

In God We Don't Trust

A book review by Mike Atnip

It's a good thing author David Bercot was not born in 1730. He could very well be sporting some chicken feathers by now. I mean, you don't tell American patriots that they are really rebellious rabble rousers who should quit their whining about paying a three cents tax on their cup of tea and get back to work. Like, you shouldn't expect to tell them that without getting tarred and feathered and driven out of town. Or, perhaps, even lynched.

But Bercot raises his voice and makes a bold statement in his latest book, *In God We Don't Trust*. He has the audacity to say that, even though our US coins state otherwise, the United States of America was not founded on trust in God.

So it is David Bercot against millions of pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters ... not to mention the millions of paper bills that make up our United States currency. Can so much money be wrong?

But more important than disproving a slogan pressed into every penny of our financial system, Bercot has a greater foe to face: Professing Christians in the United States of America are determined to prove that our nation was built upon trust in God. In fact, they are trying to teach your children that, by means of school history books.

So, the battle is not merely the correct historical facts. The battle is about how you and your children view the mixture between faith and politics. And David Bercot is asking to get himself tarred and feathered. He is adamant: The United States of America was *not* built on trust in God.

What is "trust in God"?

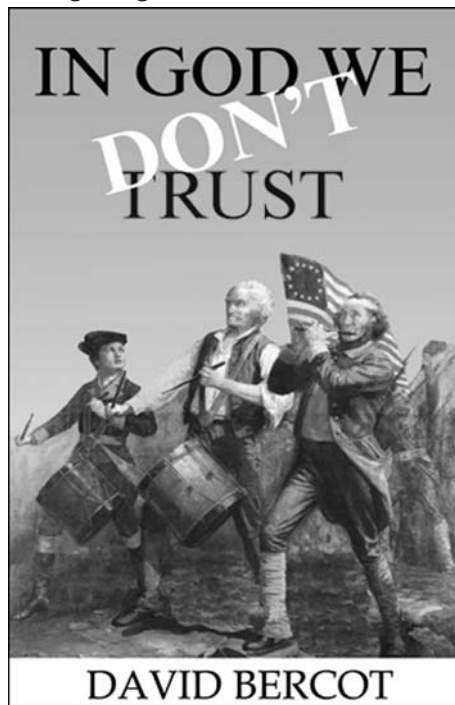
Bercot doesn't beat around the bush. "Trust means obedience." Notice those quote marks? That is because those words are pulled straight from the book. In fact, they are a chapter subheading. To trust God means to do what He says. Bercot says it this way:

Genuine faith leads people to obey God.

When we deliberately refuse to obey God, it shows we don't have faith in the first place.

So now Bercot has the challenge before him. Anyone can spout off statements that are contrary to popular belief. In fact, some folks seem to thrive on conspiracy theories. So can he back his proposition with some facts? He has a monumental task. I mean, everyone *knows* that the American colonies were being cruelly taxed to death, and that is the reason they finally had to rebel and throw off the galling yoke of British sovereignty.

Can David Bercot prove otherwise?



Oops, some Indians are in our way

When Columbus finally discovered America many centuries after the Asian people had already been here, the Europeans ran into a huge problem. And the problem was, of course, they couldn't just move into this newly discovered land; others were already living here. Or could they just move in?

Bercot treats that situation in a chapter titled *The Wrong Way to Spread the Gospel*. He points out that although the first charters for English settlements in Amer-

ica listed the evangelization of the “savages” as one of their motives, the writing between the lines of the charters essentially said “we have a God-given right to live in America, whether the Indians like it or not.” Included in the chapter is a blood-curdling quote from US President Theodore Roosevelt. You will need to read it for the shock of it to fully hit you. But I will pull one sentence for a teaser:

The most ultimately righteous of all wars is a war with savages ...

And “In God We Trust”? Hmmmm. Bercot sums up the horrible situation with some thoughtful words:

... it’s hard to teach someone else to obey commandments of Jesus when you aren’t practicing them yourself.

Ouch!

In tobacco and guns we trust

Can you imagine your dollar bills printed with such a slogan? Delving into old historical documents, the author spends several chapters describing how that the first English colonies in America were really founded upon a trust in guns and money. The two worked together quite well. They made fortunes with tobacco, and used the guns to quell any problems the Indians might have because they took more of their land to raise more tobacco.

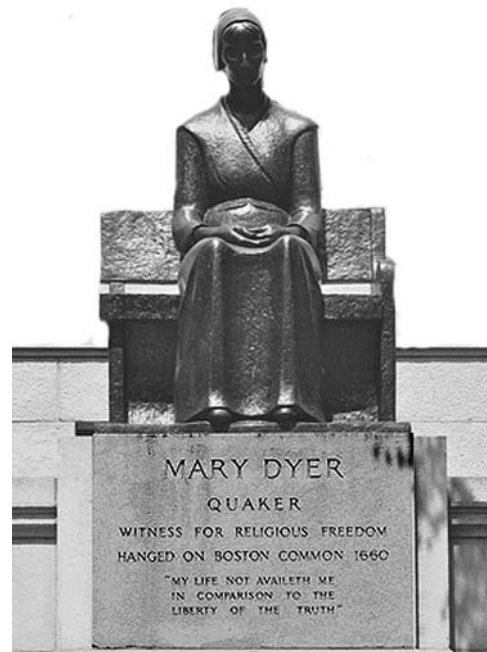
Next, we throw some rum into the equation. And to make the whole system work, add some African slaves. It was called “The Golden Triangle,” because those who knew how to operate the system could earn a lot of mammon. Take rum to Africa and trade it for slaves. Then load the slaves onto ships (giving them 39 inches of head room, and 13 inches of floor space per person) and trade them for molasses in the West Indies. From there, haul the molasses to distilleries in New England, where the molasses was turned into rum. Repeat the cycle and fill your bank account again. (And make sure that you print “In God We Trust” on your money in the bank after you rebel against paying taxes on your profit ...)

Did it matter that the whole system was full of disgusting evil? It didn’t seem to matter to those who were making the profits, most of whom would have been professing Christians. And what would happen if you founded a country on such a system? Good question.

Yet, not everyone ...

There were some bright spots. Bercot spends a chapter detailing how one man built a colony on different principles. William Penn did things like Jesus would have, at least in many ways. Even though the king of

England gave him a huge chunk of America to pay off a debt, Penn realized that the Indians were the real owners. So he paid them for the land he used. And not only that, freedom of conscience was given to all the colonists who



The Massachusetts Puritans hanged Quakers like Mary Dyer, until the British forced them to stop.

settled there. In fact, Penn’s colony had more religious liberty than the current United States of America does.

The Revolutionary Rebellion

Bercot then moves into the founding of the United States of America. He tells of the various acts of English Parliament and the American reaction. While American historians depict the English as heavy-handed despots who wanted to milk the colonies of their wealth, the author has looked at the original documents, weighed them, and found the proof to be wanting. For an example, the infamous Tea Tax—that caused some Boston “Sons of Liberty” to dump the equivalent of \$2-4 million of tea into the harbor—was the equivalent of about 2-3 cents *per cup* in today’s value. At the beginning of the war for independence, that was the only tax that England was actually still putting on the colonies.

Over-taxation?

The Black Regiment

But grumping about taxes by the common man doesn’t seem to bother the author as much as those who growled from the pulpit. After all, Bercot says again and again,

Jesus told us to pay our taxes, even taxes that were unfair and even illegal. So what is a black-robed preacher doing, telling his listeners that they were not doing their Christian duty unless they stood up for their rights? Of course, that translated into picking up their long rifles and shooting a British soldier.

So we end up with this: “Christian” ministers are telling their flocks to rebel against the king because the king put a 3 cents per cup tax on their tea. When we are all finished, we then put “In God We Trust” on all our coins and paper money as a great reminder that this nation was built upon obeying Jesus.

Huh?

To sum up the book

Author David Bercot has spent the last nine years researching the facts. Doubtless, the book has a few factual errors. Those of us who have read or written history (whether secular or church history) know that sometimes the sources are not clear, or even sometimes conflicting, in their details. But the factual details of, say, the Boston Massacre are not Bercot’s focus. His point is this ...

Some “Christian” school curriculums paint the American Revolution as a godly event. Historical facts are glossed over, conveniently forgotten, or simply changed. The bottom line is that the United States of America was not built upon trust in God. Rather, it was founded upon greed and rebellion.

The problem for us today is that many people are calling for Christians to “take back our country.” The cultural war is being lost. Heathen moral values—abortion, gay rights, divorce, etc—are replacing the former moral ethics that were indeed more biblical. Some Evangelicals are gearing up for a war. At this point, the war is political, but if push comes to shove, the guns barrels will warm up fast.

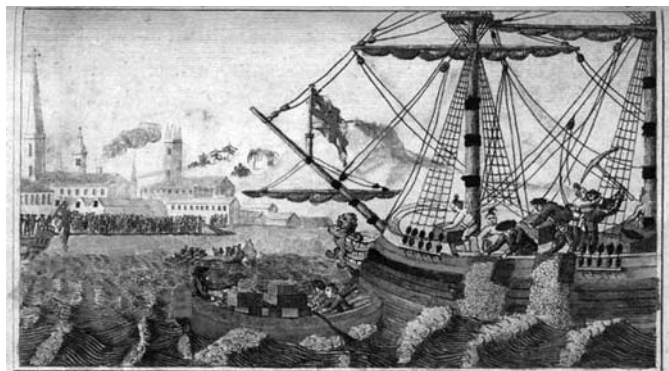
What are real Christians—those who actually obey Jesus—to do in such a case? Well, Bercot gives the details of how true Christians responded in the colonial days of America when some “Christian” preachers were calling for war. The true believers simply obeyed Jesus: paid

their taxes, submitted to the English king (unless his rules defied Jesus’ teachings), and lived in peace.

When the Rebels finally did gain control, guess what? Those who followed Jesus were persecuted. For example, Christopher Sauer, Jr., a Brethren minister, was arrested for refusing to swear an oath of allegiance to the State. His beard was cut off and he was forced into a tattered army uniform. His print shop was confiscated as well as the rest of his property. By whom, the English? No, by the revolutionaries.

After the Rebels gained their objective, guess what? Within a decade or two after the United States of America was formed, they were paying more taxes than when they were under the British crown.

Go figure!



Americans throwing the Cargoes of the Tea Ships into the River, at Boston

The Boston Tea Party was in response to the British tax on tea ... which equalled a few cents per cup in today's money. Ironically, after the colonies gained independence, taxes became higher overall in the newly formed States!

Trust, or suffer?

David Bercot will likely not have to suffer a literal tar and feathering. But I suspect those “Christians” who are trying to call kingdom Christians into the political fray will not be happy with this book. A virtual tar and

feathering may occur. Protestant Christianity has never really learned that the kingdom of God is not to mix church and state.

The Heartbeat of the Remnant recommends *In God We Don't Trust*. Author David Bercot has done his homework and went to the original documents to dig out the historical facts. He has also peppered the text with pertinent graphics so that it will appeal to younger readers, and it could even be used to supplement Christian schooling. Your high school student would benefit from the perspective this book presents.

But beyond the historical facts presented in the book is the underlying biblical message: the arm of flesh will fail us. As followers of the lowly Lamb of God, we are not called to rebel, but to trust God in suffering.

And that is the message of *In God We Don't Trust*. ~

This book is available through Scroll Publishing, P. O. Box 122, Amberson, PA 17210

www.scrollpublishing.com