

# [PDF] American Gospel: God, The Founding Fathers, And The Making Of A Nation

Jon Meacham - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

Title: American Gospel: God, the Fou

Author: Jon Meacham

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**Description:**

From **Publishers Weekly** Historian and Newsweek editor Meacham's third book examines over 200 years of American history in its quest to prove the idea of religious tolerance, along with the separation of church and state, is "perhaps the most brilliant American success." Meacham's principal focus is on the founding fathers, and his insights into the religious leanings of Jefferson, Franklin, Adams and Co. present a new way of considering the government they created. So it is that

the religious right's attempts to reshape the Constitution and Declaration of Independence into advocating a state religion of Christianity are at odds with the spirit of religious freedom ("Our minds and hearts, as Jefferson wrote, are free to believe everything or nothing at all-and it is our duty to protect and perpetuate this sacred culture of freedom"). Meacham also argues for the presence of a public religion, as exemplified by the national motto, "In God We Trust," and other religious statements that can be found on currency, in governmental papers and in politicians' speeches. Subsequent chapters consider a wartime FDR and a Reagan who grew increasingly enamored of Armageddon. All are well-written, but none reach the immediacy and vigor of the chapters on the nation's birth. Two extensive appendices reprint early government documents and each president's inaugural bible verses. Meacham's remarkable grasp of the intricacies and achievements of a nascent nation is well worth the cover price, though his consideration of Reagan feels like that of an apologist.

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### **Review** Advance Praise for American Gospel

"In his American Gospel, Jon Meacham provides a refreshingly clear, balanced, and wise historical portrait of religion and American politics at exactly the moment when such fairness and understanding are much needed. Anyone who doubts the relevance of history to our own time has only to read this exceptional book."-David McCullough, author of 1776

"Jon Meacham has given us an insightful and eloquent account of the spiritual foundation of the early days of the American republic. It is especially instructive reading at a time when the nation is at once engaged in and deeply divided on the question of religion and its place in public life."-Tom Brokaw, author of The Greatest Generation

"An absorbing narrative full of vivid characters and fresh thinking, American Gospel tells how the Founding Fathers-and their successors-struggled with their own religious and political convictions to work out the basic structure for freedom of religion. For me this book was nonstop reading."-Elaine Pagels, professor of religion, Princeton University, author of Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas

"Jon Meacham is one of our country's most brilliant thinkers about religion's impact on American society. In this scintillating and provocative book, Meacham reveals the often-hidden influence of religious belief on the Founding Fathers and on later generations of American citizens and leaders up to our own. Today, as we argue more strenuously than ever about the proper place of religion in our politics and the rest of American life, Meacham's important book should serve as the touchstone of the debate."

-Michael Beschloss, author of The Conquerors

"At a time when faith and freedom seem increasingly polarized, American Gospel recovers our vital center-the middle ground where, historically, religion and public life strike a delicate balance. Well researched, well written, inspiring, and persuasive, this is a welcome addition to the literature."-Jonathan D. Sarna, Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History, Brandeis University, author of American Judaism: A History

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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