

“The Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God”

“True law is right reason, consonant with nature, spread through all the people. It is constant and eternal; it summons to duty by its orders, it deters from crime by its prohibitions...[I]t cannot be totally repealed. We cannot be released from this law by the senate or the people...but all nations at all times will be bound by this one eternal and unchangeable law, and the god...is the author, expounder, and mover of this law.” –Marcus Tullius Cicero, 1st cent. B.C. Roman orator and statesman, “On the Commonwealth”



The Founders of this country, in 1776, claimed entitlement to the rights set forth in the Declaration of Independence on the basis of natural law.

In the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson eloquently and purposefully defined natural law, using the phrase “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God”. Jefferson and many of the other Founders were familiar with the understanding of natural law, truth, and virtue, as expressed in the writings of Cicero and other theologians, philosophers and statesmen of past centuries, ancient and more recent, such as Aristotle, Aquinas, and John Locke. The ultimate source of natural law was understood to be a Supreme Being, a Creator, Who had established a discernible order in the universe, and laws existing outside of the realm of the laws made by men.

Unlike those who hold to the faulty post-modern philosophies and teachings of our current age of relativism, Jefferson and most of the Founders were well-read, capable of sound reasoning, and intelligent enough to perceive the existence of universal truths, among which were the rights common to all human beings – the natural rights inherent in natural law. The fundamental, pre-existing “unalienable Rights” with which all humans have been, in Jefferson’s words, “endowed by their Creator”, not by their government, and which “Governments are instituted among Men” to secure, can be accepted as true because of the obvious truth of natural law.

Former U.S. Republican Senator Jim DeMint wrote an article titled “You Have No Rights without Natural Law”, which appeared in *The Federalist*, July 15, 2016. In it he explained how important maintaining a traditional, foundational understanding of natural law and truth are to the preservation of our cherished rights as Americans. Portions of the article were quoted by Steve Lawrence of the Heritage Foundation on the my Heritage website, July 22, 2016:

“Today we’re seeing the consequences of a political left that has rejected the concept of natural law because it points to uncomfortable truths regarding sexuality, marriage, human nature, and a higher purpose. But when we reject the very foundation of our unalienable rights, those rights become arbitrary things granted by government, and very alienable indeed.

“If there is no natural law, then people were not created equal, nothing is self-evident, there are no unalienable rights, and governments are not instituted to protect rights: they exist to prescribe them. If there is no natural law, there is no common sense – no commonly understood truth.”

The rejection of the existence of truth, and of “which, in America today, is so prevalent in most educational institutions, popular culture, and even some parts of our government, is a dangerous rejection of the natural rights which should belong to all of humankind, and it is positively –unnatural!

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