Securing the Blessings of Liberty – An Examination of the United States Constitution.

Part 1

- The basis of the constitution is based in the principles of the declaration of independence.
- Not an ideological document, it is a practical one; about how the powers are divided etc.
- However we have to look about the historical things that occurred before the declaration, to the protestant reformation, Martian Lurther credited as the initiator of the reformation (95 criticism of the Pope and the Catholic church) and the founding of America. This sparked not just a religious change but also a political change in Europe as the catholic church had a lesser strangle hold over politics.
- John Calvin, one of the reformers, estimated 2/3 of American columnists had been instructed in Cavinism ideology. Doctrinarians such as elections and predestinations etc... Many historians recognize the influence he had over the development of the United States. J.H. Merie d’Aubigne “Calvin was the founder of the greatest of republics. The pilgrims who left their country in the reign of James 1st and landing on the barren soil of New England, founded populous and mighty colonies, were his sons, his direct legitimate sons; and that American nation that we have seen growing so rapidly boasts as its father the humble Reformer on the shore of Lake Leman.” – credits Calvin as the founder as the republic
- Calvinistic Doctrines that influenced America:
  1. The depravity of Man: Man was sinful and never to be trusted, therefore you need limits on man. especially if you were going to put them in government.
  2. Emphasis on Biblical Law: Human law had to be in accordance with biblical law (an idea of limited government, accountable to higher powers)
  3. Limited Government: a break from government that reigned supreme in Europe, Calvin was influential with the production of the notes of the Geneva Bible, the first study bible that was ever published, his notes angered James 1st in England especially the notes of Monarchy etc.. It is the bible that the Pilgrims would have brought to America.
- Lutz/Hyneman Study of American political writings form 1760-1805; they found that the majority was the bible, showing the significance of it. Then came Montesquieu (8.3%), Blackstone (7.9%), Locke (2.9%).
- Montesquieu wrote “The Spirit of Laws”. He distinguished four different forms of government, and that there were principles on which that formed each type of government.
  1. Monarchy; the guiding principle was Honour
  2. Aristocracy; the guiding principle was Moderation
  3. Republic; the guiding principle was Virtue
  4. Despotism; the guiding principle was Fear.