



The Founders and the Bible

Carl J. Richard

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The religious beliefs of America's founding fathers have been a popular and contentious subject for recent generations of American readers. In *The Founders and the Bible*, historian Carl J. Richard carefully examines the framers' relationship with the Bible to assess the conflicting claims of those who argue that they were Christians founding a Christian nation against those who see them as Deists or modern secularists. Richard argues that it is impossible to understand the Founders without understanding the Biblically infused society that produced them. They were steeped in a biblical culture that pervaded their schools, homes, churches, and society. To show the fundamental role of religious beliefs during the Founding and early years of the republic, Richard carefully reconstructs the beliefs of 30 Founders; their lifelong engagements with Scripture; their biblically-infused political rhetoric; their powerful beliefs in a divine Providence that protected them and guided the young nation; their beliefs in the superiority of Christian ethics and in the necessity of religion to republican government; their beliefs in spiritual equality, free will, and the afterlife; their religious differences; the influence of their biblical conception of human nature on their formulation of state and federal constitutions; and their use of biblical precedent to advance religious freedom.

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