

## 7 Universal Principles for Discerning Inherent Human Rights

Based on the Bible, Judeo-Christian worldview, and evident in the Declaration of Independence.

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1. Establish the foundation for law and the rule of law in “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” (Declaration of Independence). Through the Declaration of Independence, for the second time in history (the prior was Israel’s exodus from Egypt), a people claimed their right to separate and govern themselves based on authority to do so given to them by God. That understanding came from “the Laws of Nature” (imputed into creation), “and of Nature’s God” (His Law written in the Bible). Both reveal that (1) God created man in a state of nature, pre-existing any form of civil government; and (2) that the universal Law of God therein is the only fixed and unchanging basis for forming laws and establishing the rule of law.

*Scriptures:* Exodus 20:1-17; Numbers 15:16; Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 16:17; Galatians 5:14.

2. Hold firmly to “self-evident” truths (Declaration of Independence), consistent with conscience. The concept of self-evident truths is found in the Bible: “[T]hat which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.” This includes by His “Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness” (Romans 1:19; 2:15).

3. Affirm that “all Men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence). All mankind “are created equal” because all are created by God, regardless of circumstances of conception, parents, color, nationality, or disability. Although He made a distinction in the roles of male and female, they have equal worth before Him (see “7 Truths about the Sanctity of Human Life”).

4. Declare that “unalienable Rights” are those “endowed by their Creator” (Declaration of Independence). This is the only basis for classifying any human rights as “endowed,” “inherent,” or “unalienable.” True unalienable human rights are given by God, not by man or government, and conform to the righteous and just Law of God, the moral law evident in our nature, and a rightly informed conscience. Immorality and abortion are sin, *not* human rights.

5. Declare “Life, Liberty,” and other God-given rights as “unalienable Rights” (Declaration of Independence). The first unalienable right is the right to life, because life is a gift from the Creator, and without life, all other human rights are meaningless. The second right is liberty, because God created mankind to be free but accountable directly to Him. The third right is “the Pursuit of Happiness,” which means full freedom to pursue a right and happy (blessed) relationship with God and people, but does not include immorality or moral wrongs. *Scriptures:* Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-24; 3:1-24; 4:1-2, 25; Matthew 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 7:1-4; Hebrews 13:4.

6. Establish a government that will “secure these Rights.” “(T)o secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men” (Declaration of Independence). Thus, a foremost duty of civil government is to protect its people by securing the rights given to them by God.

7. Ensure government “by the Consent of the Governed” (Declaration of Independence). The authority to establish a government to protect the lives, liberties, property, land, and nation of a people comes from God through the consent of the people. *Scriptures:* Exodus 18:13-26; Numbers 1:1-16; Deuteronomy 1:13-17; 16:16-20; 1 Samuel 2:4; 5:1-4; 1 Kings 12:1-20.

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