

LIBERTY PYRAMID DISCUSSION GUIDE

Aaron Ferguson, 2021

Foreword (p.9) – “Liberty Leaders”

Our Future Depends on You

1. The key verses for *The Liberty Pyramid* are mentioned in the opening pages of the book (p.3) – *2 Corinthians 3:16, 17*.
“Whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away... Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

Knowing the context of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, what did he mean when he said, “The veil is taken away”? How do his words apply to the subject of liberty?

2. Liberty can’t last forever. Why not? (p.9)
3. What is necessary to sustain liberty? (p.9)
4. How would you describe or define a Liberty Leader? (p.10)
5. Should we care about preserving liberty? Why or why not?

Prologue (p.11) – “The Founders’ Framework”

A Quick Look at the Levels

1. Explain the subtitle, “The Founders’ Framework.” Framework for what? (p.11)
2. Why is a pyramid a good illustration for the Founders’ framework? (p.11)
3. Why are the level numbers reversed, with the first level at the bottom? (p.11)
4. The illustration and the brief summaries of the levels (p.11, 12) will help you to understand and explain the Liberty Pyramid. Can you do it even before reading the book?

LEVEL 6 – LIBERTY

Chapter 1 (p.15) – “The Mystery of History”

The Elusiveness of Liberty

Tyranny has been the norm of history, liberty the exception.

1. Why has liberty eluded mankind throughout history? Why has tyranny been the norm? (p.15)
2. Why does pure democracy fail to produce the liberty that mankind desires? If democracy fails, then why do people clamor for democracy today?(p.16)
3. “External bondage to rulers is a symptom of internal bondage to sin.” Explain. (p.17)
4. What are the exceptions of history? Where else has liberty surfaced? Why there? (p.17)
5. Is Liberty still a welcomed guest in our country? Explain your answer. (p.18)

Chapter 2 (p.19) – “Language of Liberty”

The Distinction Between Liberty and License

Liberty is the power to act as one thinks fit within God’s boundaries.

1. What are some reasons to use Noah Webster’s *1828 Dictionary*? (p.19)
2. What does it mean that liberty is both internal and external? Define the law(s) of nature (p.20)
3. What is the difference between liberty and freedom or license? Which one is our cultural seeking today – liberty or license? How can you tell? (p.21)
4. Where license exists, liberty cannot. Explain. (p.21)
5. Define spiritual liberty and civil liberty. (p.22)

Chapter 3 (p.23) – “The Source of Liberty”

Where Does Liberty Originate?

Liberty was God’s idea.

1. Over the years, people have suggested different sources or origins of liberty. Does knowing the origin of liberty really matter? Why or why not? What are the consequences of each view? (p.23)
2. Why is *Genesis 1:1* so important, even more important than *John 3:16*? (p.24)
3. List the many benefits of a culture that honors the *imago Dei* concept. (p.25, 26)
4. Rejecting the truth of *imago Dei* would be like Pandora’s Box. How so? (p.25, 26)
5. If the concept of *imago Dei* is so important, then why is our society so opposed to it?

Chapter 4 (p.27) – “The Liberty Man”

God’s Liberation of Men and Nations

Jesus is the hero of the story of liberty.

1. In their liberty, Adam and Even brought about liberty’s demise. What does this mean? How was liberty affected (p.27, 28)
2. Should God have given mankind liberty if He knew that they would rebel against Him? What would’ve been the alternative?
3. Summarize the history of mankind by telling the story of liberty.
4. Why should Jesus be called “the Liberty Man”? (p.29)
5. Kathy Dang said, “The spiritual liberty of the individual is the foundation upon which free nations are built” (p.30). How is this truth clarified in the pyramid? (p.11)

Chapter 5 (p.31) – “The Rest of the Story”

America’s Role in the Story of Liberty

America has a unique role in the Story of Liberty.

1. God has a purpose for all nations, even ours. What is America’s gospel purpose? (p.31)
2. In the story of liberty, there are two liberties – internal and external. Which one did God restore at the cross? Why that one? (p.32)
3. “Outside of Christ, no other factor propelled the progress of liberty faster than the mass production and distribution of the Scriptures” (p.33). Why? What was it about the Bible that propelled the progress of liberty?
4. What does it mean that “the United States became the fullest expression of a Christian civilization”? (p.34) Other nations have the Gospel. Why haven’t they experienced the same degree of liberty as Americans have?
5. The U.S. had the advantage over Israel because it existed after Christ. Why would existing after Christ give our nation (or any nation) the advantage over the Jews?

LEVEL 5 – RULE OF LAW

Chapter 6 (p.37) – “Liberty and Law”

A Curious Connection

Liberty cannot exist apart from law.

1. Where license exists, liberty cannot. Explain. (p.37)
2. A society must strike a balance between law and liberty. Why? (p.38)
3. The coming of Christ radically changed how nations were made. How so? (p.39)
4. Define the law of liberty. What is it and how does it work? (p.39)
5. Without Christ, genuine liberty is impossible. True or false? Explain. (p.40)

Chapter 7 (p.41) – “The Laws of Nature”

The Origin of Law and Government

Creation is guided by the will of the Creator – the Laws of Nature.

1. What does it mean that government is all around us? (p.41)
2. Define government. Summarize each of the four functions of government. (p.41)
3. Apply the four functions of government to the home, school, church, and job. (p.41) Where do we see the four functions of government in the Garden of Eden?
4. What are the Laws of Nature? How do these laws reflect nature’s God? (p.42-44)
5. Define the conscience. What is its purpose? How can the conscience be used to prove the existence of God? (p.43, 44)

Chapter 8 (p.45) – “Spheres of Government”

Government Through Teamwork

God established spheres of government with responsibilities and limits.

1. What is the relationship between internal and external government? (p.45)
2. What are the four spheres of government, and how do they work together for the good of society? (p.45, 46)
3. What is delegated authority? Explain why delegated authority is naturally limited and accountable. (p.46, 47)
4. Explain jurisdiction (p.47). Which sphere should manage these issues – education, homelessness, fixing the street, health care, crime, marriage, job creation?
5. One sphere should not neglect, interfere with, or surrender responsibilities. What does this mean? (p.47) Provide examples of each case.
6. Which sphere tends to expand and control the other spheres? Explain why. (p.48)

Chapter 9 (p.49) – “The Rule of Law”

A Republican Form of Government

A free society must demand the rule of law but defeat Ruler’s Law.

1. Civil government is necessary, but it must be limited by law. Explain. (p.50)
2. Define the concept of Ruler’s Law. Why is it a dangerous idea? (p.51)
3. What is a republic? Why is a republic the freest and fairest form of government? (p.51, 52)
4. Explain what William Blackstone meant when he said, “No human laws are of any validity if contrary to the Laws of Nature.” (p.52)
5. Take a minute to quote the Pledge of Allegiance. What form of government was established by our Founders? Why, then, do most Americans today call the U.S. a democracy? What dangers are lurking behind this subtle shift?

Chapter 10 (p.53) – “Rules for Rulers”

The Necessity of a Constitution

Even governments need governing.

1. “All people are intrinsically good.” How did this philosophy backfire on the people of France? (p.53) How do we see this idea proven wrong every day? How does the world defend this philosophy today?
2. What is a constitution? (p.54)
3. Where do we see direction, regulation, control, and restraint exercised in the U.S. Constitution? (p.55, 56)
4. Elections are important as they imply accountability. Explain. (p.56)
5. If the Constitution was established for our good – “to secure the blessings of liberty” – then why is there such disdain for it today? Does the Constitution need to be removed, rejected, or rewritten? Explain.

LEVEL 4 – SELF-GOVERNMENT

Chapter 11 (p.59) – “Power Within or Without” *Individual Self-Government*

A free society can only endure if individuals govern themselves.

1. Explain Benjamin Franklin’s comment, when asked what form of government the Founders had given us, “A republic, if you can keep it.” (p.60) What did he mean?

In your opinion, how have Americans done with “keeping the republic”?
2. According to Robert Winthrop, people will either be “controlled by the Bible or the bayonet.” How have we seen this truth unfold in our society today? (p.60)
3. God’s people in ancient Israel had a chance to govern themselves and failed. Why? (p.61)
4. All the external spheres of government -- home, church, and civil – rely solely on the internal sphere of self-rule. Explain. (p.62)

Chapter 12 (p.63) – “Christian Self-Gov’t” *Christianity’s Unique Contribution*

True self-government cannot be achieved apart from salvation in Christ.

1. How many police officers does a community need? (p.63)
2. If society depends on self-governed individuals, then what is necessary for individuals to govern themselves? (p.64)
3. What is the difference between pagan and Christian self-government? Why does pagan self-government fail to produce liberty? (p.65)
4. “God knew that man had a problem, so He put the solution where the problem is – inside of him.” Explain. (p.65)
5. If Christian self-government is necessary for liberty to last in a society, then what is necessary to promote Christian self-government?

Chapter 13 (p.67) – “From Inside Out” *The Internal Transformation of the Gospel*

Liberty in the public sphere begins with liberty in the private sphere.

1. Man is a three-part being. What are the three parts and how do they relate to each other? (p.68, 69)
2. Explain Paul’s statement in *Galatians 5:16*, “Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.” How does this truth relate to individual self-government and the perpetuation of liberty? (p.69)
3. The Gospel of Christ within the individual is the greatest change agent in history. If that is true, then how important is the local church? What should the local church be doing? (p.70)
4. What are ways that churches get derailed or distracted from their purpose?
5. How does the world suggest changing or “improving” society? Does its ideas work? Why or why not?

LEVEL 3 – ENLIGHTENED CITIZENRY

Chapter 14 (p.73) – “A Necessary Support” *Education for Individual Self-Government*

Self-government is learned.

1. Self-government is learned. Explain. (p.74)
2. Review Webster’s four purposes of education. Which one of the four receives most attention? Which one is most neglected? (p.74)
3. Why are ignorant citizens incapable of sustaining their liberty? (p.75)
4. What’s the danger of a society raising consumers rather than producers? (p.75) What evidence is there that we are a nation of consumers today?
5. How does a society produce producers?
6. “Knowledge preserves the life of its possessor...” (*Eccl. 7:12*). Explain. (p.76)

Chapter 15 (p.77) – “No Place Like Home”

A Child's First Authorities and Educators

Parents are responsible for the education of their children.

1. The process of learning to govern oneself is first external before it is internal. Explain. Doesn't this statement contradict what has been said earlier, that government is internal before it is external? (p.77)
2. If parents are the primary educators of their children, then what is the role of the school and church? (p.79)
3. All three institutions – home, school, and church – should be in alignment. Explain. (p.79)
4. Why are Christian parents so readily willing to consent to public education, even when it clearly contradicts biblical teaching? (p.80)
5. Is it possible for a child of Christian parents to survive secular public education and not be molded into its image? Why or why not?
6. Does enrolling a child in a Christian school ensure a Christian education? In other words, can the parents “relax” or let down their guard because their child is in a Christian school? Why or why not?

Chapter 16 (p.81) – “An Enlightened Citizenry”

Safeguard of Liberty

Ignorant people are easily manipulated.

1. Define ignorance. Why is ignorance so dangerous to a free society?
2. Are Americans today ignorant or enlightened? How can we tell?
3. On average, the U.S. spends \$750 billion a year in public schools, \$13,000 per student. Obviously, education is a priority in America. What has been the result?
4. If ignorance is the problem, then what is the solution? What part can you play?

Chapter 17 (p.85) – “Diesel Fuel Only”

Sustaining the American Christian Republic

Every form of government needs a form of education to sustain it.

1. Every form of government needs a form of education to sustain it. Restate this truth in your own words. (p.85)
2. Explain the illustration of the breakdown of a bus. What is the connection to education? (p.87)
3. In what ways should American schools be different than the schools of other countries? Aren't academic subjects the same no matter where they're taught?
4. B.F. Morris said, “The State must have religion as a support for its authority.” Therefore, “some means for teaching religion must be employed.” (p.88) Is this true in today? Is religion still being taught in our public schools? Explain.
5. Predict the future of the American republic if our government-run schools do not change course. What suggestions do you have to alter this outcome?

Chapter 18 (p.89) – “Elements of Education”

A Snapshot of Early America

Since the republic is dependent on the people, then the people must be enlightened.

1. Alexis de Tocqueville provided a snapshot of early American education, which included religion, history, the Constitution, and morality. (p.89) Are these elements still present in our schools today?
2. Education cannot be religiously or morally neutral. Explain this statement. (p.90, 91)
3. Define a providential view of history. Why is this view necessary for the survival of the republic and our liberty? (p.90)
4. If our enemies have transformed American schools and they are indoctrinating our children with ideas and philosophies antithetical to our founding, what assumptions can be made?

LEVEL 2 – VIRTUOUS / MORAL CHARACTER

Chapter 19 (p.95) – “The Necessity of Virtue” *The Restraining Presence of Morality*

Only if a society holds to a system of morality can free people survive.

1. According to John Adams, “Happiness [in society] can never be found without virtue.” Why not? (p.96)
2. According to Samuel Adams, “Virtue is the surest means of securing the public safety.” Explain why. (p.97)
3. Noah Webster said, “Society requires that the education of youth should be watched with the most scrupulous attention.” Evaluate our society regarding this claim. How have Americans done? (p.98)
4. Explain Benjamin Rush’s statement, “It is much easier to establish an effectual system of preserving morals than to correct by penal statutes the ill effects of a bad system.” (p.98)
5. Predict the future of the United States if citizens continue to become less virtuous. (p.97)

Chapter 20 (p.99) – “A Free or Fettered Life?” *The Results of Reason and Revelation*

Without virtue, the whole experiment of self-government unravels.

1. Without virtue, the whole experiment of self-government unravels. Explain. (p.100)
2. One of the primary goals of the education system is to produce virtuous citizens who are capable of managing their freedom well. What grade would you give our government-run school system in this area? Explain why. (p.100)
3. What is the connection between reason and revelation? (p.101)
4. Can our current public school system produce the kind of citizen necessary to preserve liberty? Why or why not?

Chapter 21 (p.103) – “Common Morality” *The Danger of a World with No Rules*

It is common sense for societies to adhere to a common morality.

1. Postmodernists believe that anything goes. Nothing is wrong, deviant, or evil. There are no rules. What can be expected from a society that holds that view? (p.104, 105)
2. Today’s tolerance movement is ironically intolerant. Explain. (p.105)
3. What are the benefits of societies or nations holding to a common morality, a common law? (p.106)
4. Should standards of morality ever be allowed to change?

Chapter 22 (p.107) – “The Hidden Truth” *The Nation’s Contempt for Christianity*

The best system of morality is no longer an option in America’s secular society.

1. Have you ever had a conversation with someone like Andy, someone who is intelligent but believes and says foolish things? Why is it that so many intellectuals buy into such absurd ideas? (p.107, 108)
2. Why do so many people suppress the knowledge of God? If His views and values have proven to be so successful, then why reject or abandon them? (p.109)
3. Explain Solomon’s statement in *Proverbs 14:12*, “There is a way that seems right a man, but it only leads to death” (p.109).
4. A nation’s stability is linked to its morality. Predict the future of our country if we completely abandon God and His values. (p.109, 110)
5. What should Christians do in a nation that is turning away from God?

Chapter 23 (p.111) – “The Moral Law”

A Look at the Ten Commandments

A nation built on the Moral Law would be a role model for others.

1. Why are the Ten Commandments sometimes called the Moral Law? (p.112)
2. Why are the Ten Commandments the best moral system for societies to use? (p.112-114)
3. Recount the benefits of a society following the Ten Commandments. (p.112, 113)
4. Is a nation that promotes the Ten Commandments as its moral code forcing religion on its people or preferring one religion over another? Why or why not?
5. Is it right for the U.S. to abandon the Ten Commandments to honor the separation of church and state? Why or why not?

LEVEL 1 – RELIGION / CHRISTIANITY

Chapter 24 (p.117) – “Indispensable Element”

Religion – the Foundation of Liberty

Religion is the driving force behind nations and governments.

1. Can a nation be religiously neutral? Why or why not? (p.117)
2. Nations reflect the worldview of their citizens. Explain. (p.118)
3. Explain Galloway’s assertion, “As is the religion, so is the nation.” (p.119)
4. Today we are told that religion and politics can have nothing to do with each other, yet Alexis de Tocqueville said of America, “Religion must be regarded as the foremost of its political institutions.” Why the discrepancy? Which view is correct?
5. If Galloway is correct, that behind every nation is a religion, then what religion influenced the United States at its founding? How do we know? What religion is influencing America today? How do we know?

Chapter 25 (p.121) – “Champion of Liberty”

The Liberating Force of Christianity

Christianity is the unprecedented and the undisputed champion of liberty.

1. Explain Charles Galloway’s statement, “Every religion must be measured by the man it produces.” (p.121)
2. Review the products or personalities of each major religion – Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and atheism or humanism. (p.121-123)
3. What did Galloway mean when he said, “Christianity had a three-fold influence on men – it humanizes, liberalizes, and equalizes them”? (p.123)
4. What is it exactly about Christianity that produces “dignified, free-loving, and equal people”? (p.124)
5. The detractors of Christianity always point to the Crusades, to the European or American slave trade, or to the abuse of the natives or other countries as evidence that Christianity is no different than other religions, when it comes to producing exemplary civilizations. How would you respond?

Chapter 26 (p.125) – “Liberty Goes West”

The Chain of Christianity

Where Christianity goes, liberty soon follows.

1. John Quincy Adams connected America to Christ, insinuating that the United States would not exist in its present form without Christianity. Explain. (p.125)
2. Adams also described history as a chain with links. Why is that a biblical view of history, and what are the implications of such a view? (p.125)
3. History is about the Gospel of Christ, not America. Why is it important to be reminded regularly of this truth? (p.126)
4. In what ways has God used the United States to aid in “the Gospel dispensation”? (p.126)

Chapter 27 (p.129) – “Christianity Works”

The Benefits of Christianity in Nation-Making

Anyone who hinders Christianity is jeopardizing the foundation of his liberty.

1. Review the ten benefits of the Christian worldview. Which one stands out to you? Which ones are under attack today? What does that tell you about the opposition?
2. What would America be like if it were founded on a secular worldview, without the God of the Bible in the picture?
3. Why is it important to view human rights as endowed by God and not men? What is the proper role of civil government in the biblical worldview? (p.130)
4. If Congress passed a law tomorrow that forced all Americans to become Christians, should we celebrate? Why or why not? Isn't our goal for everyone to follow Christ? (p.131)
5. What does it mean that America is a Christian nation? Why is there so much controversy over this question? (p.132)

Chapter 28 (p.133) – “Church and State”

Common Misconceptions About Their Separation

The Church and State should encourage but not control the other.

1. Reflect for a moment on your educational experience and upbringing. What were you taught about America's Founders? Were they Christian or anti-Christian?
2. Summarize your understanding of the separation of Church and State.
3. The State should remain religiously neutral. True or false? (p.134)
4. The modern interpretation of the separation of Church and State is false pretense, a one-way street. How so?
5. Should we eliminate the phrases, “One Nation Under God,” or “In God We Trust”? Should prayer, the Bible, or the Ten Commandments be allowed in schools?

Chapter 29 (p.137) – “Rock of Our Republic”

The Influence of the Bible

When people exalt the Book of God, they will experience the blessings of God.

1. Explain Charles Galloway's statement, “Civil liberty requires for its support religious liberty.” (p.137)
2. What did John Adams mean when he said, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people”? (p.138)
3. The Founders sternly warned us what would happen if we ever rejected the Bible's truths, principles, and wisdom. With such warnings, why are Americans abandoning the Bible today?
4. The founding generation of Americans applied the Bible to every facet of life and society. Do American Christians still do that today? Why or why not?
5. What should be the role of our churches and pastors in preserving liberty?

Chapter 30 (p.141) – “Can Liberty Last?”

Freedom Under Fire

“Repent and do the things you did at first or I will remove your lamp.” *Revelation 2:5*

1. Dr. Guinness said, “Sustaining freedom should be on everyone's mind today, but it's not.” Why not? (p.141)
2. Explain this statement, “The greatest enemy of freedom is freedom.” (p.142)
3. As bad as our country's situation is today, all our woes are fixable. How so? (p.143)
4. Liberty requires responsibility. Explain. (p.143)
5. Every person, ever event, every political action either advances liberty or abuses it. Are Americans wise enough to know the difference? Why or why not? (p.143)
6. How has reading *The Liberty Pyramid* challenged you? What is your part in preserving liberty?