



The NHC GOP Podcast

Episode 2:6 **Biblical Citizenship for Modern America**

Reuel Sample: Welcome to the NHC GOP podcast. I'm Reuel Sample. I am happy to be joined by our very special guest, Katie Gates, who will be leading a Biblical citizenship class in just a couple of weeks. She is also a member of the GOP here in New Hanover County, a very active one. Katie, welcome to the podcast.

Katie Gates: Thank you, Reuel, it's good to be here.

Reuel Sample: This is the Biblical Citizenship Class in Modern America. From Patriot Academy. Now, that is that is combining two ideas that seem to be at polar opposites. Biblical stuff and citizenship stuff. Tell us about tell us about this class.

Katie Gates: Sure. Well, that's a great question to start with because of the way that history has transpired and has led us to believe that there's a separation of church and state. And one would think that that's our default. That's what's taught. That's what's believed in law schools and that's what's legislated. And it's not necessarily true. And if we want to start there because why not? Why not?

Katie Gates: Let me tell you. And then I could go into some details of the class, of course. But. Basically, our country was founded on biblical principles, on a Judeo-Christian worldview. Many of our founding fathers were Christians, contrary to the popular belief that they were atheists and deists and systemic racists and so on and so forth. And so this course is really neat because it will it will teach you things about history that you didn't learn in school. And most of the content is developed from

primary sources. So we want to look at original intent. We want to look at the content of the annals of Congress and and the journals of the Constitutional Congress to give background on basically the words that are in the Constitution, because the words are limited. And so the separation of church and state was never a thought in any of the founders minds. Fisher Ames was a representative in the in the Congress in 1789, I believe, who wrote the First Amendment. And nowhere in the debates and discussion did he ever say separation of church and state. He actually said, we need the Bible and and we need it in schools and it should be the primary textbook.

And where do we go astray? So it comes from Thomas Jefferson. So a little background is in the Constitutional Congress and the writing of our Constitution. The summer of 1787, Thomas Jefferson was in Europe. He wasn't even around for the writing of the Constitution. We thank him for the Declaration, but it was an 1802 rule when the Danbury, Connecticut Baptist Association contacted Mr. Jefferson and said, You know what? We're a little worried that the federal government will infringe on our freedom of religious expression or our First Amendment rights. Can you guarantee that that is not going to happen? He's like as it's designed, as it's written, there is a wall of separation between church and state. The government can never infringe on the church and the freedom of expression therein. And so. For 100 or so years. If you look at any Supreme Court cases or any judicial case, you'll see that the context was proper and it was properly adjudicated. It was with Justice Hugo Black in the middle of the 20th century, I believe it was somewhere in the 1960s, early 60s, maybe 62, that the first ruling came down that took Jefferson's words out of context, meaning that no one in government can speak of the Bible, can't communicate it. We can't require it in schools. Prayer in schools isn't going to work. And so it was as a result of misinterpretation of the original intent and meaning. And it has stuck.

Reuel Sample: Our Founding Fathers meant for that protection to go really one way is that is that according to the Federalist Papers and others, is that the church was protected by the state and the but not regulated by the state. And the it was Thomas Jefferson not I'm sorry, not Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, who said and you probably know this better than I do, who said, let us consider carefully the idea of legislation without morality is that the whole idea of the influence of the church, It was no less than five Presbyterian ministers that signed the the original Declaration of Independence or the Constitution. This whole idea of a separation of biblical values and

biblical thoughts from from government would have been anathema to our founding fathers. So what does this biblical citizenship class do?

Katie Gates: So the Biblical Citizenship class is firstly a very approachable content. I don't imagine that many of us have actually read our Constitution through and through and haven't really set aside time to take like a Hillsdale College Constitution course to really get up to speed. I think we believe we have certain constitutional rights and we stand on them or what we perceive them to be. And this course is going to certainly teach what those are. And in more of a you know, we're going to dig deep into the Constitution for three classes, but a lot of it's going to be contextual. It's going to be from a 10,000 foot view. So it's going to it's going to create for you a reason to have this knowledge. And it's going to compel people to say, I had no idea. I've got to share this and I've got to do something about it. What I love about this course is it it is actually good for the GOP because I've found that in coaching these classes for two years that something clicks by the end of the course in most of the alumni. And because they said I had no idea. They feel badly that they've discovered the Christian foundations upon which our nation was built and have been silent this whole time and not involved in politics or pastors certainly aren't involved in the political arena. I mean, it has a big reach. And this course is going to say, No, we have a voice. You are protected, your voice is protected. Pastors are protected to a degree. And I think that you're going to leave feeling solid and probably knowing 95% more about the Constitution than most people in the United States. It's just not taught as a primary source. Now, Rick Green, who is the founder of Patriot Academy, was a former constitutional lawyer in Texas, state senator. And the reason why he started this.

Reuel Sample: I was going to talk about that is that the founder of this is no lightweight. I mean, he's not he's not somebody coming out of the backwoods of Texas. He's he's a heavyweight heavyweight intelligentsia.

Katie Gates: Yes, he is. And I think that adds a lot of merit to the class. It's not a fly by night type of curriculum. He did find as a Texas state senator that the degree of constitutional and civic illiteracy amongst his colleagues, amongst the General Assembly, was so bad that most of them couldn't name four of the five First Amendment rights. And and it was tragic to him because how could you legislate? How can you operate a government when we have no anchor, no strong foundation and there's no

consistency in the teaching anymore? And so as a constitutional lawyer as well, he will say that in delivering, you know, a seminar or a lecture to a lot of these law school students that they would bring up the separation of church and state. And he's like, where is that in the Declaration? Where is that in the Constitution? Open up your Constitution and let's look at it. Let's look at the primary source. Well, in law school, in the majority that he visited, they don't study the Constitution as a primary source. They study case law and precedent. They precedent law. So it was very discouraging for him that the perpetuation of the twisting of the truth, the misinterpretation of church and state, among many other things, was continuing. So he he's the one who gave that up and started this course. There's many other facets to Patriot Academy, but this is their most recent curriculum. And I think it's really good for the GOP also in a way, because not only are people respond Reuel to the material wanting to do something, but as a community wanting to reach out to independents, wanting to gather more, more people to our cause, to stand up and serve and be we the people and steward our liberties while this course will will shine the light on them and the spark is there and they're going to say, What do I do? How do I do it? Where do I plug in? And I think that's going to be huge and create a lot of value for our organization.

Reuel Sample: I think one of the things that people need to understand is that. Our founding fathers were Christians. They were men of faith. And from that was this understanding of an individual need of worship and an individual right of to worship or not to worship. And that comes out in our Constitution. And as you study that, is that. Yes, but this is this is not this is not a religious course. This is a constitutional citizenship class. Incorporating a biblical perspective.

Katie Gates: That's correct. And the the beauty of that is that you can come from any denomination, any past, any upbringing, and it doesn't feel like church. You're going to learn and you're going to hear quotes from our Founding Fathers. You're going to get excerpts from the Federalist Papers. You're going to understand the culture at the time so we get original intent. I mean, we kind of need to crack open the minds of, as Rick Greene would say, of our founding fathers because of all the questions that have arisen in our nation about what does the Constitution mean? It should be living. It should evolve. Well, the Founding Fathers were very well aware that the sin nature of man and the power hungry egos would get the best of our government leaders. And so they I believe the Constitution is divinely inspired, that they had foresight to to know how to put

in checks and balances and limit our government. We don't need small government, but we need limited government. And in in doing so based on biblical principles, you know, they protected what we should have today. Do you know where the breakdown is? Was in education. We stopped the recurrence to fundamental principles. We stopped learning about the Constitution. It's not repeated every year in your education K through 12 or in college. And if anything, it's misconstrued.

Reuel Sample: I went to a very good school, one of the top rated public schools in Pennsylvania. We didn't touch the constitution after freshman year. You know, we talked about civics, we talked about social studies, we talked about all that other stuff. But we never talked. We never went back to the Constitution.

Katie Gates: Yeah. Well, you'll be very interested to know that a lot of people are wanting to know more about it because they feel like their rights are being infringed on, rightfully so. But when you think of Biblical Citizenship, kind of just going back to that for a second. The representative style of government that we have stems from Exodus 1821, when when Moses ordered the Hebrew population, according to tens, 50s, hundreds, thousands and ten thousands, and they had elected representatives at each level of government. So that's what we see in the United States. And so if you say, you know, that our founders are atheists and deists and, you know, God has no place in that discussion, well, that's where the foundation is. And Isaiah 33:22 talks about God as lawgiver, king and legislator. And so the three branches of government are actually inspired by that scripture. So when you get to the bottom line like that, I mean, you can't really argue that.

Katie Gates: It's in the Bible.

Reuel Sample: You're really passionate about this and that's great. I'm going to put you on the spot. Why did you get involved in this?

Katie Gates: Well, that's a good question because I was a teacher, environmental scientist, marine biologist most of my life and moved here to work at the aquarium, came from Colorado and, you know, volunteered, got a job, and then Covid happened and everything got shut down. So I was like, I just moved here and I don't know what to do. So I ended up taking Constitution Alive, which is an earlier version of this course

from Dr. Bradley Walter, who was my chiropractor, and he offered it in January of 2020. So when everybody's feeling, you know, the lockdown impact and starting to have questions, it was a perfect time to gather people to learn about the material. And I went from knowing nothing. I mean, I was I was I was responsible politically, but I wasn't involved. But when I learned about this material and had that same reaction that I know people have and I've seen people have, but what I have to do something like, I need to know this because we live in the freest country in the world. I mean, our Constitution is over 235, almost 236 years old. The average constitution in any other nation is 17 years. Wow. Like we're losing our liberties because we, the people have failed in our duty to keep the government in check because we have our inalienable rights from God. Right. And so we will operate by default under common law. The laws of nature and the nature of God and governments are instituted among men to protect those rights.

Katie Gates: And the government is regulated by the consent of the governed by us. So we have forsaken our responsibility. And honestly, pastors have been really quiet in the pulpits since the 5013C happened in the in the. When was that? That was the Johnson Amendment in 1954. So we've become quiet and we're supposed to, as Christian people, as conservatives, we're just supposed to be nice and not upset people and not be too involved and not be confrontational? Well, the the revolutionary era, I mean, these men were were revolutionary and thought and, you know, physically defending our country. And that's why we have the structure that we have, the nation we have today. And if we don't carry the torch, we're going to lose it because the Constitution won't defend itself. I think it was John Adams that said the Constitution was written for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the governance of any other because our Christian values are supposed to dictate morality, dictate law. And and it's a common ground. I mean, now we have relativism and humanism. There's no moral compass. And if you don't have a moral compass, how do you have law? People don't know what's right and wrong because everybody has a different viewpoint. So the only way we're going to get back to some semblance of order, in my opinion, is to figure out where we came from and get back to those values, which is an uphill battle. But let's let's get it going.

Reuel Sample: So how many classes are there?

Katie Gates: There are seven classes and they are. We're setting aside a two hour time block for each one. The videos range from an hour and five minutes to maybe an hour and 25 minutes, but we leave time for intro and discussion because there's always lots to talk about. The nice thing about this course Reuel is that each class is stand alone. So given it's summer and people have vacations, you can miss 1 or 2 and not get behind. And I want people to know that we expect that you'll miss one, you know, maybe two. But each one you go to, you're going to glean and gather knowledge that you wouldn't have had before. And so if you can only make two classes, come to two classes register. I'm not taking attendance. I just need to know that you're registered for the viewing license rights. So I encourage everybody there's really no excuse at this point. Totally approachable, easy. It's not like sitting in college class. There's some fun anecdotes that Rick shares and there's a lot of content from contemporary pastors and media figures and governing officials. Barry Loudermilk is my favorite. He's a he's over in Georgia and just have great, great perspective and what's working for them. So I'd love to hear what is working in in pastors churches like they are, you know, talking about government. They are talking about our role. And, you know, there's no pressure from the IRS because it's unconstitutional for the IRS to restrict any freedom of expression of worship. And so they really can't.

Reuel Sample: They just they just try to scare them.

Katie Gates: They try and scare them. And they've done a really good job. Just as an aside, I know I can keep going on, but it's kind of fun to know that since 2008, there is this concept called Pulpit Freedom Sunday, where a group of pastors who were politically savvy and realize that it's the church's job, it's the pastor's job to to speak to dual citizenship. You're a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. You're a citizen of the United States. They go hand in hand and they have actually recorded themselves, sent the transcripts to the IRS for the past 14 years, and only one investigation was made. But there. So I'm sure that the government does not want to get into the pursuit of those pastors because technically the 501C3 is an unconstitutional. The media gets a hold of it and you win a lawsuit, then all the pastors are going rogue. So so it's been under wraps. And so I want to encourage everybody, pastors included, come check it out. We've done it in a couple of churches already. And it's so well received.

Reuel Sample: Tuesday, starting June 13th. At what time in the morning?

Katie Gates: It's 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. And I realize that's prohibitive for those who work. If this goes well with the GOP, I'm completely happy doing it again and doing an evening class in the fall for those who can't make it in the morning and there are online options. I'm doing a national class on Thursdays starting Thursday the 15th, so that's through an organization I work with called My Faith Votes, so I can send the registration link to anybody for that. But we'd love to see everybody because to have like minded people in our community, it's community building and we're equipped and encouraged together and that's really valuable.

Reuel Sample: So you can go to the New Hanover County GOP's website NewHanoverCountyGOP.org, and you will see the registration link right there on the front page on the calendar section. So just click that and that will take you to the registration because we do need to have people register ahead of time so that you can get viewing rights and any other content that you need.

Katie Gates: That's right. And it's a free class. And there is an online workbook which you can download because honestly, it's great information, it's very approachable, but it can be a lot. And people want to take notes and write down the quotes and it's just too much. But it's all included in the workbook that's free. So know that you have that. But a lot of people find that they like something tangible. And so when you register online, you'll have the opportunity to order this book so that you can flip through and use the quotes and refer to what you've learned because you'll want to reference it as you grow in your knowledge.

Reuel Sample: The class is Biblical Citizenship Class in Modern America, brought to you by the Patriot Academy, founded by Rick Green out of Texas. Katie Gates, who I am told goes by Katie, Kate or just Katie Gates will be leading our class and doing that for us. If you are if you are a Christian, even if you go to church all the time, if you don't go to church all the time, and even if you're not a Christian, come to this class because it is a really great opportunity to study the Constitution and how it operates with us. Katie, thanks for joining us on the podcast and all the best.

Katie Gates: Thank you very much. Have a great evening. Good night.

