

The Land of FAIR PLAY

Geoffrey Parsons

We the People

of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

Article

SECTION 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

SECTION 3. The Senate shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Electors in each State for six Years; but two Senators from each State shall not be chosen in the same Year.

SECTION 4. The Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

SECTION 5. The Senate shall be organized in each State in the same Manner as the Electors in that State are organized, and shall have the same Powers and Authority as the Electors in that State have.

SECTION 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive for their Services a Compensation, which shall be ascertained by Law.

SECTION 7. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and the Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law provide otherwise.

SECTION 8. The Congress shall have the following Powers: To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes; to borrow Money on the Credit of the United States, to emit and receive Notes, to regulate the Value of Money, the Weight and Measure, to fix the Standard of Weights and Measures, to coin Money, to regulate the Mint and the Coinage, to provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States, to regulate the Bankruptcy and Insolvency, to regulate the Naturalization and Immigration, to regulate the Trade and Commerce of the United States with foreign Nations, to regulate the Trade and Commerce of the United States with the Indian Tribes, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with foreign Nations, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Indian Tribes, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the States, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Territories, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the District of Columbia, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Possessions, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Dependencies, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Colonies, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Provinces, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Kingdoms, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Empires, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the States, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Territories, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the District of Columbia, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Possessions, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Dependencies, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Colonies, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Provinces, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Kingdoms, to regulate the Commerce and Fisheries with the Empires.

American Civics
from a Christian
Perspective

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George Washington read Thomas Paine's inspiring words to his weary men on Christmas Eve, 1776, just before the Battle of Trenton and the turning point of our War for Independence.

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be so highly rated.

Thomas Paine

Chapter 1

The Spirit of America

The Spirit of Fair Play—Every American boy and girl learns on the playground the true spirit of America, which is nothing else than fair play; fair play for everyone, big and little, neither bullies nor cheats allowed. You can sum up the whole object of American government by saying that it seeks to give every American—man or woman, boy or girl, rich or poor—an equal chance. Every boy and girl in America wishes to win, to succeed, to become great and famous. There is more ambition in America than any other country in the world. That is because every boy and girl has a better chance in America than in any other country in the world. Our country is far from perfect; we have our faults and injustices—as has every country. There are cheats and bullies in business as well as play. But we try to keep the game of life fair, and we have succeeded by God's grace in making America the land of opportunity.

The poorest child can become President. Ronald Reagan, who worked as a radio operator as a young man, lived to become a famous President. Every position, every success, stands open for each boy to try to win. Every girl can learn as much as she can and enter any business or work that appeals to her. Mr. Ray Kroc, who started out working as a soda fountain attendant in his uncle's drugstore in Chicago at the age of fourteen, eventually became the founder of the world-famous McDonald's restaurant chain. He is but one of hundreds of Americans who have won their way to the highest success because they had the freedom to pursue their dreams.

Now it is fair play, and only fair play, that makes this possible; that gives this chance to rich and poor alike. As in games, so in work we try our hardest to win, to succeed. But we play fair. We obey the rules. We give every boy and girl a fair start. We put bullies and cheats out of the game, and we aim to give everyone an equal chance to succeed. That is the spirit of America. No one is a true American who does not try to live up to this standard of fairness.

There is no room for king or noble or any favored class in this free country. Every American is as good as his brains and character and manners, and no better.

Five Reasons for America's Success*

Today in our affluent society, we are enjoying so much of the fruits of this great system of ours that most of us forget just how and why we have become so prosperous. How is it that four and a half percent of the world's population can produce almost one third of the world's wealth? How could the American people in the short span of eight generations have changed an undeveloped wilderness continent into the tremendously rich and powerful nation that we now take for granted?

First, our founding fathers wrote the Constitution, the greatest document to govern people that the world has even seen. Living and working under our Constitution with its Bill of Rights, Americans created the most successful major society in all human history—and they did it all without government aid.

* *Five Reasons for America's Success*, written by Walter Knot of Knott's Berry Farms.

The Land of Fair Play

It was built on these five principles:

1. We had a *belief in God*—and this religious background made us reliable and dependable with one another.
2. We had *limited government*—and this limited our national expenses and gave us surplus capital for tools and a good living standard.
3. We had *individual freedom*—every man could work at what he wanted.
4. We had *incentive*—which was simply the right to keep the fruits of our labor.
5. We had *competition*—the thing that makes businessman and employee alike serve his fellow man well.

Five Reasons for America's Success by Walter Knott of Knott's Berry Farms

The thinking of earlier leaders molded our American heritage. For example, Patrick Henry said, "If my family has freedom, and I have not given them one shilling, they would be rich. If they would not have freedom, and I have given them the whole world, they would be poor."

Thomas Jefferson put it more simply, "As government advances, freedom gives way." He was echoed much later by Woodrow Wilson—"Liberty has never come from government. The history of liberty is the history of limitation of governmental power, not the increase of it."

America became a place where the common man could be uncommon; where a man could become whatever his energy, his intellect, and his manhood could make him. This was the challenge, the hope, and the American heritage that touched and inspired hearts everywhere.

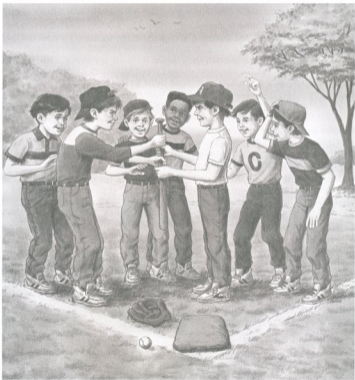
That freedom that our founding fathers gained for us is the cornerstone upon which this nation is built. We, in America, have been able to deliver in unbelievable abundance what Marxism, collectivism, socialism, and fascism can only promise. But freedom rests, and always will, on *individual responsibility, courage, and faith*. It was exactly these qualities that have made the United States the most prosperous nation the world has ever known.

For two centuries—due to the individual strength of each citizen—we have guarded and nurtured our hard-won freedom. Gradually, though, as we have become more prosperous, we have also become less willing to shoulder individual responsibilities. More and more, we have government do what the individual should do. Either we will again assume the responsibility required by freedom or that light will go out in America. And if it does, it will go out all over the world. If the wealth, luxury, and leisure that our system has brought us make us smug and complacent, willing to load our responsibilities on our government, we will lose—and deserve to lose—all these fruits of freedom.

American Civics from a Christian Perspective

Questions on the Text

1. What is the spirit of America?
2. What is the object of our government?
3. Why is there no nobility in America?
4. List five reasons why the United States is successful.



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Americans frequently do not understand the complex nature of the American system of government. Often, they simply look for help and guidance from Washington, D.C., in spite of the fact that the Framers of our Constitution purposefully established a mixed system of government. Few know that the Supreme Court itself stated approximately one hundred forty years ago that the "... Constitution, in all its provisions, looks to an indestructible Union, composed of indestructible States."

The Land of Fair Play can help educate young people in the true nature of our civil government. This U.S. civics text provides students with detailed information regarding how our local, state, and federal governments work. The primary purpose of the text is to give young people the knowledge they need to intelligently exercise their citizenship responsibilities.



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