

Christianity: Lifeblood of America's Free Society (1620-1945)

John A. Howard

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For many decades the teaching of American history has given ever-dwindling attention to the founding of our country and its phenomenally successful development. That failure to acquaint new generations with their proud heritage is appalling.

Their Christian faith dominated the lives of the Pilgrim settlers, and standards of Christian behavior continued to guide the living of the large majority of Americans who came after them.

The French political philosopher Charles Montesquieu, widely regarded as one of those towering thinkers of Western Civilization, published The Spirit of the Laws in 1748.He analyzed various forms of government. Some of the key concepts he set forth were incorporated in the U.S. Constitution. Montesquieu noted that each form of government has a different relationship with its people which enables it to have the people do what the government needs them to do to fulfill its purposes.

In a dictatorship the people do what they are told to do for fear of severe punishment if they disobey. Fear is the operating principle. In a republic, virtue is the operating principle. The people voluntarily abide by numerous standards of behavior: truthfulness, lawfulness, honesty, cooperation, patriotism, marital fidelity, and many, many more.

Civilized behavior does not come naturally to a human being. In ever nation each new generation has to be taught how to live in its own society. America was uniquely prepared to live in a free society because from its beginning the Christian standards of behavior met the virtue requirement until the middle of the Twentieth Century. As our country developed the civilized, cooperative, hard-working people in a relatively short period of time prospered greatly in every field of endeavor and became the wonder and envy of the world.

This book provides an overview of Christianity's powerful influence upon life in American until World War II.



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