

“To Secure the Blessings of Liberty to Ourselves and Our Posterity”:  
Why the Constitution is Relevant Today  
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It is strange how we often remember things best when we attach humor or irregularity to them. I remember last year I was sitting in the back of our small chemistry lab, typing notes about the nature and structure of minerals. The teacher, attempting to pull us out of our drowsiness, asked us a non-rhetorical question – the hardest ones in chemistry class.

“Why do most minerals bond in crystal structures?”

Unable to awaken my mind from its stupor, I decided to let one of my more scientifically minded classmates answer the question. Then my friend sitting next to me leaned quietly over and whispered in my ear.

“In order to form a more perfect union.”

Now of course, every time I think about minerals I think about the Constitution, and vice versa. As the laughter wore off, I began to seriously ponder what my friend had said. That little phrase gave me more than just another way to remember chemistry principles and some comic relief – it revealed to me a new way of understanding the Constitution. Images and analogies made their way into my mind, reaffirming and expanding my understanding of our nation’s defining document. I began to realize that the Constitution’s two basic principles were part of an indissoluble bond with freedom – break that bond and all structure is lost. Like the laws of science, the laws of human nature never change, and because of this the Constitution is as relevant to modern times as when it was written.

In a world that is far less than perfect, we often wish we could live in a utopia – or create one. Unfortunately, people do not often understand that a utopia cannot be achieved simply by a global government with boundless security and healthcare policies. In a utopia a government would not even be needed, yet humans cannot live without it, putting any government in immediate opposition to utopian thoughts. The Founding Fathers recognized this principle as expressed by Thomas Paine in his famous work, *Common Sense*:

Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country without government, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer.[2]

This is the first basic principle of the Constitution: that government is a necessary evil that requires firm boundaries to protect the individual.

However, it is more than just government that needs boundaries, it is we humans. The Founding Fathers firmly believed in the idea that man is fallible, predictable, and tends towards evil by nature – when given power, he abuses it, prosperity, he misuses it. Therefore, they wrote in our Constitution clear laws to be checks and balances of power to prevent corruption. Human nature never changes and history testifies to that. These two principles are the foundation of the house of liberty we call America; if they are removed, so are our freedoms.

The Constitution is relevant to this generation, because it ensures us the rights and liberties that we wish to have, while maintaining the limits on power they require. Under this Constitution, Americans have thrived and enjoyed the freedoms they were intended to enjoy. To

alter its two key, universal principles of human fallibility and limited government would be to go against the laws of nature and ultimately suffer corruption and collapse, as did Rome, Soviet Russia, and countless others. It is essential that we Americans, and particularly this generation, learn to distinguish between the universals and the particulars of the Constitution, educate ourselves in its significance, and defend it. We have to understand that a threat to the foundation of the literalness and relevancy of each clause of the Constitution is a threat to the liberties built upon it.

It is easy for us to understand that atoms will always behave according to the laws of science – bonding to become stronger and dissolving when the nucleus is broken. The laws of liberty, government, and human nature are likewise as unchangeable as the laws of science. The Constitution is like the nucleus around which liberty revolves, creating what the Founders called “a more perfect union.” Because we are one nation under God and God’s law never changes, then the goals of the Founders in writing the Constitution should be our goals today in defending it: “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.” If we still wish to live in the home of the free, we have to defend its foundation: the Constitution.