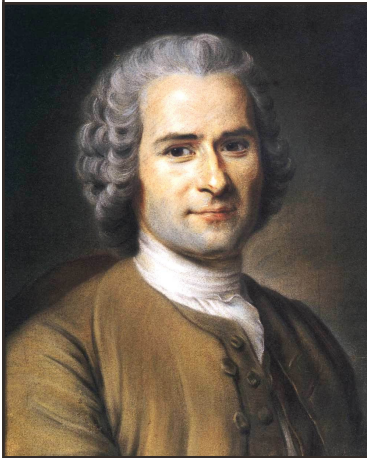


Bishop Charles B. Galloway

“That which powerfully affects the inner life must necessarily determine the outer form of society. A man’s thinking in the political field is determined by his convictions in the spiritual field.”

Excerpts from a series of lectures that Bishop Galloway presented at Emory College in 1898.

All excerpts and much more are included in an excellent book entitled, *Christianity and the American Commonwealth*.



Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau

“Never was a State found that did not have religion for its basis.”

Nations Are a Reflection of Their Religion

Orthopraxy is determined by orthodoxy. This principle is easily understood in theological circles. In layman’s words, *actions are determined by beliefs*. This principle is certainly true for individuals, but it also applies to civilizations. At the heart of a nation’s laws and governments are the answers to two questions – who is God and who is man? In its response to these two inquiries, a nation will inevitably determine its course and character.

Perhaps no one has done more writing or speaking on this subject than Bishop Charles B. Galloway (1849-1909). Galloway was a spirited Methodist preacher, who at the age of 36, became the youngest man ever elected a bishop in American Methodism. As a result of his numerous missionary travels to the Orient and South America, he had extensive contact with other cultures and their worldviews. He saw the effects of false religions on whole civilizations. In his lectures at Emory College (Oxford, Georgia), in 1898, he shared these observations:

“The governments and civilizations of all people are determined by the character of their religion. A man’s thinking in the political field is determined by his convictions in the spiritual field. Out of religious doctrines are developed political principles; and, therefore, the purer the religion, the broader a nation’s constitution and the wiser its civil polity (laws).

“From history, we learn that the great function of religion has been the founding and sustaining of states. All the civil institutions of the ancient world were the outgrowth of religious beliefs. Nations

were governed as the gods directed. Heathen and Christian alike, in all ages of the world, have regarded religion as the basis of civilization. All history attests to the fact that religion is not only a helpful influence, but that it is the most potential factor in a nation’s life. That which so powerfully affects the inner life must necessarily determine the outer form of society. The deepest and mightiest thing in any nation’s heart is its religion; therefore, *as is the religion, so is the nation*.

“For example, Buddha hated life and preached a gospel of annihilation. His aim was to make men know their misery; his hopeless end was a state of non-existence. To Buddha, the highest life was in seclusion, to renounce the duties of home, society, and state. Out of this religion of despair, this petrified pessimism, what may we expect but a man of demoralized spirit, without purpose, ambition, daring enterprise, or aggressive courage? The legitimate and necessary product of the Buddhist creed is a *paralyzed people*.

“Then, there is Confucius, who taught that religion was reflection. He opposed progress, abhorring anything new. He taught nothing with regard to man’s relation to God. The cardinal doctrine of his creed was the worship of dead ancestors. From such lifeless, spiritless philosophy, we can only expect an *impoverished people*. These thoughts sterilized whole nations and reduced them into playthings or spoil for other governments.

“The combined influence of Buddhism and Confucianism produced the civilization of China, a land of heavy slumber

Nations Are a *Reflection* of Their *Religion*

HISTORIC METHODS OF NATION-MAKING

John Fiske, 1889

“The Beginnings of New England”

Oriental Method

Conquest without incorporation

Roman Method

Conquest with incorporation but without representation

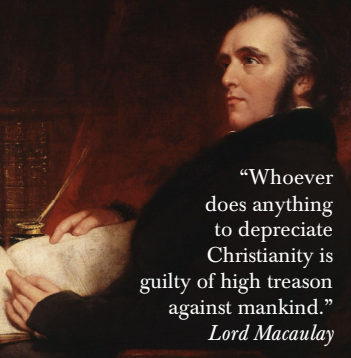
English Method

No conquest, but incorporation with representation

In the **Oriental** method, one sees little to commend. Conquering tribes annexed their neighbors and enslaved them. Yet, it was better than savagery, and for a long time, no more efficient method was possible.

The secret of the **Roman** method was that it incorporated the vanquished peoples into its [culture]. Never before had so many been brought under one government without enslaving them. Tribes were transformed into Roman citizens. Nevertheless, this method had a fatal shortcoming – it sacrificed liberty to union and lacked the principle of representation.

The **English** method contains the principle of representation yet does not require conquest to be put into operation. What changed the methods? Learning from history’s failures and the influence of Christianity?



“Whoever does anything to depreciate Christianity is guilty of high treason against mankind.”

Lord Macaulay

and darkness. China sits forever by the grave. Her only ambition is to emulate the dead; her holiest worship is to dwell among the tombs. No wonder the whole nation is stationary. There is no future. China is a giant with immense capabilities but with a paralyzed personality.

“What about Hinduism? Its distinguishing feature is the caste (class) system [you are what you are in life; you will never be more], which suppresses the development of individual independence and character. Hinduism produces a society of *degraded people*. Under this system, there can be no social unity, no patriotic spirit, and no cohesive power. In addition to the caste, the hideous idolatry of Hinduism only produces a *debased people*. No man can rise higher than the gods he worships. Debased idols make for debased followers.

“Consider Islam. Its Koran demands intellectual slavery. Its laws demand the slavery of women. Its state enforces religious and civil slavery. The citizen is a slave to the State; he has no rights to be respected. Thus, Islam has produced an *enslaved people*. The Koran puts a premium on war, offering the highest rewards to those who slay the greatest number of infidels. Mohammad’s cardinal principle was that the end justified the means. Mohammad is an absolute [tyrant], a gigantic engine of intolerance and persecution in the world.

“Contrast these religions with Christianity. The dignity and individuality of man, with personal, inalienable rights, and entitled to freedom is the exclusive legacy of Christianity. In no land, untouched by the Christian religion, has such a conception ever been obtained. The doctrine of equality falls on the premise that every human has intrinsic value. Thus, Christianity humanizes, equalizes, and liberalizes! Other religions have their merits, but none of them has rendered this service to mankind.

“Thus, civilizations differ as their religions differ. The governments of all non-Christian countries are tyrannical. It is a logical and spiritual necessity. Without spiritual liberty there can be no civil liberty. Only in Christian nations do we find free, representative governments. Monarchies give way to republics and royal decrees to constitutions. The fable of divine right of kings surrenders to the sovereignty of the people and the rule of law.”

So then, why is the United States of America set apart from the nations of world history? Is it our natural or human resources; no, other nations have bountiful resources, even more than we do. Look to the religion upon which it was founded. The religion of Christ is vastly different, with obvious, remarkable results (because it is the one true religion). Why, then, would anyone marvel at what it produced in our country? *As is the religion, so is the nation.*

“However, with the growth of a materialistic spirit, which invades every department of American life, we are threatened with an undervaluing or ignoring of the great moral and spiritual forces that constructed the framework of this mighty nation. If we eliminate from our national history the direct influence of the Christian religion, we have nothing left but a set of disjointed facts without significance, dry and dreary annals without parentage or posterity. A nation without Christ is a nation without a conscience; and, a nation without a conscience knows no rule of right but might, perverts law into license, and makes authority the bitter synonym of cruel tyranny.”

We must not neglect or undermine the religion of our construction, or we shall effectively initiate the deconstruction of all that remains and witness, as do pagan nations, the heavy hand of slavery.