

Lesson #42
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Socrates in the City
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- St Augustine said that if you want to understand a nation/people, you look at the things they LOVE and hold in common.
- If what a nation loves is noble then that nation may be noble.
- The thing that the American Republic loves the most since its founding is FREEDOM.
- How does a people sustain freedom?
 - Winning Freedom
 - Ordered Freedom – Give it a framework so it will last e.g. Constitution.
 - Sustaining Freedom – perpetuating the institutions of freedom.
- Institutions of freedom are almost totally destroyed in America today.
- Founders studies the classics to learn about what brought down free societies.
 - External enemy - Not takes seriously.
 - Corruption of customs – Constitution and fundamental laws with institutions.
 - Time (most dangerous). – Forgot roots of the founding.
- The Constitution of the US, ratified in 1787, was the same year that the book, “Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire” was published.
- What did Rome fall after 800 years of dominance?
 - Injuries of time i.e. time i.e. nothing lasts forever.
- Paradox of freedom i.e. the greatest enemy of freedom is “freedom”.
 - No free societies ever lasted forever. Rare in history.
 - Freedom requires the “spirit” of “liberty”.
 - Structure may be there but liberty will not last if the “spirit” is gone. i.e. the habits of the heart.
 - Deepest level of freedom in MORAL! i.e. spiritual.
 - Freedom requires ordering. The only “ordering” that works is SELF restraint.
 - The problem is that self restraint is undermined when freedom flourishes.

- Freedom is not to do as you like but to do as one ought!
- How did the founders try to counter that? By cultivating “Habits of the Heart”.
- Montesque – spirits and the habits of the heart i.e. **Golden Triangle of Freedom**.
- All founders believed this though they never explicitly stated it anywhere.

TRIANGLE OF FREEDOM

- Freedom requires virtue.
 - Virtue is Latin root word for ‘courage’ i.e. character.
 - J. Adams – “only virtuous people are capable of freedom!
 - Freedom is the POWER to do as you OUGHT!
 - People should know the character of their leaders. This allows the followers to trust their leaders. So if people don’t really understand the actions of the leader they can still trust due to the leader’s character.
 - Virtue requires Faith. Tells us what virtue actually is.
 - Faith requires freedom!
 - First Amendment is unique among all forms of government around the world.
- Negative freedom – Free FROM Tyranny.
- Positive freedom – FOR freedom i.e. the good.
- How to turn the current state of affairs around?
 - Leadership – lack a deep American vision.
 - Restoration of civic education.
 - Reopening of public life for ALL faiths to participate.
- America is no longer the “City on a Hill”.
- *** Need a frequent return to fundamental principles! Because every generation is a “new people”.