

December 8, 2023

Honoring God at the Capitol

The week starting December 2, 2023, began with the news of a disgusting display sitting in the State Capitol Building in Des Moines, a satanic altar placed there by the Iowa Satanic Temple. The outrage and disgust for this satanic display is widespread, but few people think there is much that can be legally done about it because of free speech and freedom of religion. However, I disagree.

The Iowa Constitution is the supreme law of the State of Iowa, and it establishes the legal foundation upon which all other state laws are built. The opening paragraph (Preamble) of the Iowa Constitution sets the tone for the rest of the Constitution, or we could say, it establishes a lens through which the rest of the document is viewed and interpreted. The Preamble to our Constitution says:

Preamble. WE THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF IOWA, grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of those blessings, do ordain and establish a free and independent government, by the name of the State of Iowa....,

According to these opening lines of our Constitution, the foundation for laws and continued blessing and success in Iowa is based on these points:

1. There is One Supreme God.
2. Blessings over this state come from the One Supreme God
3. We must depend upon the One Supreme God if we want to enjoy continued blessings.

It is a tortured and twisted interpretation of law that affords Satan, who is universally understood to be the enemy of God, religious expression equal to God in an institution of government that depends upon God for continued blessings. Such a legal view not only violates the very foundation of our State Constitution, but it offends the God upon whom we depend, and undermines our wellbeing.

If we claim to believe in the One Supreme Being, the God of all creation, we cannot claim an exemption from obedience to Him in things relating to civil government. In fact, if we claim Him as our God, then we as legislators and government officials are His ministers. As such we must submit to Him in government as much as any other area of life. Either He is God or He is not.

For those who wish to worship Satan, they are free to do so on their private property. But to allow satanic expression in the State Capitol and other public property is to surrender to Satan's demands for equality with God which was his original sin: "I will be like the Most High" (see Isaiah 14:14).

Therefore, based on the laws of God and the Constitution of the State of Iowa, and for the purpose of securing the blessings of God upon our state:

- I am calling for our governor to have this blasphemous display removed immediately based on the grounds that it is unconstitutional and offends God upon whom the State of Iowa depends for blessings.
- I am calling for clarifying legislation to be adopted in accordance with our State Constitution that prohibits satanic displays in our Capitol building and on all state owned property.

- I am calling for legislation to be adopted that makes it legal to display the Ten Commandments in our Capitol, in all buildings owned by the state, and in our public schools.

If we want the blessings of God upon our state, we must demonstrate by our laws and actions that we are indeed depending upon Him and that we are opposed to Satan. And during this Christmas season, let us remember this wonderful passage of Scripture and the promise of peace on earth:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: And the government shall be upon His shoulder: And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. — Isaiah 9:6

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Sherman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brad" being more prominent than the last name "Sherman".

Brad Sherman
Iowa State Representative for District 91

December 19, 2023

Reversing Slow Surrender Honoring God at the Capitol, Part II

On December 8, 2023, I sent out a letter about the Satanic Alter display in the Capitol Building in Des Moines. (That letter, Part I, is provided above). My comments were circulated by multiple media outlets and, based on the discussion it generated, I am writing this letter (Part II) as a follow-up to the previous letter.

In Part I, I made a case for why the satanic display did not belong in the State Capitol and called for the Governor to immediately remove it. I did so because the governor is the Chief Executive of our state, not because I blame her for it being there. The display was authorized by the Department of Administrative Services, who has an application process that is based on a policy of equal access. That policy is the result of a neutral mentality that exists across our nation which essentially grants Satan equal religious standing with Christ. This is what allowed the satanic display to be placed in the Capitol Building. Policies such as this are the result of gradual compromise that has taken place over many decades and this process of slow surrender is where the blame must be placed.

I had a strong positive response to what I wrote in the first letter, but of those who responded in opposition, there were two general categories. First, there was the angry/sarcastic category who just wanted to be rude and sling nasty names. Second were those who sought to make a sincere and intelligent response, most of which referred to free speech and freedom of religion in the First Amendment. It is this second category of opposition that I address here.

In Part I, I stated that it was a "... tortured and twisted interpretation of law [the First Amendment] that affords Satan, who is universally understood to be the enemy of God, religious expression equal to God in an institution of government..." To explain this, we must look back to the original intent of those who wrote the First Amendment which says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." The point I wish to make is that the religion spoken of in the First Amendment was Christianity and did not include what we think of as "other religions" today --- and it certainly did not include satanism! There are many comments by leaders in our history that back up this view, but for the sake of brevity, I will focus on one.

In 1853, there was an anti-God group who sought to have God removed from government much like we see being pushed today. They wanted references to God removed from government documents, sought to remove chaplains from the military, etc. Their vision was a religiously neutral Government. But the problem with their vision, and with those who espouse similar views today, is that neutrality is a myth, a point which will be addressed below.

The anti-God proposal was submitted in the U.S. Congress to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees for deliberation. They deliberated for several months and, in 1854, came back with the following report:

Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, but not any one sect ... In this age, there can be no substitute for Christianity ... That was the religion of the

founders of the republic, and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants.”

A paper by Harvard Law Review, published in December of 2021 corroborates the view expressed by the 1884 House and Senate Judiciary Committees. The paper points out how the modern idea that the First Amendment protects blasphemy was not always the case. In fact, it was only after World War II that Courts began to shift on this issue, previously upholding prosecution against blasphemy. Now, let's break the above quote down into three parts.

1. Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle.

If those who fought in the Revolution had not had the faith that comes from belief in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, we would not have a nation. The American Revolution was deeply rooted in Christianity, so much so that their battle cry was, “No King but Jesus!”

John Adams, our second President said: *“The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity... Now I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.”*

We must realize that there is a war against Christianity; it is a war waged by Satan, who opposes God and all He seeks to do in this world. This war existed long before the revolution, it existed in 1853 and it continues today.

2. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, but not any one sect ...

This portion of the quote speaks to the true interpretation of the First Amendment. Religion in early America was Christianity, but there were several different sects, or denominations. The Founders had experienced the tyranny of England, which embraced Christianity, but persecuted Christians who believed differently from the state church of England. The First Amendment was written to prevent Congress from establishing a favored version of Christianity (a state church) in America. The First Amendment strictly prohibits Congress from making any laws regulating worship, like had been done in England. That being said, Christianity in general was still recognized as the religion of the founders and the foundation of our freedom. Noah Webster, the father of American Education, said: “No truth is more evident to my mind than that the Christian religion must be the basis of any government intended to secure the rights and privileges of a free people.” [iv]

3. In this age, there can be no substitute for Christianity ... That was the religion of the founders of the republic, and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants.”

In this portion of the report, we see that the committees clearly viewed America as a nation founded upon Christianity. They did not think we could substitute other religions for Christianity, as we commonly see in modern interpretations of the First Amendment.

We also see their reference to “the republic.” A republic is essentially a form of government that means “ruled by laws”, and in a republic, elected representatives construct the laws and policies of the republic. But as we all know, there can be good laws and bad laws. What determines a good republic from a bad republic is the nature of its laws.

This brings us back to the comment above, “neutrality is a myth.” If we as Christians, embrace the idea of religious neutrality in government, we are creating a political vacuum. In such a case, it should be obvious what will happen next. Those who hold ungodly values will not embrace neutrality and they will push their views and push them hard while they continue to tell us to be neutral. They will demand that we keep our beliefs privately sequestered, while they fill the political vacuum with their own views that undermine our Constitution and violate the laws of God.

This is what has been going on in our nation since we allowed “religion” in the establishment clause of the First Amendment to apply to other religions besides Christianity. It has been a slow surrender, but this is exactly why a satanic alter was allowed in Iowa’s Capitol building. Our weakness and lack of true conviction has allowed public policy that claims Satan has equal status with God. If Christian values do not shape our laws and policies, which set of values will? Will it be Islam with Sharia Law? Will it be socialism and Marxism resulting in a communist police state void of freedom? Make no mistake, someone’s views and beliefs will shape public policy and those policies won’t be neutral.

The slow surrender by means of the neutral mentality has already resulted in Marxism and socialism infecting our nation. We have a decline in morals, renewed racism, open borders, loss of free speech and many other freedoms. Untold millions of babies have been slaughtered through “legalized” abortion. We have a decline in effective education with many of our schools becoming indoctrination centers. We have homosexual marriage, a plague of transgender ideology among our youth, and every kind of corruption. Our nation is on the brink of destruction.

I know that some will accuse me of advocating a theocracy or some kind of “Christian Dictatorship.” But I stand on the historical evidence that only true Christianity produces freedom, not an oppressive dictatorship. In fact, a legitimate kind of neutrality is inherent in true Christianity because it promotes free will and doesn’t force anyone to be a Christian. We must without apology stand for the Christian values that caused freedom to flourish in our nation.

When it comes to a satanic display in our state’s Capitol Building or any other policy that violates the laws of God, don’t tell me there is nothing we can do about it because of freedom of religion, free speech, and the First Amendment. Current interpretations of law might disagree, but they are wrong, and they can be changed. We must abandon the politics of surrender and re-establish the values of Christ in our republic. In this age, there can be no substitute for Christianity. If we claim the name of Christ, we must acknowledge that the laws of God supersede the laws of man and go about the work of making disciples of the nations as commanded by Jesus Himself saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...”

Wishing You a Very Merry Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Sherman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Brad Sherman
Iowa State Representative for District 91

February 12, 2024

Evil in the Capitol – Part III

An Update on Fighting Evil in the Capitol

Recap

December 3, 2023

News was breaking about a satanic altar that had been placed in the State Capitol building in Des Moines. Some of the first conversations centered around the current culture's understanding of freedom of speech and religious expression, and whether a response would just give undeserved attention to Satan. After prayerful thought, I decided two things. 1) Letting the display go unchallenged would amount to giving Satan equal religious standing with God, and 2) silence would only be tacit consent to the blasphemy that was being displayed in the Capitol.

December 8, 2023

English author Edward Bulwer-Lytton said in 1839, "The pen is mightier than the sword."

Therefore, I sent out my first letter (Part I) on this issue entitled Honoring God in the Capitol, calling for the removal of the alter and legislation to prevent it from happening again. The article garnered a significant level of attention and support.

December 19, 2023

On this date, the second letter on this issue (Part II), Reversing Slow Surrender, went out. Part II addressed some of the feedback from the first letter and primarily focused on the mentality of our founders showing that today's understanding of separation of church and state and freedom of religious expression is a "tortured and twisted interpretation of the First Amendment."

January 8, 2024

The 2024 Legislative session convened, and I began the task of crafting a bill to address the satanic display issue. How to address this issue legislatively was a challenge but after asking God for guidance, the bill took shape, and the rough text was submitted to the Legislative Services Agency who put it in the proper format.

February 5, 2024

I filed the bill in the House and Senator Sandy Salmon filed a companion bill in the Senate. At this point we are waiting for processing and committee assignments. I have included the full text of the draft below.

Wake-up Call

The satanic alter that was in the Capitol Building should be a wake-up call to all who name the name of Christ. But if anyone needs more awakening, the advertisement for "After School Satan Clubs" should provide a needed jolt. This ad (below) is for a Satan club in Moline is the same organization, The Satanic Temple, that placed the alter in the Iowa Capitol last December. According to Wikipedia, the Satanic Temple is pursuing these after school clubs in 9 other states as well as Washington, D.C.



A Normalization Campaign

The Satanic Temple claims to reject the idea that Satan is a spiritual or supernatural being but embraces Satan as a metaphorical symbol of the “eternal rebel” in opposition to what they would deem arbitrary authority or tyranny. They claim on their website that Satan is a symbol of an “unbowed will.” They also claim not to promote any religious ideology or seek to convert anyone to a religious belief, but their own statements perfectly describe the religion of humanism. Humanism is a term that can be defined as placing man’s will above God’s, and that is how Jesus Christ defined satanism.

When Jesus revealed to His disciples that it was the will of God for Him to be crucified, Peter disagreed and voiced his own will against the will of God saying, “*God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.*” This prompted a reply from Jesus which defines satanism. He turned and said to Peter, “*Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.*” (Matt 16:23)

From this, I conclude that “after school Satan clubs” are stumbling blocks to children. They are deceptive satanic grooming operations that are designed to normalize and legitimize the idea of Satan and open the door to deeper levels of satanism. Make no mistake, Satan is real, and he is coming after our children.

Bad Legal Precedent

Unfortunately, after school Satan clubs have recently been successful in court. In 2023, a Pennsylvania School was ordered by a federal court to allow The Satanic Temple to conduct an after school Satan club on its campus. But it wasn’t always this way. As mentioned in *Reversing Slow Surrender*, the courts commonly upheld laws prohibiting blasphemy against the Lord and Savior until the middle 1900’s. Even more recently, in 1977, Pennsylvania enacted a law banning the use of blasphemous language in business names and that law was upheld until 2010.

History makes it clear that our founders would not have stood for after school Satan clubs, nor would they have allowed a satanic alter to be erected in the Capitol building. They knew that the favor of God was necessary for a successful nation. Noah Webster, the father of American education said, *"No truth is more evident to my mind than that the Christian religion must be the basis of any government intending to secure the rights and privileges of a free people."* So, what has changed?

Paradigm Shift

In the last 50 years, our nation has experienced a paradigm shift that moved us away from our spiritual foundations. As a result of this shift, those who claim to be God's people have operated as if the public debate on religious matters was to be carried out from a position of neutrality and we should not seek to elevate the Christian religion above others, especially in a way that would influence public policy. In doing so, we have agreed with the pluralistic view that all religions are equal and have embraced the humanistic philosophy that the standard for truth is "what I choose to believe." We must remember that Jesus Christ said: *"I am the way, the truth and the life."* We don't get to define truth and neither does a lawyer wearing a black robe, God does.

Just as we have seen a paradigm shift away from our spiritual foundations, we will see a paradigm shift back to the godly foundations that produced the freedoms we have enjoyed. But we won't just wake up one morning to learn that a paradigm shift happened overnight, and everything is good. It will require a mighty outpouring of God's power to change the culture –and that will require unrelenting Holy Spirit led prayers, bold declarations in every sphere of society, and an unwavering stand in the face of evil.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this piece, I want to again clarify, as explained in previous articles, that true Christians do not advocate for a theocracy or any attempt to force others to accept Christianity. The inner conscience, a person's heart, cannot be changed through legislation or outward laws. God has given every human being the gift of free will and I will defend this freedom of conscience for all people. Though certain moral principles must be legislated and enforced to maintain an orderly society, the founders also gave us the 4th Amendment to protect privacy. One may have private thoughts or effects that go against man's law, but civil government is not to violate a person's privacy if no harm has been done to others or to society. We all need some space to search for truth.

Your Help Needed

There are hundreds of bills introduced in the state legislature and it is impossible for all of them to garner public attention. However, the importance of raising public awareness on this issue cannot be overstated. Regardless of what the courts might say on banning satanic practice on public property, those who name the name of Christ must engage this battle until Satan and satanism is pushed back into the shadows of shame and public rejection. Please let your legislators know through emails, calls, etc. that you support Representative Sherman's HF 2370, and its companion bill, Senator Salmon's SF 2210.

With best regards,



Brad Sherman
Iowa State Representative for District 91

January 9, 2024

Evil in the Land

The recent shooting at the school in Perry Iowa is heart-breaking. It is impossible to craft words sufficiently to convey the condolences and comfort that are needed by those touched by this tragic event. I can only attempt to do so by saying I am praying for God's comfort to rest on us all. At times like this, there is a tendency to point fingers and look for a place to assign blame. Doing so only pits us against one another and does nothing to address the real problem.

However, there actually is one who can be blamed, and that one is pointed out by Jesus Christ who said, "*The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy...*" This thief to whom Jesus refers, is the evil one known as Satan, or the devil. It is this devil who has sinned from the beginning, and he is the one who lies, deceives, and manipulates people into carrying out his evil deeds of stealing, killing, and destroying.

Jesus was sent to destroy the works of the devil, and He said, "the words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Thankfully, we have this powerful weapon, His word, to use against this spiritual enemy who seeks to kill and destroy.

I firmly believe that much of the evil we see in our culture would be averted if we honored God by displaying and speaking His words. Surely no harm can come from posting words like, "*Thou shalt not kill*" on the walls of our schools. But under a misguided interpretation of the First Amendment, and by misusing the phrase "separation of church and state," we have expelled God from our schools and evicted Him from many of our public institutions. We must work to restore the original meaning of religious freedom as understood by those who penned a timeless principle that is reflected in Iowa's Constitution:

"WE THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF IOWA, grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of those blessings..."

May we turn to God in this time of need and express our dependence upon Him.

With best regards,



Brad Sherman
Iowa State Representative for District 91