

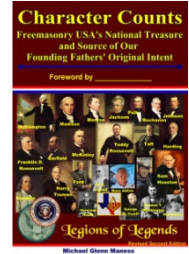


The following was from the first version of
Character Counts
Freemasonry USA's National Treasure and
Source of Our Founding Fathers' Original Intent

by Michael G. Maness

www.PreciousHeart.net/fm

This is not in the Revised Second Edition



“Religious” Equal to “Christian Denomination” in Thirteen Colonies



The greatest virtues are those which are
most useful to other persons.

Aristotle 384-322 B.C., Greek Philosopher



Barton’s business is “dedicated to the restoration of the ... religious foundation.”¹ But he denies any other religion any space today in his books as he forwards a clearly evangelical Christian faith. You will see him double-ticketing *religion* itself, as if to encircle all the great values of all religions, when focusing upon character and such, and then using *religion* to buy commerce for a Christian establishment. That is clear when you notice that Barton’s “religious foundation” message does not include the Buddhist or Muslim markets, or even much Catholic, though he does give some honorable mention to Catholics. That is not even subtle, for all of his books and paraphernalia are turned to evangelical Christian values and advertisements.

The real question then and most certainly today is this: Did the Founding Fathers determine in 1789 and then 1791 with the First Amendment to forbid the passing of any law

¹ This was culled from www.WallBuilders.com on December 15, 2004.

that protected only Christian freedom? Or did they protect the practice of all religions? Barton solely defends Christian freedom, and leaves out all other religions. And even if Barton can make his weak case strong, it is still the ghost of intent. More importantly, even if Barton can put serious flesh on his ghost of intent, is that where we want the USA to be today? Does God really want that? I think God truly enjoys being worshiped *without* government favor.

Freemasonry then in 1789 was clearer in its plurality, in not being a religion, as it fostered a true respect for all religions without requiring anyone to sacrifice a droplet of their own absolute differences. They all agreed in the belief in God and immortality, and beyond that the Freemason was trusted to pursue his own faith. That was true then, as today, and the proper way to look at “religious” foundation without confusion. Freemasonry was the only institution in the 1700s that respected true “religious” freedom among all the Christian variants, and included other religions in their view of “religious” freedom *before* 1789. That is a far more clear precedent for not placing God in the Constitution than any other extent institution in the 1700s.

Hiding that is occultic. Twisting that is immoral.

Barton reads Christian establishment *into* Washington’s use of the word *religious*. With just a smidgeon of knowledge of Freemasonry principles (and it not a religion), then Washington’s words lean more to Freemasonry’s value of the universality of morality and “eternal rules” than Washington’s words support Barton’s cause of “restoration of the ... religious foundation.” And religious freedom means what it says.

Why is the *religious* foundation *not* in the Constitution? And why does Barton deflect *religious* as nearly synonymous with *Christian* establishment without a hint of the other religions implied in the term *religious* today? That has implications for the kind of *wall* he is building that he has yet to specify in both of his non-profit or for-profit businesses.

Beware of the word “restoration of the ... religious foundation,” for Barton and others in the Religious Right do not betray how viciously some Christians controlled other Christians prior to 1776. Does Barton mean a *restoration* of compulsory church attendance? Does he want the legal ability to *banish* because someone does not believe in his view of baptism? Of course not, not yet, for he could never sell that. Yet, certainly, he is looking at some kind of restoration of Christian control over government, but just will not spell that out. A Christian *could* banish another Christian in the 1700s. What would they do to a Pagan? The record is infamously clear. Christians burned witches in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692.²

Barton certainly wants to recover and rebuild the “religious” foundation of the 1700s, for he says that a hundred times and that is his widely published mission and market. Only Barton does *not* use “religious” establishment to mean all religions—we need to see that—

² *Random House Encyclopedia* (NY: Random House, 1983): 2591, s.v., Salem, Massachusetts.

or he would say so, and reflect that. He means an exclusively Christian foundation. Therein, Barton intentionally uses “religious” duplicitously to include the moral values of all religions but not truly the freedom for all religions.

This applies to all the religious establishers, and comes to bear upon Freemasonry too, for I know not one Christian establisher today who also has positive thoughts on Freemasonry. And Barton is the most successful.

It is all in the name, and Barton’s businesses’ names say it all—WallBuilders—“We have chosen this historical concept of ‘rebuilding the walls’ to represent allegorically the call for citizen involvement in rebuilding our nation’s foundations”³—a nice allegory, the call to rebuild “the walls.” Just how serious is Barton about discovering our country’s foundation? An abundance of records for 1750-1800 exists, for our USA came into existence in an era when printing was an established industry.

What does *rebuild* the walls mean? That should be the clearest of all points. His goals are clear.⁴ Barton has been successful in all three. Yet how does one get a 5.01.c.3 non-profit that’s main purpose is to “exert a direct” influence in the government? I do not get it. Barton is good at marketing. On #1, he is only partially right, but becomes suspect when he leaves out so very much that should have been crucial to a discovery of our Founding Fathers’ original intent.

If Barton had thought about it, he might have named his business differently, because he has to do some rhetorical gymnastics to avoid confusion of his “WallBuilders” from the more established metaphor of the “Wall of Separation” between church and state. His “WallBuilders” came from Nehemiah’s rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. But Barton’s metaphor is strangled: Barton wants to help *restore* or *rebuild* a Christian foundation or “wall” like Nehemiah rebuilt the walls to Jerusalem. Ok, then tell me more about the wall! Come now!

So Barton is wall-building, metaphorically, something like a Christian *wall* of sorts that—in his mind—and this is a Christian wall against the rest of the world, while at the

³ This was culled from www.WallBuilders.com on December 15, 2004: the context of which was, “In the Old Testament book of Nehemiah, the nation of Israel rallied together in a grassroots movement to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and thus restore stability, safety, and a promising future to that great city. We have chosen this historical concept of ‘rebuilding the walls’ to represent allegorically the call for citizen involvement in rebuilding our nation’s foundations. As Psalm 11:3 reminds us, ‘If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?’”

⁴ This was culled from www.WallBuilders.com on December 15, 2004: “WallBuilders’ goal is to exert a direct and positive influence in government, education, and the family by (1) educating the nation concerning the Godly foundation of our country; (2) providing information to federal, state, and local officials as they develop public policies which reflect Biblical values; and (3) encouraging Christians to be involved in the civic arena.”

same time he is trying to destroy the Jeffersonian Wall of Separation. His anchor is the *rebuilding* of what we had in the 1700s and the ghost of intent that came *before* 1789. Look at Barton's book, booklets, and web site for yourself and see if you can discern more clarity. Barton is building a wall, while destroying a wall. Or he is simply trying to *move* the Jeffersonian Wall of Separation out to include Christianity in government control and exclude all other religions or non-religion. Yes, Barton *is* building a wall, but he himself is not clear—not yet—on who will be *inside* and *outside* of his own religious-Christian wall.

This is about the foundations of our country and Freemasonry's place, and this is also about how Christians shall perceive this in the future. And no one is making more headway in the evangelical Christian church like Barton, and he is doing so at Freemasonry's expense.

At first glance, this may sound like we are twisting something simple. WallBuilding—what can be clearer? Barton is typical of a long list of Christian establishers. They *want* to build a wall and to recover an earlier time, and occult Freemasonry. That is clear. But what is cloudy and hard to see is where that dog-gone wall is to be rebuilt. Yes, *where* their wall will be built is a problem, and the greater problem is the ancient time zone from which their model comes. There is only one clear case—if it will ever get clear—and that is if they *rebuild* something that existed in 1776 and before 1789, not their claims but something that actually existed. The decades prior to 1789 are the most potent time zone to divine the ghost of *intent* that led to what was written in the Constitution. Somehow, they *must* discover a ghost of *original intent* that will allow them bricks to build their wall—or rebuild—a wall that overrides a Constitution that left God out.

In order to *rebuild* then, they must discover the philosophy and religion of our Founding Fathers. Barton is the best example. He tries to *rebuild* a wall in the 21st from the original sources of the 1700s. Yet, curiously, Jefferson's Wall of Separation metaphor was not source material. That is quite a job. What is that? It would be baloney but for the attention Barton is getting, and the money he and others are making. Barton has gotten others to help, even in our USA Congress and even the Republican Party! Yet among all of his little booklets, where is Barton's *wall* going to be built? Who is included and excluded? A good man would tell you that straight up!

Instead, we have what appears to be a manic search of the original source material for every speck of Christian *intention* behind a written USA Constitution that excluded God, all in order to say that our Founding Fathers really meant to establish God but did not write that in—hmm?

A police detective at the scene of a crime tries to capture *all* the evidence. The next step is to piece together what happened, and the honest detective lets the evidence lead where it may. We would call the detective crooked if he or she purposely left evidence behind that impacted intent or history—that impacted the discernment of the truth—and we would

charge obstruction of justice. That is precisely what Barton did in his *Original Intent*, and then does that again in a more sly fashion in his itsy bitsy *The Question of Freemasonry and the Founding Fathers*.

By Barton's pick-and-choose evidence collection, we could have *constructed* a better case for a deistic or Pagan nation, so very ironic, and used fifty quotes from Barton. History is distorted by Christians to get a privileged status by the government. And the anchor of their rationale is the ghost *intent* over the body of a *written* Constitution. Is there a clearer way to understand Barton's *Original Intent* and the other lesser lights?

Do you want to know the *roots*? Or do you want to know what some folks are trying to turn *into* roots? Is there a clearer way? Yes, there is: Freemasonry's focus upon character counting is our *National Treasure*.



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