

# Biblical Principles

ONE IN A SERIES

PUBLISHED IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING  
BY PLYMOUTH ROCK FOUNDATION

PRIN'CIPLĒ, n [L. *principium*, beginning]; a truth; that which supports an assertion, an action, or a series of actions; a law comprehending many subordinate truths.

## Individuality

In-de-vij-e-wal-et-e\ n. (L. *individuus*, *in* and *dividuus* [*divido* = to divide]) separate or distinct existence, a state of one-ness; character peculiar to and distinguishing one individual from others. SYN—uniqueness, distinctiveness; separate, set apart.

### The Biblical Principle

*Each individual counts, and is accountable:* each person is unique, created and endowed by God with certain distinct and special characteristics, talents, abilities and purpose (Genesis 1:27; John 1:3; Psalm 139:13–16). Each is of incalculable worth in the eyes of God, the Creator and Sovereign (John 3:16). The Biblical principle of individuality (the uniqueness of the individual) is directly linked to the sovereignty of God (Creator).

### Expanding the Definition\*

Individuality is (1) that *uniqueness of character, ability and responsibility with which each person is endowed by the Creator.*

Individuality is (2) *the manifestation of that true spiritual freedom God has implanted in each individual.* And, individuality (3) *bears witness to God's law of infinite variation—each individual is created equal but "distinctly different."*

The principle of individuality—all are equal in

the sight of God but each person is special, created to be unique, counts and is accountable (if one is not accountable one does not count)—is part and parcel of the *Christian idea of man* and the *Christian methodology of government*.

At the root, there are two basic ideas of man and government: the *Christian idea* and the *pagan idea*. The *Christian idea* is "that man was created in the Divine image and destined for immortality; pronouncing that, in the eyes of God, all men are equal. This asserted for the individual an independent value." (Richard Frothingham, *The Rise of the Republic of the United States*, 1890.)

The *pagan idea* is that the "social order rested on the assumed inequality of man. The indi-

vidual was regarded as of value only as he formed a part of the political fabric and was able to contribute to its uses, as though it was the end of his being to aggrandize the State" (Frothingham).

Thus, we understand several vital distinctions between the two ideas:

Examples of each individual's worth in the eyes of God: God loved each individual so much that He sacrificed His only begotten Son to save from the wages of sin each person who believes on Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Jesus underscored the importance of each person through His parable of the Good Shepherd and one lost sheep (Matthew 18:12). Christ assures us that each person is so important that even the hairs on our head are numbered (Luke 12:7). God's Word emphasizes the importance of the individual in telling us that the angels sing with joy when a single sinner repents (Luke 15:7). The Bible informs us that one single soul is more important than the whole world (Matthew 16:26)! Jesus tells us that our Heavenly Father watches over each one of us and hears the prayers of each individual who prays to Him in Christ's name (Matthew 7:7-11; John 15:7). Of all of God's creatures, man was the only one created individually—*one man*, and from man *one woman* (Genesis 1:27). Each individual will be required to account for his or her deeds (Revelation 22:12). (Note also that God speaks through His written word which is a seamless whole; yet He chose as His instruments unique individuals—judges, prophets, apostles—each with a distinct styles of writing, yet all united in His work!)



The *Christian idea* holds that man is a child of God whose purpose is to serve and glorify God; the *pagan idea* asserts that man is an economic unit whose purpose is to serve and magnify the state.

(Those who see the state, or economic determinism, as the master must, *ipso facto*, deny God; in denying God, they must also (sooner or later) deny the sanctity of the individual. In their eyes, the individual is not endowed by a Creator with unalienable rights but is simply an *erg*—a unit of energy to serve their master plan. Consider the term, “We, the people. . . .” When each individual counts, then “We, the people” are the important whole of the nation ( $1 \times 264,000,000 = 264,000,000$ ). But when each individual counts for nothing, then, “We, the people” count for nothing ( $0 \times 264,000,000 = 0$ ).

Between the two ideas there is also a distinction concerning the purpose and function of *government*.

The *Christian methodology of government is self-government* with union in Christ; through Him and in Him, the many (unique, distinctive) individuals become one (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 12:14–20; Colossians 3:11). The *Christian idea of*

*government* is that it is an institution ordained by God to honor Him by being His servant to the people for good (Romans 13:1–4). Both the governed and the governors are to be governed by the laws of God.

The *Biblical Christian* understands that the power and force which is government flows from God, the source of all power, to the individual (*internal self-government*) and then from the individual in concert with others (by the consent of the governed) to their representatives (*external civil government*).

The pagan idea holds that the state is the ultimate source of power, that it controls the flow of that power and force, and that it alone will decide what “rights” it will “grant” the people. It is the master; the people are the servants; they are of value as they serve the state (1 Samuel 8:11–17). Under such an ideology, the state is (becomes) a god and law unto itself.

The Christian idea of man and the Christian methodology of government formed the foundation for the first Christian republic, these United States of America. (The Biblical principle of individuality is the second root principle upon which the American Christian Republic was built—the first

### Some Key Scriptures

- “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27).
- “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:3).
- “For You have formed my inward parts; You have covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!” (Psalm 139:13–17).
- “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).
- “For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26).
- “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing” (Luke 15:4–5).
- “But to each one of us grace [special gifts] was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Ephesians 4:7).
- “But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body” (1 Corinthians 12:18–20).
- “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12; see also Galatians 6:5).

root principle being the sovereignty of God).

### Individuality and God's Dynamic of Progress

The principle of individuality is essential to the fulfillment of God's Cultural Mandate. As Dr. W. David Gamble has written, the challenge before each individual Christian "is not to attain equality, but to take the resources which have been given to us and

### Individuality

develop them to the fullest, to become the best servants of God that we can be." (Quoted in *Faith Family Forum*, January 1987, p. 4.)

Inherent in the principle of individuality is diversity—the tremendous range of talents, abilities, capabilities, occupations and pursuits of those whom He has created.

If that were not so, if each and every person were cut from the same mold and had the same characteristics, the same talents, the same abilities, man would

#### "IN THE IMAGE OF GOD"

List some of God's attributes and those with which He has endowed the individual. Clues are at bottom of page 4.

Scripture Reference	Attribute of God	Individual Potential
Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Acts 17:24	1.	1a.
Deuteronomy 10:17; 2 Samuel 7:22; 1 Timothy 6:15	2.	2a.
1 Samuel 2:8; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 28:18	3.	3a.
Psalms 147:5; Job 36:4; 1 John 3:20	4.	4a.
Psalms 9:7; 1 Timothy 1:17; John 3:16	5.	5a.
Deuteronomy 31:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Timothy 2:13	6.	6a.
Psalms 18:30; Matthew 4:48; Philippians 1:10	7.	7a.
Deuteronomy 32:4; Romans 2:6; Revelation 15:3	8.	8a.
Exodus 34:6; Psalms 106:1; Luke 6:36	9.	9a.
John 3:16; 15:12; 1 John 4:16	10.	10a.



find it difficult, if not impossible, to replenish the earth and subdue it or to be stewards having dominion over the earth which God created.

What would we all be if our Creator had not given each of us individuality? Farmers, doctors, fishermen, carpenters, nurses, teachers, cattlemen, aviators, engineers? And, if we were all farmers, who would care for the ill, pastor the flocks, search the skies or measure electrons? Who would build the houses, drill for oil, or construct the highways? Each person is special—unique, with a special task to do for Him.

God, in His wisdom, did not produce sameness; when He created each individual as a unique and distinctive person, *He created variety*. This is His *law of infinite variation*. No two snowflakes, no two flowers, no two thumbprints, no two individuals are identical. To each is given not only distinctive form and shape but also distinctive gifts, distinctive abilities, unique and special talents.

This may be termed “God’s dynamic of progress”—His method of providing man the opportunity to gain dominion over the earth and the sea and the heavens, and all that is therein as He has commanded.

### Relating the Principle to an Issue

*First*, we should strive to make sure that we use our God-given individuality to produce those good works so that others may take note and glorify our Father which is in heaven. We are to be living witnesses of the power of Christ in our affairs (our deportment, our utterances, our priorities), thus to attract others to Him and His grace. (To mis-use our individual-ity to serve self rather than to honor God is to slide into the sin of individual-ism and sink into the abyss of humanism.)

\* It is essential to understand the vital distinction between individual-ity and individual-ism. Consider the definition of individual-ism: “a doctrine that the interests of the individual are or ought to be ethically paramount (conduct guided by such a doctrine) (2) “the conception that all values, rights and duties originate in individuals.” Individualism is nothing new. It is an offspring of humanism. It slithered in with Satan when the serpent tempted Eve: “**You will be like God knowing good and evil**” (Genesis 3:5)—and Eve did eat, and Adam also. And man, separated from his Creator, began to die. Individualism is described in Judges 17:6: “**In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**” The Apostle Paul touched on individualism/humanism when he wrote of the fools and reprobates “**who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator**” (Romans 1:25). Thus, they shoved themselves ahead of the Creator; they substituted the “I” of sin for the “O” of the Son. The “social contracts” of individualism seek to abrogate the laws of God. In individualism is one virulent form of *humanism*; the other strain is *collectivism*. Both deny God, in works if not in words.

*Clues to the attributes listed in “In the Image of God” (page 3).* 1. Creator, 1a. creativity; 2. Sovereign, 2a. dominion over self (2 Corinthians 10:5); 3. Omnipotent, 3a. strength to do God’s work (Philippians 4:13); 4. Omniscient, 4a. intelligence (Philippians 2:5); 5. Eternal, 5a. everlasting life (John 5:24); 6. Faithful, 6a. obedient (2 Corinthians 10:5); 7. Perfect, 7a. excellence (Philippians 1:10); 8. Just, 8a. a sense of justice (right and wrong); 9. Merciful, 9a. compassionate; 10. Loving, 10a. the capacity to love (1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

*Second*, we should keep always in mind that that form of civil (external) government which is rooted in the principle of individuality (self-government in Christ and the recognition of the importance, dignity and liberty of each individual) is in keeping with God’s perfect plan and purpose. (God does, indeed, have a definite blueprint for the right civil government!)

*Third*, we should always be on guard against any form of government (and the appendages and apparatus of such government) which denies or violates the principle of individuality (refuses or rejects the truth that each individual is created in the Divine image and endowed with certain inalienable rights). To condone or compromise with such ungodly external power is to deny the flow of power and force and sovereignty of God.

*Fourth*, as followers of Christ we are to work for, construct and support that form of government (both internal/self and external/civil) which is based on God’s laws and precepts—including the recognition of the individuality of each individual.

**You’re precious, you’re valuable,  
you’re unique, you’re one of a kind,  
there’s no one else in the world like you.  
Think about that for a second.**

— Rosey Grier, football great

NOTE: All Scripture is from the New King James Version.

For copies of this paper, or for further information, please write or call Plymouth Rock Foundation, Fisk Mill, P.O. Box 425, Marlborough, NH 03455, (603) 876-4685. Corporate offices are located in Plymouth, Massachusetts.