

HUMAN RIGHTS: RIGHTLY BUILT UPON BIBLICAL TRUTH

I. The Word of God – universal, unchanging, Law of God (foundation for lawful law):

True inalienable human rights are gifts from God, which cannot be rightly taken except by due process of law. Life is the first and foremost inalienable human right, and second is liberty.

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27; see Genesis 5:1-2; Ecclesiastes 11:5; Isaiah 29:16; 45:9).

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Cor. 3:17).

II. Clergy & the Church as “the pillar and support of the truth” (I Timothy 3:15):

“(L)iberty, traced to her true source, is of heavenly extraction, that divine virtue is her illustrious parent, that from eternity to eternity they have been and must be inseparable companions . . . that when man lost his virtue, he lost his liberty too.” – Rev. Jacob Duché, Philadelphia, July 7, 1775

“(I)t is part of the work and business of a gospel minister to teach his hearers the duty they owe to magistrates. Let us, then, endeavor to explain the nature of their duty faithfully, and show them the difference between liberty and licentiousness; and, while we are animating them to oppose tyranny and arbitrary power, let us inculcate upon them the duty of yielding due obedience to lawful authority. In order to the right and faithful discharge of this part of our ministry, it is necessary that we should thoroughly study the law of nature, the rights of mankind, and the reciprocal duties of governors and governed. By this means we shall be able to guard them against the extremes of slavish submission to tyrants on one hand, and of sedition and licentiousness on the other.”

– Rev. Samuel West, sermon before the public officials of Massachusetts, May 29, 1776

III. Government Leaders Standing for True Human Rights:

“Let it be known that British liberties are not the grants of princes and parliaments, but original rights . . . that many of our rights are inherent and essential . . . before a parliament existed.”

– John Adams, “Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law,” 1765 (later 2nd President of U.S.)

“The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time: the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them.” – Thomas Jefferson, Esq., Member, Virginia House of Burgesses,

“A Summary View of the Rights of British America,” August 1774 (later 3rd President of U.S.)

“If ‘all men are by nature equally free and independent’ [Virginia Declaration of Rights, 1776], all men are to be considered as entering into Society on equal conditions; as relinquishing no more, and therefore retaining no less, one than another, of their natural rights.” – James Madison, Esq.,

Member of Continental Congress, “Memorial & Remonstrance,” 1785 (later 4th Pres. of U.S.)

IV. Charters, Constitution of Uganda, & International Policy:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” – 1776 United States Declaration of Independence

“No person shall be deprived of life intentionally except . . . No person has the right to terminate the life of an unborn child except . . .” – Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Article 22

“No person shall be deprived of personal liberty except . . .” – Constitution of Uganda, Article 23

“Every individual shall have the right to liberty and to security of person.”

– African (Banjul) Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights, Article 6

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person” – UDHR, Article 3