



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 24, 2023

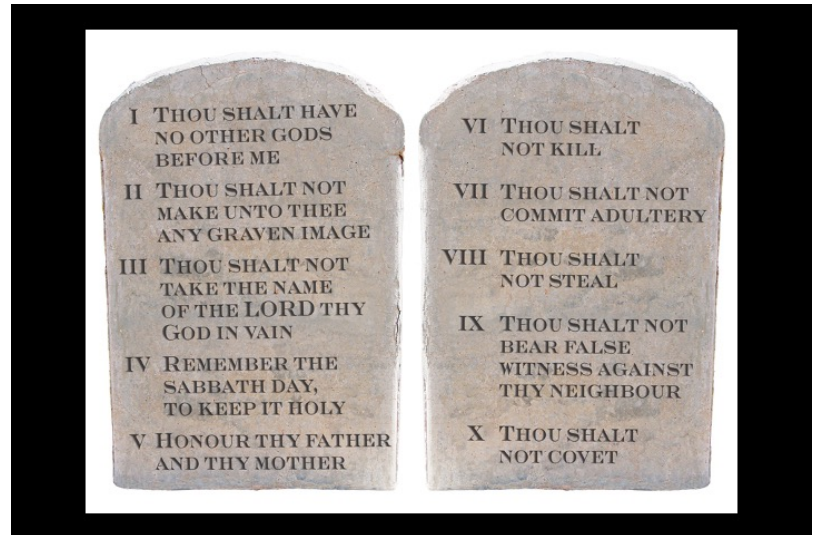
Texas Senate Passes Three Bills Designed to Restore the Foundations

In celebrating the state Senate's passage of three pro-freedom-of-religion bills on Thursday, Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick nailed it: The bills are part of the effort by the state to begin to rebuild the foundations of the culture that have been savaged by decades of a deliberate misreading of the First Amendment.

On Thursday Patrick declared:

Allowing the Ten Commandments and prayer back into our public schools is one step we can take to make sure that all Texans have the right to freely express their sincerely held religious beliefs.

I believe that you cannot change the culture of the country until you change the culture of mankind. Bringing the Ten Commandments and prayer back to our public schools will enable our students to become better Texans.



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Psalm 11 asks: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Patrick answers that question: Begin by rebuilding them.

The first bill passed by the Senate on Thursday (to be voted on shortly by the state House, with approval likely there as well) is [SB 1515](#):

A public elementary or secondary school shall display in a conspicuous place in each classroom of the school a durable poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments....

It is to be the King James version of the text, and any school that does not have such a copy may accept a donation from a private citizen of that listing of the Ten Commandments.

The Senate also passed [SB 1396](#), allowing public schools to require time for students to pray and to read their Bibles at school, and [SB 1556](#), "Relating to the right of a public school employee to engage in religious speech or prayer while on duty," which in effect codifies into state law the Supreme Court decision in *Bremerton v. Kennedy* (allowing football coach Joe Kennedy to pray after football games without interference from the school or the state).

Texas Republican Senator Phil King said during a committee hearing on the first bill (SB 1515): "[This bill] will remind students all across Texas of the importance of the fundamental foundation of America."



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Passage of the three bills follows the passage of a law last summer requiring Texas public schools to display “In God We Trust” signs in a conspicuous place.

The reactionary ACLU, in learning of Texas’ continuing effort to rebuild the foundations, repeated the now-outdated and irrelevant argument the group has used for so long to bring down those foundations:

The U.S. Constitution expressly prohibits the entanglement of church and state, and the Texas Constitution guarantees the freedom of worship.

Whether we choose to belong to one religion or none at all, people of all faiths and creeds should together resist the state’s endorsement of one particular religion.

The author of that screed, David Donatti, an attorney in the employ of the ACLU, surely must know that this argument holds no water. Here are quotes from the Supreme Court’s decision *Bremerton v. Kennedy* that obliterates that narrative:

Here, a government entity sought to punish an individual for engaging in a personal religious observance, *based on a mistaken view that it has a duty to suppress religious observances* even as it allows comparable secular speech.... [Emphasis added.]

The Constitution neither mandates nor permits the government to suppress such religious expression....

The only meaningful justification the government offered for its reprisal rested on a *mistaken view that it had a duty to ferret out and suppress religious observances even as it allows comparable secular speech*. [Emphasis added.]

Of course, this is just a beginning, but it *is* a beginning. Young, impressionable minds must be reached before the secular culture has the opportunity to bend them in its direction — to where there is no God but the state, and sovereignty rests not with the individual but the state.

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