorization** | Romans 13:3–4

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### ***The Complete Idiot's Guide to U.S. Government and Politics*** | Chapters 10–11

To Discuss After You Read

39. How does Congress increase their pay without increasing their salary? [chap. 10] ➡
40. Who are the most powerful members of the House of Representatives? [chap. 10] ➡

**Notes:** The text says that “no one in the House has ever served in the Senate” (139). I read that as a blanket statement though history, though it may be in reference to the Congress at the time of the book's publication. If intended as a blanket statement, it's not entirely accurate. John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, was a Senator before he was President. After his presidency, though, he served in the House for seventeen years.

Perhaps the most famous filibuster in pop culture is the Jimmy Stewart film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. If you can, watch it; it's a classic!

If members of Congress were paid \$6/day in 1790 and \$8/day in 1855, that was actually a very generous wage. The well-paid tractor drivers in the Dust Bowl in 1930s earned \$3/day. The very well paid assembly line workers for Henry Ford earned \$5/day in the early 1900s.

We'll cover the workings of Congress in greater depth later in the course, so don't feel discombobulated by all the terms and committees.

**Current Events** | Three reports this week

### Day 4

#### Bible

#### ***God and Politics*** | pp. 34–37 (through third paragraph)

To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** When Bahnsen discusses the people of God (p. 35) he espouses what is sometimes termed covenant

replacement theology. This view holds that the Christian church is the new Israel, thus replacing it in God's eyes. Other forms of theology, notably dispensationalism, views the church and Israel as remaining distinct even after the New Testament.

Bahnsen writes of how even those “who do not love God ... nevertheless know the just requirements of God's law.” This is known as natural law and is confirmed in passages such as Romans 2:15, which Bahnsen later cites. [p. 37]

**Memorization** | Romans 13:3–4

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### ***Basic American Government*** | The Constitution: Article I, Sections 5–10 pp. 536–539

Vocabulary

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect **Taxes, Duties, Imposts, Excises** ...

To establish a uniform Rule of **Naturalization** ...

To Discuss After You Read

41. Can the two houses of Congress act in any manner they want, or must they follow certain rules with respect to how they treat their members, the penalties they may apply to members who misbehave, and so forth? ➡
42. Are there any limits placed upon the two houses for *expelling* members? ➡
43. How “open” must the Congress be about its activities? ➡

**Notes:** I see two possible problems with this clause: 1) “from time to time” could be interpreted in such a broad way that it might almost be as good as never having it published; 2) the “Secrecy” clause may require no more than a simple majority vote to be put into effect. If a bunch of Senators or Representatives decided they just didn't want their votes publicized, it wouldn't be too hard for them to make their votes secret. What might “require” their votes to be kept secret? Nothing more than their own self-interest! So: a fifth of all members can force a roll-call vote that will be recorded in the journal, but a half-plus-one vote can force the proceedings to remain secret.

The Constitution requires neither house to adjourn for more than three days (except by permission of the other house) during a Session of Congress. I would guess that that is because one house, by itself, is unable to achieve much of anything. Significant legislation requires coordination between the two houses.

44. Why the clause about members of Congress being “privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at” or going to or coming from a session of Congress? ➡

“[F]or any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other place.” As I understand,

this does not mean that a private person could be arrested for asking a member of Congress what he or she meant in a speech in Congress. It is meant to preclude lawsuits or other actions taken against members of Congress for speaking their minds; Skousen says, “Under Elizabeth and her two successors, members of Parliament were punished for speaking against the crown. Charles I attempted to seize five members of the House of Commons who had opposed him, which contributed to the outbreak of civil war and terminated with the decapitation of the king . . . . [I]f it were not for this provision (members of Congress) could be sued for libel, slander, or perhaps defamation of character if they frankly spoke their minds on certain public issues or against certain public personalities”<sup>5</sup>

The first half of the second paragraph of Art. I, Sec. 6 (“No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed . . .”) protects us from having congressmen create positions for which they can then be appointed, or raise the pay for a position to which they can then be appointed. If this provision were not included, there would be tremendous potential for votes with a conflict of interest. Skousen notes: “It is necessary to realize that in the beginning, Senators and Congressmen . . . were paid so much per day during the short time the Congress was in session. Many ran for office with the hope of getting a permanent job with the government. It was feared that there might be collusion between the President and members of Congress whom he could bribe with promises of well-paying jobs if they voted the way he desired on some critical issue. This provision was designed to prevent this type of corruption . . . . Notice, however, that a Congressman could resign and be appointed to another government job which was already in existence, provided that that member of Congress had not voted to increase the compensation for that job.”<sup>6</sup>

The second half of the second paragraph of Art. I, Sec. 6 (“... and no Person holding any Office ...”) was to protect from conflicts of interest between the various branches of government. As Skousen notes, there had been no such protections in British Parliamentary experience, and so the king had often been able to “buy off” the votes of Commons members because they were beholden to him for their positions in government—the positions that yielded them their primary sources of funds. The founders wanted to be sure that no members of Congress could be “bought off” in this way.

45. According to the Constitution, where must “all bills for raising revenue” originate? ➡
46. According to the Constitution, does the president have any responsibility to consider the Constitutionality of a bill when it is presented to him? ➡
47. What happens if the president does not sign a bill? ➡

48. What happens if the president vetoes a bill? Can it still become law? ➡
49. Over what kind of commerce was Congress to have power to control? ➡

**Notes:** Uniform laws concerning bankruptcy would be important to keep cheats and frauds from absconding with funds and running from one state to another.

The matter of coined money is of great significance. Any more, we hardly think of coins as significant money. “Money” seems to be scraps of paper with special printing on them. Coins are merely bits and pieces of those scraps of paper.

This was not at all the view of the founders! Just one of the framers of the Constitution, James Wilson, commented that “It will have a most salutary [beneficial] influence on the credit of the United States to remove the possibility of paper money.” Meaning: the United States will have better credit if there is no possibility of paper money.

A “post road” is a road specifically built to provide a means for transportation of mail.

50. What is the legal name for “the exclusive right” that the government guarantees to an author and an inventor, respectively, for their literary or physical inventions? ➡
51. According to the Constitution, for how long can a financial appropriation be made for an army? ➡
52. Why do you think the founders placed such a limit on financing an army? ➡
53. Does the United States follow the Constitution in this matter? ➡
54. In your opinion, is this a good thing: a) that the United States ignores the Constitutional restriction and, b) that it has a standing army today? Why or why not?

In 1903, the state militias were divided into an “organized” militia, called the National Guard. As such, I don’t think Congress “provide[s] for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia” as provided for in the Constitution.

55. What “District (not exceeding ten Miles square)” is “the Seat of the Government of the United States”? ➡

**Notes:** Congress does not “exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District” because the citizens of Washington, DC demanded the right of self-rule. There was not a Constitutional amendment to enable such behavior.

Article I, Section 8 dealt with enumerated powers of Congress; Article I, Section 9 deals with acts that are specifically *excluded* or *proscribed*.

“The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended,” This means that the government does not have the right to hold a prisoner without making him available for public inspection in court. The writ of habeas corpus is a legal document that demands a jailer to “have

5. Skousen, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

6. Skousen, *op. cit.*, p.g 348.

the body” (“habeas corpus”) out of prison and in court for just such a purpose as I have just expressed.<sup>7</sup>

A bill of attainder is a legislative act that singles out an individual or group for punishment without a trial. Ex post facto law is passed after the fact, i.e., a law that criminalizes an action that was completed in the past and that was legal at the time it was done. It’s good to have the Constitution say, “No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law.”

A “capitation tax” is a “head” or “poll” tax, a tax levied “per person” or “per capita.”

56. According to the Constitution as originally written, were all capitation taxes illegal under the Constitution? ➡

A “direct” tax directly affects the citizens of the United States. This is one of those few laws in the Constitution that, as Carson and others have said, permitted the general government to directly touch the citizenry.

57. Why the restriction on taxes or duties laid on articles exported from any state? ➡

58. In essence, what is the purpose and significance of Article I, Section 10? ➡

## Current Events | Three reports this week

### Day 5

### Bible

## God and Politics | pp. 37–41 (up to break)

### Vocabulary

**excoriated:** to severely criticize or censure. [p. 39]

**Ex post facto:** being retroactive in force or effect. [p. 39, footnote 15]

**Exegesis:** refers to interpretation and explanation of biblical texts by drawing out what they state. [p. 41]

**Rousseau:** Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78)—French philosopher who wrote on political theory and education. He viewed people as naturally good, but negatively influenced by culture and education. Rousseau’s views had an impact on the French Revolution. [p. 41, footnote 17]

**Marx:** Karl Marx (1818–83), German thinker and coauthor of the *Communist Manifesto*, which influenced the rise of modern communism in nations such as the former Soviet Union. [p. 41, footnote 17]

7. There are all manners of historical examples where kings and others in power have grabbed innocent people (i.e., people who have committed no crime other than maybe offending the person in power), hiding them away in dungeons or prisons, torturing or abusing them, and never being called to account for their unjust actions. The “privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*” is intended to reduce the possibility for such abuses.

**Buckley:** Bahnsen may be referring to William F. Buckley (1925–2008), an American conservative writer. [p. 41, footnote 17]

**Galbraith:** Bahnsen may be referring to John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–2006), a liberal Canadian-American economist. [p. 41, footnote 17]

### To Discuss After You Read

Most modern translations of the Bible use the word “abolish” or “destroy” in place of “abrogate” in Matthew 5:17. [p. 40]

Bahnsen writes, “It should constantly be borne in the mind that no school of thought, least of all the theonomist outlook, has all the answers.” This is a good point to keep in mind when seeking to understand any viewpoint, especially when it comes to differing positions within Christianity. No one has all the answers and, in some circumstances, a lot of work must be done toward building a case and understanding other perspectives before coming to serious conclusions. [p. 41]

## Memorization | Romans 13:3–4

## History/Civics and Historical Fiction

## The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics | Chapter 9

### To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** “The conflict between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists in the early years is mirrored today by the debate among strict and liberal constructionists” (117). In our reading, Carson is a strict constructionist: he wants the general government to do what the Constitution allows, and no more. (Presumably, George Washington was also a strict constructionist: “let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation . . .”) The liberal constructionists do not believe the Constitution serves the needs of the present day (see Carson’s example on p. 13).

I value Carson’s perspective, but though it may be dominant in this course, it is not the prevailing view of our culture. In preparing for this course, most of the books and articles I read, as well as the news media I follow personally, comes from a liberal constructionist perspective. If Carson persuades you to his perspective, just know you will be outside the mainstream.

59. I appreciate the author’s discussion of the Commerce Clause. Congress is allowed “To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.” How would you read this clause? (Remember that “commerce” is defined as the activity of buying and selling, especially on a large scale.)

Wikipedia says that copyrights are a bit longer than the book claims: life of the author + 70 years. Patents, too, have increased in length since 1995, from 17 years to 20.

“Eminent Domain,” or the ability of Congress to take private property for public use, has, unsurprisingly, expanded in recent years, especially in the Kelo decision of 2005. Andrew Napolitano, a senior judicial analyst at FOX News Channel, spoke on “Property Rights After the Kelo Decision.”

When teaching law students the significance of private property, we tell them that each owner of such property has something called a “bundle of rights.” The first of these rights is the right to use the property. The second is the right to alienate the property. The third and greatest is the right to exclude people from the property.

With this in mind, let me pose a question: Can the government force a property owner to sell his property? James Madison argued that the government could do so as long as it paid the owner a fair market value and as long as the property was purchased for a public use, such as a road or a highway or a bridge. Thomas Jefferson was opposed even to that, arguing that the essence of owning property is the right to exclude everybody—even the government—from that property, and that no one could force a sale. But Madison’s ideas prevailed and were incorporated in the Fifth Amendment, which allows the government to take property for “public use” if it pays the property owner “just compensation.”

The “public use” requirement of the Fifth Amendment is now no more. A 1959 court case entitled *Courtesy Sandwich Shop, Inc. v. Port of New York Authority* arose when the owners of a lower Manhattan deli refused to sell out to the Port Authority in order to make room to build the World Trade Center. The Court of Appeals of the State of New York, which is the highest state court, held that because the World Trade Center would enhance the area’s economy, the owners of Courtesy Sandwich Shop could be forced to sell in return for the property’s fair market value. When the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the shop owners’ appeal, this became settled law. From that point on, there have been tens of thousands of takings of property for a non-public use. Thus “public use” as found in the Fifth Amendment was redefined by the courts as “public purpose.”

I thought these property takings would finally come to an end last year when the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case called *Kelo v. City of New London*. I was wrong. We all know what happened: Suzette Kelo and her neighbors, on their own and with their own money, turned a slum neighborhood in New London, Connecticut, into a sparkling, lovely

little village on the Long Island Sound. The City of New London decided that it wanted to condemn that property and turn it into a parking lot for Pfizer Corporation. I should point out that Pfizer was not a party to the case, and Pfizer said many times that it would build a parking garage in a different location, allowing Suzette Kelo and her neighbors to live where they wished. In response to this proposal, the City of New London said no, a trial court in Connecticut said no, an appellate court in Connecticut said no, the Connecticut State Supreme Court said no, and the U.S. Supreme Court said no. In doing so, the latter went even further than the Court of Appeals of New York had gone in the *Courtesy Sandwich Shop* case: It ruled that if the local tax collector collects more money as a result of the taking of property by government and its sale to another private owner, that is a public use!

Like a nation of sheep, we continue to allow government to violate our natural rights, of which the right to own property is an essential one. Thinking about the Kelo decision, I am reminded of one of Thomas Jefferson’s favorite quotes from William Pitt the Elder:

The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail, its roof may shake, the wind may blow through it, the storm may enter, the rain may enter, but the King of England cannot enter. All of his forces dare not cross the threshold of the ruined cottage.

In short, the natural right to exclude others, including the government, from one’s property—a right enshrined in the Fifth Amendment—has now been eviscerated by the courts. But our natural rights don’t come from the government. They spring from our very humanity, which is why Jefferson called them inalienable in the Declaration of Independence. Thus government has no legitimate power to take them away from us. Of course, if one is a criminal and violates the natural rights of others, the government may use due process through the mechanism of a fair trial and take one’s rights away. But Suzette Kelo was no criminal, and due process was not observed in allowing the City of New London to take what was hers.

One encouraging sign is that, since the Kelo decision, numerous states have fought back by passing legislation or amending their constitutions to prohibit such takings. One can only hope that this movement will continue.<sup>8</sup>

**Current Events** | Three reports this week ■

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Date:	Day 11	Day 212	Day 313	Day 414	Day 515
Bible					
God and Politics	pp. 41–45	pp. 46–49 (through third para.)	pp. 49–53 🌐	pp. 54–57 (up to break)	pp. 57–60 🌐
Memorization	Romans 13:5–7				
History/Civics and Historical Fiction					
Basic American Government	pp. 27–29; The Constitution: Art. II pp. 539–541; Amendment 12 p. 547		pp. 29–33; The Constitution: Art. III p. 542	The Constitution: Art. IV–VII pp. 543–544	pp. 33–42
The Complete Idiot's Guide to U.S. Government and Politics		chap. 13		chap. 15	
Current Events	Three reports this week.				
Other Notes					

## Day 1

## Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 41–45

## Vocabulary

**Lenin:** Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), key person involved in the Russian Revolution who later led communist Russia (1918–1924). [p. 42]

**Augustine:** Important 4th and 5th century Christian thinker and author of *Confessions* and *City of God*. [p. 43]

**Thrasymachus:** 5th century Greek philosopher and also a character in Plato's *Republic*. [p. 44]

**telic:** moving toward a specific end or goal, from the Greek *telos* (end, goal). [p. 45]

## To Discuss After You Read

1. Describe the Reconstruction view of how Christians should relate to government? ➡
2. Do you agree with Bahnsen's statement in footnote 19: "The biblical way to deal with the physical needs of the poor in society is by means of voluntary personal charity ... obedience to the relevant laws of God ... and the corporate church's tithe-supported diaconal [deacons] ministry"? Should the state, then, have no role in helping the poor? What if the church fails to live up to its calling to help the poor?

**Memorization** | Romans 13:5–7

## History/Civics and Historical Fiction

In Days 11–15, we continue on with the original Constitution, covering the executive and judicial branches, as well as the other Articles. Then we continue to look at the type of government we have.



**Basic American Government** | pp. 27–29; The Constitution: Article II pp. 539–541; Amendment 12 p. 547

**To Discuss After You Read**

3. What is the name of the executive of the United States? [pp. 27–29] ➔
4. How is the President elected? [pp. 27–29] ➔
5. What are some of the President’s unique powers? [pp. 27–29] ➔
6. For how long does a president or vice president hold office? [pp. 539–541] ➔
7. What are Electors? [pp. 539–541] ➔
8. According to the Constitution, who sets the rules for how Electors are chosen? [pp. 539–541] ➔
9. How many Electors serve each state? [pp. 539–541] ➔
10. Who is permitted to serve as an Elector? [pp. 539–541] ➔
11. Is it possible that an Elector might vote differently than the way they are expected to vote? [pp. 539–541] ➔

In the 2000 presidential election, the “popular vote” was in favor of candidate Al Gore, while the Electoral College apparently went in favor of candidate George W. Bush. Bush became president even though he hadn’t won the popular vote. How? Well, it could have happened because the Electors didn’t vote as they were expected. That wasn’t the case here. Rather, there was not a perfect correlation between the number of citizens in a state and the number of Electors that represent the state. For example, the extremely populous states of New York and California have more voters per elector, while the rather unpopulated states of Montana, and North and South Dakota have fewer voters per elector. This means that, assuming their Electors vote as they want, the individual voters in small states have a relatively stronger influence on who runs the general government than do voters in the most populous states.

In 2000, Gore had huge numbers of votes in New York and California, but once he had won those electors, the additional votes for him didn’t make a difference: he couldn’t get double electoral college votes.

Finally, because the voters in each state know that their votes only count toward electing Electors from their state, if a state is dominated by one party or another, many citizens won’t even vote because they know their candidate would not win. Or they will vote for a third-party candidate who doesn’t have a hope of actually winning the election, but whose views more accurately reflect what they believe than do either of the two major party candidates. Thus the popular vote for either one or both of the major party candidates may be severely depressed compared with what it would be if there were a nationwide election in which every vote counted equally.

12. Who is eligible to become president of the United States? [pp. 539–541] ➔
13. How does that compare to the requirements for Senator or Representative? [pp. 539–541] ➔
14. Why do you think the founders made the rule about the president’s compensation being neither “increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected”? [pp. 539–541] ➔
15. What military responsibilities does the president have? [pp. 539–541] ➔
16. Do you think that the fact that the president has these kinds of responsibilities should make it incumbent upon the president to have studied military strategy? Why or why not? [pp. 539–541]
17. What privilege does the president have when it comes to matters of persons who have been proven to have broken United States laws? [pp. 539–541] ➔
18. What responsibilities does the president have? [pp. 539–541] ➔
19. Does the president make treaties all by himself? [pp. 539–541] ➔
20. Is there any way for the president to get around the requirement that the Senate approves all appointments? [pp. 539–541] ➔
21. Even though he is the head of the executive branch, the president may propose legislation. Why do you think this is? [pp. 539–541] ➔
22. What kind of powers or authority does the president have over Congress’ being in or out of session? [pp. 539–541] ➔
23. Do you think this power of adjournment provides any possibilities for abuse? [pp. 539–541] ➔
24. Why would a president want to adjourn Congress? [pp. 539–541] ➔
25. What other powers and responsibilities belong to the president? [pp. 539–541] ➔
26. What does that mean, “to commission” an officer? [pp. 539–541] ➔
27. How is “commissioning” different from “appointing”? [pp. 539–541] ➔
28. If someone believes the president, vice president, or other official has done something wrong, can these government officials be removed from office? How? [pp. 539–541] ➔
29. For any crime? [pp. 539–541] ➔
30. How did Electors vote for president and vice president under the Constitution as originally written, and how do they do it today? [p. 547] ➔

31. What happens if no one gets a majority of the Electors' votes? [p. 547] ➡

## Current Events | Three reports this week

### Day 2

#### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 46–49 (through third paragraph)

#### Vocabulary

**deontological ethics:** a theory of ethics that believes right or wrong actions are not completely determined by consequences, but that some actions are inherently right or wrong in and of themselves. [p. 49]

#### To Discuss After You Read

On page 46 Bahnsen mentions “separation of church and state,” noting that it is not a biblical concept. One might add that it isn’t even a Constitutional concept, as the phrase is found in a letter of Thomas Jefferson, not in the U.S. Constitution.

**Memorization** | Romans 13:5–7

#### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

**The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics** | Chapter 13

#### To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** The book suggests Lincoln was a great president because his name is remembered, that he was a strong enough leader to take the power of the presidency. “Lincoln was the only president to stand up to Congress and the partisan system that had developed. He used his executive powers . . . . He did all of this without the approval of Congress” (162). That’s one way to look at it. The other side would say that Lincoln ignored the Constitution and the various checks and balances, that is, he acted unconstitutionally, or illegally.

The next paragraph says that “the system has changed” (162). Obviously it has. But did it change Constitutionally? Or did it just evolve to meet the needs of the present day?

“A president may serve for more than eight years if he succeeds another president” (163). On some level, every president succeeds the president before, but in this context it means that the president becomes unable to serve any longer and the vice president steps in. That vice president could be elected on his own ticket twice, and so serve some period shorter than a full three terms, but longer than two.

Interesting that the last formal declaration of war came during WWII, and yet we’ve fought the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the War against Terrorism (which doesn’t have an actual target, just an amorphous concept). By changing the definition, the general government is able to change the procedure.

## Current Events | Three reports this week

### Day 3

#### Bible

**God and Politics** | pp. 49–53

#### To Discuss After You Read

32. Bahnsen suggests several approaches for bringing about theonomy—“evangelism, prayer, and education” (p. 53), as well as “intellectual persuasion and apologetical appeals to the unconverted.” Do you agree with his recommendations? Whether you agree with theonomy or not, are there other things the church can be doing to transform society and civil government for the better?

#### Timeline and Map Activities

- 📍 Uganda (map 1)
- 📍 Jericho; Sinai (map 3)

**Memorization** | Romans 13:5–7

#### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

**Basic American Government** | pp. 29–33;  
The Constitution: Article III p. 542

#### To Discuss After You Read

33. How, specifically, is the judicial branch structured? [pp. 29–33] ➡
34. What are the duties of the Supreme Court? [pp. 29–33] ➡
35. What does it mean that the United States government is “mixed”? [pp. 29–33] ➡

**Note:** The second word in Section 1, “Judicial,” should read “judicial.”

36. How many United States courts were specifically planned for when the United States Constitution was first written? [p. 542] ➡
37. For how long are justices of the United States courts permitted to fulfill their judicial duties? [p. 542] ➡
38. There is a provision in Art. III, Sec. 1, that the compensation for judges “shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.” Why do you think this is? [p. 542] ➡

**Note:** “Cases in law” are situations where someone is charged with breaking a definite law. “Cases in equity” have to do with situations in which, though no direct law may be involved, there is a matter of justice. For example, if someone hits a baseball through someone else’s window, there is no specific law against hitting baseballs through windows, but, clearly, it’s “not right” that the owner of the home with the broken window should have to replace his or her own window when it was broken by someone else. Or, say, my drain backs up and sewer water flows out of my house into your back yard and even into your basement: what is to be done?—These are “cases in equity.”

39. In general, to what kinds of cases is the United States judicial power supposed to extend? [p. 542] ➡
40. What does the phrase “original jurisdiction” mean? [p. 542] ➡
41. Over what cases do the courts of the United States have original jurisdiction? [p. 542] ➡
42. For which kinds of cases is the United States court system an appellate court? [p. 542] ➡
43. “The Trial of all Crimes except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury”: does this have anything to do with cases that are not to be tried by any of the courts set up under Article III (i.e., does this apply to trials in state courts)? [p. 542] ➡
44. Where are crimes committed against the United States supposed to be tried? [p. 542] ➡
45. According to Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution, do the words *the United States* refer to a singular entity or plural entities? [p. 542] ➡
46. According to the Constitution, what is treason against the United States? [p. 542] ➡
47. How difficult should it be to convict a person of treason under the Constitution? [p. 542] ➡

**Notes:** “[N]o Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted”: what does that mean? To “attain” means to “put the finger on” a person; i.e., to convict. More specifically, “attainder” is the forfeiture of land and civil rights as a consequence of a sentence of death for treason or felony. “Corruption of blood” means that a person’s heirs are viewed as judicially dead, i.e., incapable of receiving an inheritance. So the person attainted has his or her property taken away (“forfeited”). In context, and put in a slightly different order, the Constitution is saying, “No person convicted of treason shall lose control over his property or be precluded from passing his property on to heirs except during his lifetime.”

The *Catholic Encyclopedia* says,

While bills of attainder were used in England as early as 1321, ... it was not until the ... [English] civil war that ... this process was first freely used, not only

against the living, but sometimes against the dead, the main object in the latter case being, of course, the confiscation of the estate of the attainted person. In the flush of victory which followed the battle of Towton, Edward IV obtained the passage of a sweeping bill of attainder through which the crown was enriched by forfeiture of the estates of fourteen lords and more than a hundred knights and esquires.<sup>1</sup>

Skousen comments:

[D]uring the Civil War ... officers of the military or the United States government who were under oath to serve the Union, but joined the Confederate cause, were declared to be not only rebels but guilty of treason. Action was therefore taken against their estates and many of them were confiscated and sold. Nevertheless, after the death of these individuals, their heirs demanded back the property on the basis of [Art. II, Sec. 3, Para. 2 of the Constitution]. To the shocked amazement of the purchasers, the Supreme Court ruled that the property had to be returned to the heirs. The property of a rebel could be expropriated for the life of the offender, but it could not be permanently “attainted” as far as his family was concerned.<sup>2</sup>

## Current Events | Three reports this week

### Day 4

### Bible

## God and Politics | pp. 54–57 (up to break)

### Vocabulary

**Westminster Confession:** Commissioned by English Parliament, completed in 1646; an influential Reformed confession; Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms adhere to the theology of the Westminster Confession and provide a succinct list of core Christian beliefs. [p. 54]

**Sphere sovereignty:** a Reformed concept articulated in modern times by individuals such as Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd. [p. 54]

**Pentateuch:** the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). [p. 56]

**Decalogue:** the Ten Commandments. [p. 56]

### To Discuss After You Read

**Notes:** Sphere sovereignty is a Reformed concept articulated in modern times by individuals such as Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd. [p. 54]

48. The concept of sphere sovereignty (p. 54) will be addressed in more detail when the Principled Pluralism viewpoint is presented and defended. Given the brief description of it in this chapter, what are your thoughts about it? Does it appear to be biblical? Does it make

1. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Attainder,” found at [www.newadvent.org/cathen/02059c.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02059c.htm) (accessed November 20, 2000).

2. Skousen, *op. cit.*, p. 626.

sense? What, if any, weaknesses might it have as a Christian approach to society and the world?

Schrotenboer writes (p. 56), “We cannot simply lift the laws meant for Israel out of that differentiated society and try to fit them, with little adaption, into our highly developed society.” This statement, however, is an oversimplification of Bahnson’s position. He himself stated that much work needs to be done in order to properly incorporate and apply Old Testament laws in a contemporary setting. Bahnson’s point about understanding the underlying principles of biblical laws also can help in adapting them in a modern culture. In other words, Schrotenboer is making a criticism of theonomy that does not seem to hold up. By the way, as we prepared these notes on *God and Politics*, keep in mind that we were not attempting to champion any one of the four views as the right one. But when any of the contributors makes what we believe is an error in reasoning or in critique, we point it out without “playing favorites.”

### Memorization | Romans 13:5–7

#### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### **Basic American Government** | The Constitution: Articles IV–VII pp. 543–544

##### To Discuss After You Read

49. What does Article IV, Section 1 mean? ➡

**Notes:** This clause was a major bone of contention prior to the War for Southern Independence (also known as the “Civil War”). Courts in the North would not condemn a slave for running away in the same way that the Southern courts would condemn such slaves. The Northern states refused to abide by this provision of the Constitution on what they believed were higher, moral grounds that went beyond the written word of the Constitution.

More recently, this has become a bone of contention over the rights of homosexuals. When one state declared that a couple is married, then all states are required to honor that decision; all other states in the American union are supposed to recognize their marriage.

50. Article IV, Section 2, Para. 1 begins with a comment about citizens of each state enjoying the same “privileges and immunities” of the citizens in “the several” states. What does this mean? ➡

This means, primarily, that even if you’re not a citizen of a particular state within the Union, if you happen to be present in a state of which you are not a citizen, you are to enjoy all the *legal* protections that a citizen is supposed to enjoy. This does *not* mean that, say, a state in which you have never resided has an obligation to give you “in-state” tuition at a state-sponsored college, or to provide you other special benefits that only resident taxpayers may enjoy.

51. What is the technical word used to describe what happens when a criminal is captured in one state and, upon request of the executive authority of the state from which he fled, is “delivered up”? ➡
52. What does the third paragraph of Art. IV, Sec. 2 (“No person held to Service or Labour in one State ... escaping into another, shall ... be discharged from such Service or Labour”) mean? ➡
53. Art. IV, Sec. 3 places certain restrictions on the formation of new states from the territories of states already in existence. What are those restrictions? ➡
54. Who or what is supposed to control the property of the United States? ➡
55. Are certain forms of government not permitted within the United States? ➡
56. What kind of military responsibilities do the United States together owe to each state individually? ➡
57. Under what circumstances must amendments to the Constitution be considered? ➡
58. Under what circumstances does an amendment become legally binding? ➡
59. Two significant limitations were placed upon potential amendments to the Constitution. What were those limitations? ➡
60. Why is the first clause of Article VI (“All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation”) so important? ➡
61. Why does the Constitution say that it, “and the Laws of the United States ... and all Treaties made ... under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land”? ➡

**Note:** According to Skousen, this clause was a foundation stone in establishing a new type of government. Prior to the United States under its present Constitution, he says, the world had seen two types of republics: the “unitary republic” in which the parliament was supreme (“parliamentary supremacy”) and there had been the “confederation of states republic” in which the constituent states were supreme (“state supremacy”). The British government was a classic example of the parliamentary supremacy government; the United States under the Articles of Confederation were a classic state supremacy government.

[I]t is significant to note that the British Parliament can pass any law it wishes on any subject. It even passes on the constitutionality of its own laws. Furthermore, it is responsible for the well-being of the entire kingdom, top to bottom. It is therefore called a “unitary republic.” The United States, however, operates under the numerous restrictions of the Constitution. No matter what Congress or the states might wish to do, they have to stay within the boundaries

of the Constitution. That is why the Founders are credited with the invention of a new kind of republic based on “constitutional supremacy.” This makes the “supremacy clause” the cornerstone of the whole American political structure.<sup>3</sup>

62. Why do you think this clause didn’t cause great discomfort to the individual states? Wouldn’t they have been worried that they would lose their rights under this supremacy clause? ➡
63. According to the Constitution, to whom or to what are all Senators, Representatives, all officers of the United States, and all state legislators required to swear ultimate allegiance? ➡
64. What about natural law, the People, God, the “social contract,” etc.? ➡
65. According to Article VII, who or what was to *ratify* the Constitution? ➡
66. What *mechanism* were they to use in order to ratify it? ➡
67. When was the draft of the Constitution “done”? ➡

### ***The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics* | Chapter 15**

#### **To Discuss After You Read**

**Note:** Did you notice that the judicial branch also has the difference of opinion between the strict-constructionists and the activist approach? The debate goes on. And I appreciated this comment: “Today, many politically conservative judges favor judicial activism in order to reverse many court rulings of the last half century” (192).

68. What is doctrine of implied powers? ➡
69. What is the doctrine of national supremacy? ➡

**Notes:** “The current Supreme Court appears to maintain a ‘liberal’ majority voting bloc on issues of liberties but a ‘conservative’ majority voting bloc on issues relating to federal supremacy” (195). As I understand it, this means that the Court would be willing to push the envelope on individual rights (abortion rights, for example: not in the Constitution, but now legal). However, in cases where federal supremacy is in question, it seems the Court is happy to allow a balance between states and general government, closer to what the founders conceived. They limit the general government.

Did you understand the jurisdiction of the federal courts? In the first instance, a “civil case” is a lawsuit brought to set right a private wrong such as breach of contract, encroachment, or negligence; or to enforce civil remedies such as compensation, damages, injunction. If such a wrong happens due to a violation of the Constitution, a law, or a treaty, the federal courts can adjudicate. (Whereas if my business partner breaches contract, I wouldn’t go to federal court, but state court.) The second instance, the

“diversity of citizenship case” occurs when the lawsuit is between the residents of two different states.

This book focuses solely on the federal courts. There is also state court. These courts, usually located in the courthouse in the county seat, handle most civil and criminal cases, as well as traffic violations. The judges are not appointed, but elected. In an appeal, the case goes to a state court of appeals, and finally to the state supreme court. It’s a separate entity. The busted local drug dealer is not going to appeal his conviction before the United States Supreme Court: that was entirely a state matter.

70. What is the doctrine of *stare decisis*? ➡

*Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) established the “separate but equal” doctrine, that required separate accommodations for blacks and white in trains, schools, and public places. This was finally overturned in *Brown v. The Board of Education*.

### **Current Events** | Three reports this week

## Day 5

### Bible

### **God and Politics** | pp. 57–60

#### **Vocabulary**

**amalgam:** a combination or mixture. [p. 58]

**sundry:** diverse, of different kinds, various. [p. 59]

**Synod:** a church council or assembly. [p. 59]

**Year of Jubilee:** follows a cycle of seven sabbatical years (every 50 years), an Old Testament time of liberty and restoration, particularly in reference to slaves and land. See for instance, Leviticus 25 and Ezekiel 46:16–18. [p. 59]

#### **To Discuss After You Read**

**Notes:** The “guidance of the Holy Spirit” is not exclusively a Reformed or Calvinistic viewpoint, as there are many Christian traditions, denominations, and expressions that incorporate the Holy Spirit into their theology, discipleship, missions, evangelism, etc. As the third person of the Trinity, we would do a disservice to Scripture to neglect the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives individually and in the life of the church corporately. [p. 58]

71. Schrottenboer writes (p. 59), “All the laws of the Old Testament are connected in some way to providing redemption.” Do you agree with his statement? If it’s true, what would that say about all the Old Testament laws and their relevance to us today?

Regarding the mention of the council in Acts 15 (p. 59), Schrottenboer wonders what to make of the council’s decision to apparently “impose on Gentile believers the Mosaic prohibitions on eating food offered to idols, sexual immorality, eating meat of strangled animals, and drinking blood.” One important point to keep in mind

3. Ibid., p. 657.



when reading Acts is that in some cases it presents a church in transition, not necessarily a final blueprint or example for what church should be like today. In other words, the church in Acts struggles, faces challenges, and also grows. It is not supposed to be a set template we are to follow in every detail. This does not mean that there isn't much to learn from Acts (there is), but that we should be careful not to try to apply everything that happens in Acts in our contemporary setting.

Schrotenboer's point, at any rate, in bringing up this passage in Acts is to show that even the New Testament church, at least in this portion of Acts, was not quite sure how to incorporate Old Testament dietary (and other) laws, which in this instance are applied to Gentile believers. If this is the case, then how can Bahnsen and other theonomists so quickly toss out dietary laws as not applying today. The basic problem Schrotenboer is apparently seeking to make against theonomy with this point is that it's difficult if not impossible for us to try to figure out what specific Old Testament laws should apply today.

On page 60 mention is made of "the love commandment." Schrotenboer is referring to passages in the Gospels where Christ is asked what the greatest commandment is. He responds by saying that the first is to love God with heart, soul, and mind. The second is to love our neighbors as ourselves (see, for instance, Matthew 22:37–39, adding in verse 40, "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments," NIV). Some Christian thinkers, notably Augustine, see love as the foundation of all Christian ethics. Rather than giving his disciples new laws, Christ summarizes them in the love commandment. This need not do away with all the Old Testament laws, but it does get to the underlying matter—the condition of our inner dispositions toward virtue, which is what God desires.

#### Timeline and Map Activities

- 📍 *El Salvador* (map 1)
- 📍 *Egypt; Gethsemane; Jerusalem* (map 3)

#### Memorization | Romans 13:5–7

### History/Civics and Historical Fiction

#### **Basic American Government** | pp. 33–42

##### Vocabulary

... which animates every **votary** of freedom ...

The **substantive** limits will be discussed in another section ...

The word "sovereignty" has **absolutist** origins.

#### To Discuss After You Read

72. What, in sum, is a republic? ➡
73. What apparent contradiction resides in the whole concept of representative government? ➡
74. What danger—expressed most forcefully by Madison—were the founders more concerned about than that the people would become despotic? ➡
75. According to Alexander Hamilton, are the state governments supposed to be superior to, equal to, or inferior to the general government in terms of their power? ➡
76. Why does Carson say that the phrase "State's Rights" is a misnomer? ➡
77. According to Carson, what is the major difference between a federal and a confederate system of government? ➡
78. Read all the quotations Carson uses to bolster his case: do they back him up? Based on what these other authorities say, do you agree with Carson's interpretation? ➡
79. At the bottom of p. 39, Carson presents evidence for the idea that the United States Constitution was in no way meant to create "a unitary state ... to embrace all English Americans." He says that if anyone had tried to propose such a thing, "almost every man's hand would have been against him." Why does he say such a thing? On what grounds would people have opposed such an idea? ➡

**Note:** The 10th Amendment reads, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." A "delegated" power is one that is granted. So the first clause means that any power the Constitution doesn't grant to the United States is not for the general government. The second clause is pretty obvious: any power that the Constitution doesn't restrict to the States is still allowed to the States, or to the people. And "reserved" power is power that is held. So the States and the people hold the powers that aren't either granted to the general government or prohibited. The Constitution enumerates, or lists, the powers of the general government.

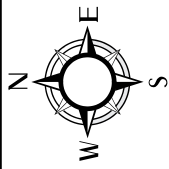
80. What does "dual sovereignty" mean? ➡
81. Why does Carson say "[t]he concept of sovereignty is alien to our system of government"? ➡

#### **Current Events** | Three reports this week ■



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## God and Politics—Map 1



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## God and Politics—Map 2



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## God and Politics—Map 3



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## God and Politics—Map 4



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<b>“American Government/Civics” —Scope and Sequence: Schedule for Topics and Skills</b>					
<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Memory Work</b>	<b>Bible Reading</b>	<b>History/Social Studies</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Biography</b>
1	Romans 13:1–2	Brief summary of the history of the Reformed tradition; Theonomy	Judeo-Christian Background; Introduction: The Political Crisis; Principles of Government; The Constitution	<i>Germany; Soviet Union; China; Sweden; England; United States</i>	
2	Romans 13:3–4	Theonomy	A Constitutional Government; The Constitution; The House of Representatives; The Senate; Congress	<i>England; United States</i>	
3	Romans 13:5–7	Theonomy	A Constitutional Government; A Republic; A Federal System of Government; The Constitution; Amendment 12; The Presidency; The Federal Court System	<i>United States</i>	
4	1 Timothy 2:1–2	Theonomy; Principled Pluralism	A Limited Government; The Bill of Rights; American Colonial Experience; Practical Political Experience; Development of Ideas on Liberty; Civil Liberties	<i>Virginia; Massachusetts; England; Philadelphia</i>	John Wise; Jonathan Mayhew; Benjamin Franklin; Adam Smith; Andrew Hamilton
5	1 Timothy 2:3–4	Principled Pluralism	The Declaration of Independence; The State Constitutions; The Articles of Confederation; The Constitution of 1878	<i>Massachusetts; Virginia; Spain; Mississippi River; Philadelphia</i>	Richard Henry Lee; Thomas Jefferson; George Washington; Benjamin Franklin; James Madison
6	1 Timothy 2:5–6	Principled Pluralism; Christian America	Government at the State Level; County Government; Municipal Governments; Other Local Governments; Putting the Government into Operation; Setting an Economic Course; Amendment 11; Federalism		Alexander Hamilton; George Washington
7	1 Peter 2:13–14	Christian America	Foreign Affairs; Washington’s Farewell Address; The Rise of Political Parties; American Ideology and Public Opinion; Political Parties	<i>France; Louisiana Purchase territory; Spain; Barbary Coast; Morocco; Algiers; Tunis; Tripoli; New Orleans; Kentucky; Virginia</i>	John Jay; Napoleon Bonaparte; George Washington; Thomas Jefferson; James Madison



**“American Government/Civics” —Scope and Sequence:  
Schedule for Topics and Skills (cont.)**

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Memory Work</b>	<b>Bible Reading</b>	<b>History/Social Studies</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Biography</b>
8	1 Peter 2:15–17	Christian America; National Confessionalism	The Jeffersonians; The Jacksonians; The Establishment of the Supreme Court; Jefferson’s First Inaugural	<i>South Carolina</i>	Thomas Jefferson; Andrew Jackson
9	Revelation 1:4b–5a	National Confessionalism	Major Decisions of Marshall Court; The Taney Court; Origins of the U.S. Supreme Court; The Justices; The Court at Work; The Chief Justice	<i>Kansas; Nebraska</i>	John Marshall; Roger Taney
10	Revelation 1:5b–6	National Confessionalism	The Court and the Other Branches; The Court and the Public; The Court and the World; Civil War and Reconstruction; Republicans in Power; Conduct of the War and Presidential Reconstruction; Congressional Reconstruction; Constitutional Reconstruction; Constitutional Restoration; Civil Rights; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>Fort Sumter; South Carolina; New Orleans; Mississippi</i>	Abraham Lincoln; Thaddeus Stevens; John Howard Griffin
11	Ecclesiastes 12:13–14	The Theonomic Major Response; The Principled Pluralist Major Response; The Christian America Major Response	American Government in the 20th Century Introduction; Cutting Away the Foundations; The Rise of Socialism; Major Reforms of Progressives; Amendments 16–19; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>United States; Europe; Russia; Mississippi; Mobile; Montgomery; Georgia</i>	Thomas Hobbes; Franklin D. Roosevelt; John Howard Griffin
12	Revelation 5:9–10	The National Confessional Major Response; A Summary of Arguments and Disagreements	Breaking the Constitutional Dam; Emergency Used to Justify Action; Overwhelming Congress; Bringing the Courts to Heel; Buying the People; Overwhelming the State Governments; Buying and Controlling the States; States Reduced to Minions by the Warren Court; Amendments 20–27; Economic Policy, Foreign Policy, and National Defense; American Political Culture; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>Atlanta; New Orleans; Mansfield</i>	Franklin D. Roosevelt; Earl Warren; John Howard Griffin
13	Colossians 2:8–9	Morality; Rationality; Family; Humanity	States Reduced to Minions by the Warren Court; Government out of Control; Fiscal Policy and Spending; The Policy-Making Process		George Marshall
14	1 Peter 5:6–7	His Wounds; His Compassion; His Kingdom	Fiscal Policy and Spending; Bureaucracy; Crime, Punishment, and Litigation; The Bureaucracy: A Government at Work		

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**“American Government/Civics” —Scope and Sequence:  
Schedule for Topics and Skills (cont.)**

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Memory Work</b>	<b>Bible Reading</b>	<b>History/Social Studies</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Biography</b>
15	1 Peter 5:8–9	His Truth; His Law; Evangelism	Campaigns and Elections; Political Participation and Voting; The Presidential Election Year: A Snapshot; The Primaries; The Conventions: Clinching the Nomination; The General Election; Election Day; Inauguration Day		
16	Galatians 6:7–8	Evangelism; The Holy Spirit; The Church	Social and Environmental Policies; Political Philosophies		
17	Galatians 6:9–10	Hope; The Corruption and the Culture of the Cross	How Laws Are Created; Welcome to Congress; The House of Representatives; Scoping Out the Senate; Introducing a Bill; Meeting the Players, Setting the Schedule		
18	Proverbs 29:2; 29:12	The Corruption and the Culture of the Cross; From Worldview Programs to Kingdom Movement; Transform America	Conclusion; Interest Groups; The Media; Reaching the Floor and Beyond; Raising Revenues; Budgeting, Authorizing, and Appropriating Government Money; Putting Your Political Contributions to Work; Looking at Lobbying; Explaining Your Cause; Lobbying Members of Congress; Congressional Staff; Making the Most of the Media; Working with Various Media		