



CHAPTER THREE

The Preamble

Why the Constitution was written

The following is the text of the Preamble of the Constitution, “We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

FOR THE PARENT OR GRANDPARENT

The Preamble is the one part of the Constitution a child can hold whole. If they learn its fifty-two words by heart during this chapter, each phrase explained in the pages ahead has somewhere to land.

Fun Facts for Young People

1

The Preamble has only 52 words, yet it introduced the most enduring written constitution of any nation that is still in force today.

2

The first three words—“We the People”—are among the most famous words ever written.

3

The Preamble contains seven goals for the new government. Can you name them?

4

Although the Constitution has been amended 27 times, the words of the Preamble have never changed.

MEMORY CHALLENGE

Can you memorize all 52 words?

Many children have done it—and once you know the Preamble, you’ll always remember the purpose of the Constitution!



Memory Thought about the Preamble

Before America had laws, it had a purpose.

As stated, the first three words of the Constitution are among the most famous in history, “We the People.” Notice what the Constitution does not say. It does not begin with “We the King...” “We the President...” “We the Congress...” or “We the Military...” Instead, it begins with “We the People.”

Those three words teach us an important lesson. In America, the government receives its authority from the people. The people elect their leaders, and those leaders must obey the Constitution. The Founders believed that no person should have unlimited power. Instead, the people would establish a government with limited powers and hold it accountable.



Why God Created Civil Government

God created every person with dignity and value. “So, God created man in his own image...” (Genesis 1:27). There is an element of sacredness when it comes to human life, which is one of the main reasons why God created civil government. Civil government has a threefold duty before God. First, it is to restrain evil. Second, protect innocent life, and third, stop the shedding of innocent blood (Genesis 9:6). Civil government’s duty is to punish the evildoer and protect those who are good in God’s sight (Romans 13:1-4).

The Bible also teaches that civil leaders are to be servants and not masters over the people. Jesus taught, “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (Matthew 20:27).

What do we learn from all this? Freedom begins with a responsible people, and good government begins with good character. Proverbs warn that if the land and its people become lawless, it expands government’s power to oppress the people, because the people have lost moral strength to correctly handle freedom in a responsible way (Proverbs 28:2).



Noah Webster on Education

Noah Webster, the Father of American Education, wrote in his first edition 1828 Webster's Dictionary this definition on the importance of education. He wrote:

WEBSTER'S 1828 DICTIONARY

EDUCA'TION, noun [Latin *educatio*.] The bringing up, as of a child, instruction; formation of manners. *Education* comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations. To give children a good *education* in manners, arts and science, is important; to give them a religious *education* is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties.



Training Up Good Character

The first principle of education of children is to train them up with a good, godly character. This is something public, government schools fail to do. This author highly recommends homeschool as the more Biblical option to educate the young since God holds family government as the responsible jurisdiction. To form manners, to instruct, discipline, and correct the temper prepares young people for their future stations in life. All this training relates to character.

Next, Webster believes that academics plays a role in educating youth, but the most important education to him was religious training rooted in the Bible. Theodore Roosevelt, our 26th President agreed. He stated, “A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.” This means that in order for our Constitution to work properly, “We the People” must exercise godly character. And this responsibility to train young people is not the duty of the state nor the church, but the parents of children.



Understanding the Preamble

As stated previously, the Preamble is like the mission statement of the Constitution. It tells us why the Constitution was written. Let's look at each part.

1

"We the People," means the people are the source of the government's authority. The government works for the people—not the other way around. Our government is not the Master and American citizens the slaves. Our government works for us, and we can hire and fire based upon our informed vote.

2

Next phrase, **"To form a more perfect Union"** means unite the different states together making us a stronger nation. Working together instead of being separated makes us greater as a people.

3

Next phrase, **"Establish Justice."** Our Constitution must create fair laws that protect everyone. Everyone needs to be treated fairly. This fulfills the Golden Rule, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:12).



Peace, Safety and Opportunity

4

Next phrase, **"Insure Domestic Tranquility."** Our Constitution seeks to keep peace within the country. Our Founders wanted to create a nation that helps people live peacefully together. This is why righteousness is so important for us as Americans. One of the blessings of righteousness is, "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." (Isaiah 32:17).

5

Next phrase, **"Provide for the Common Defense."** The world is dangerous and our nation was formed to protect the nation from danger. Keeping our country safe was part of the purpose for forming America.

6

Next phrase, **"Promote the General Welfare."** This means help create conditions where people and communities can flourish and our nation thrive. Our Founding Fathers wanted a nation where we can have opportunities to take our God-given talents and skills, work hard, and prosper.



Liberty, Now and for Those to Come

7

Next phrase, **“Secure the Blessings of Liberty.”** This means protect freedom. As Americans, we guard the freedoms God has given us. God’s Word teaches, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage... Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (Galatians 5:1; 2 Corinthians 3:17).

8

Next phrase, **“To Ourselves and Our Posterity.”** The preamble wants us to think about future generations. We should leave America better for your children and grandchildren. George Washington, our first President encouraged us to take what they gave us and make it better. He stated, “Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair; the rest is in the hands of God.”



The Virtues Behind the Preamble

Every phrase of the Preamble teaches an important character quality. I would encourage you to look up the Bible verses that connect virtue to the Preamble Phrases and memorize them.

PREAMBLE PHRASE	VIRTUE	BIBLE VERSE
We the People	Responsibility	Genesis 1:27
More Perfect Union	Unity	Psalms 133:1
Establish Justice	Justice	Micah 6:8
Domestic Tranquility	Peace	Matthew 5:9
Common Defense	Courage	Joshua 1:9
General Welfare	Compassion	Philippians 2:4
Blessings of Liberty	Responsibility in Freedom	Galatians 5:13
Posterity	Legacy	Deuteronomy 6:6-7



Remember, the Constitution can help organize a nation. Only people of good character can keep it strong. The outline of the Constitution is important, but the substance of a godly character is more important.

Memory Verse

“Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

Proverbs 14:34

What does this mean? A nation becomes stronger when its people love truth, practice justice, show kindness, and honor God. Buildings do not make a nation great. Money does not make a nation great. Power does not make a nation great.

Character is what makes a nation great.



A Visitor from France

French Historian Alexis De Tocqueville visited America in 1831 to examine our nation. He came on a fact-finding mission. He was curious about America's rise to greatness in such a brief amount of time. He was determined to discover the key to America's success. How did we become a city on a hill, a light to the nations? The following is the summary of his investigation. He stated:

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers – and it was not there . . . in her fertile fields and boundless forests and it was not there . . . in her rich mines and her vast world commerce – and it was not there . . . in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution – and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great."

This is a sobering reminder why we need to become a good, godly people again.



Chapter Review

- 1 The Preamble has only 52 _____.
- 2 The first three words of the Constitution are “We the _____.”
- 3 The Constitution has been amended 27 times, but the words of the Preamble have never _____.
- 4 The Preamble is like the mission _____ of the Constitution.
- 5 “To form a more perfect Union” means to unite the different _____ together.
- 6 “Insure Domestic Tranquility” means to keep _____ within the country.
- 7 “Provide for the Common Defense” means to protect the nation from _____.
- 8 “Promote the General _____” means to help people and communities flourish.
- 9 “Secure the Blessings of Liberty” means to protect _____.
- 10 Noah Webster is called the Father of American _____.

THE PREAMBLE · FIFTY-TWO WORDS

You finished Chapter Three! You now know *why* the Constitution was written.

Preamble Word Search

Words run across, down, and diagonally — forwards and backwards. Circle each one as you find it.

N D J J V J C P U F O R L S
R Y E L W Z C H A N G E D E
E E Q Z J U S T I C E M Y T
M T G N Z N O Z E T L O P A
P E F N I P G M Q Z T D V T
E E W R A W E W J N F E X S
O T D E A D W A E H Z E R F
P S W F L O T M C U H R S O
L V S W R F E Z P E F F S Q
E Z Y D V T A Y T R E B I L
D H S S A G L R K Y T M M K
P E J T M C S N E R Q F Q I
T Q S H M W X T T O F Q R W
E D U C A T I O N X Q O H H

WORD BANK

Words	People	Changed	Statement
States	Peace	Danger	Welfare
Freedom	Education	Liberty	Justice



Two of these words are not answers to anything. They are two of the things the Preamble was written to secure.

Family Questions

Talk these through together before you write. There is no hurry.

1 • What does justice look like?

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2 • Why does freedom require responsibility?

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3 • What kind of America do you want your children to inherit?

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4 • How can our family promote peace?

.....

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More Family Questions

Keep going together. Every answer is worth hearing.

5 • Why do you think the Constitution begins with “We the People” instead of talking about government?

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6 • Which phrase of the Preamble do you think is the most important? Why?

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7 • Why does freedom require responsibility?

.....

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8 • What does justice look like in our family?

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.....

9 • Why should we think about future generations before making decisions today?

.....

.....

FOR THE PARENT OR GRANDPARENT

Question three is the one worth lingering on: it asks a child to look past their own lifetime. Let them answer before you offer yours.

Family Activity

Choose one virtue from the Preamble each week and practice it together.

EXAMPLES:

☐

Show kindness.

☐

Solve disagreements peacefully.

☐

Serve someone in need.

☐

Pray for America.

☐

Memorize the Preamble together.



FAMILY PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for allowing us to live in this nation. Help us never to take our freedoms for granted. Give us wisdom to pursue justice, courage to stand for truth, hearts that seek peace, and love for our neighbors. Help our family to live with integrity and to pass these blessings on to future generations. Above all, may we honor You in everything we do. In Jesus' name, Amen.



A GRANDPARENT'S THOUGHT

The Constitution begins with “We the People” because the strength of America has never depended only on its government. It depends on its people. When the people pursue wisdom, justice, courage, responsibility, and faithfulness, liberty is strengthened. When those virtues are forgotten, even the best Constitution cannot preserve freedom.

**As you continue through this workbook, remember this simple truth:
Good government begins with God fearing people.**