

What do the Promises of the Preamble Mean to Me?

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The Preamble of the Constitution of the United States of America is what makes it one of the most recognizable and fondly remembered government documents in all of historical literature. By just reading the introduction, I am struck with awe and admiration for the eloquence and intellect of our Founding Fathers. The Constitution is not only the foundational text on which our government is built, it is also a work of art. The Preamble to the Constitution is imperative because of the promises it makes to the American people. In doing so, it assures us and inspires others as to what the ideal government should be.

To begin, our founders lay out that their intent for this document was to form a more perfect union. They felt, and I agree, that the only way to do this effectively was to have a government that served the citizens. The first promise they make is to secure justice. The act of establishing justice seeks to administer laws that are fair to all citizens; otherwise known as equal representation under the law. To ensure domestic tranquility means to promote peace within our country; and ensure that everyone is safe. To provide for the common defense means that our government has taken it upon itself to shield the citizenry from all threats foreign and domestic. The act of promoting general welfare is the government's way of saying that they will look out for the needs of the people, and assist in elevating the quality of life for all Americans.

This brings us to the final, and I dare say most important, promise found within the Preamble of the Constitution: "To secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." The founding fathers were wise to realize that liberty is not something that is provided by man, but a blessing from God. This is why our Constitution says that the government will only seek to secure liberty, not be the source of it. Liberty is the state of being free within a society to exercise one's God given human and individual rights. The Founders vision for enshrining liberty in our Constitution was to protect the nation's freedoms that had been won by the blood of the brave men who fought and died in the American Revolution. It is important to note that liberty has been preserved only by all service members who made sacrifices in every conflict our nation has endured. This alludes to the inspiration for the Constitution itself. Our founding fathers wanted a

government that would reflect the rights, freedoms, and values of the people of the United States. Because they placed such an emphasis on individual freedoms, our founding fathers set this promise to the people apart from the previous four. They understood that preserving liberty was *so* important that they put the responsibility back on us. They did this by asking every American citizen, including you and me, to continue to preserve liberty for ourselves; as well as for our children and all future generations. When asked by citizens about the government system we were to adopt, Benjamin Franklin wisely responded, “A republic, if you can keep it.” I feel that ensuring the blessings of liberty is the most important promise made within the Preamble because it challenges us to take an active role in the preservation of our freedoms.

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