

## 12/7 - “Freedom of Religion”

“Because religious belief, or non-belief, is such an important part of every person's life, freedom of religion affects every individual. Religious institutions that use government power in support of themselves and force their views on persons of other faiths, or of no faith, undermine all our civil rights. Moreover, state support of an established religion tends to make the clergy unresponsive to their own people, and leads to corruption within religion itself. Erecting the "wall of separation between church and state," therefore, is absolutely essential in a free society.”

"In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot(tyrant), abetting(assisting) his abuses in return for protection to his own." --Thomas Jefferson

### The First Amendment to the US Constitution – The Bill Of Rights Article 1

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

**Write an essay: How do the events of the Salem Witch Trials as depicted in “The Crucible” relate to Jefferson’s views on religion and the first article of the Bill Of Rights? Do you agree or disagree? – Support your analysis with quotes from the texts.**

<b>Intro</b>	<b>Relate an anecdote from your own experiences, observations, or readings about the issue of religion and government. Briefly summarize Jefferson’s view. State whether you agree or disagree.</b>
<b>Body 1</b>	<b>Paraphrase Jefferson’s views in detail and explain what they mean.</b>
<b>Body 2</b>	<b>Explain the connection between religion and government as depicted in “The Crucible.”</b>
<b>Body 3</b>	<b>Explain one way that “The Crucible” dramatizes Jefferson’s view.</b>
<b>Body 4</b>	<b>Explain another way... (to get at least a C)</b>
<b>Body 5</b>	<b>Explain a 3<sup>rd</sup> way... (to get at least an A or B)</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>Agree or disagree and say why?</b>

### **Body 1 – Paraphrase Jefferson:**

**Thomas Jefferson, one of our “Founding Fathers” believed strongly that, “freedom of religion affects every individual.” If a religious group controls the government, they can force people to follow the rules of their religion. Some people may follow another religion, or not believe in religion at all. This takes away peoples civil rights. He also believes that when religion gets involved in government, it stops helping the people and becomes corrupt as well. He believes that if we want to live in a free society, then we must erect a wall of separation between religions and government. When he’s feeling less polite, he even goes so far as to say that priests, throughout history, have always been on the same side as tyrants and oppressors and against freedom.**

### **INTRO – Anecdote:**

**In America, one of the main arguments used by government officials against gay rights, like gays in the military, or gay marriage, or gay adoption, or even the right to have sex, is that it is immoral and sinful. Where do these Senators get the idea that it’s wrong or sinful to be gay, or have pre-marital sex of any kind? They get it from their Bible. Well, what if you are one of the billions of people who don’t believe in that religion? Should you be forced to follow that religions rules and be denied the right to live your life the way you choose? Thomas Jefferson would say no! He would argue that it is wrong to take away the rights of people and force them to follow the rules of someone else’s religion. That is why I strongly agree with Thomas Jefferson and think that it is very important to ensure that religion and government stay separate.**

### **INTRO – ANECDOTE – example #2:**

**In Afghanistan, Muslim Mullahs are often the leaders of the government. Their religion suggests that it is wrong for girls to get an education, and that girls need to cover their bodies from head to toe in thick black clothes called a burka....**

### **INTRO – ANECDOTE – EXAMPLE #3**

**Why is pot and other drugs illegal? Why does the government make rules about what a person can choose to do with their body and their mind? Where do they get the idea that they should make rules and control what a grown person wants to do in the freedom of their own home? Religion. Some religious people believe that the Bible is the absolutely true word of the one and only true God and that everyone should be forced to worship this God and follow his rules. People who don't follow those rules are criminals, and deserve to be jailed, beaten, or killed. The rules are right there, in the Bible. Thomas Jefferson would have strongly disagreed....**

**Body 2 - Explain the connection between religion and government as depicted in "The Crucible."**

**In the play "The Crucible" by Arthur Miller, we learn that back in the 1600's in Massachusetts, the Puritans had a system of government where the priests were in charge and the bible was the word of law. The Bible told them to believe in witches and spirits and the devil and that it was right and holy to kill and punish people for witchcraft. Danforth explains this to the group of girls, "The law, based upon the Bible, and the Bible, writ by Almighty God, forbid the practice of witchcraft, and describe death as the penalty thereof. But likewise, children, the law and Bible damn all bearers of false witness."**

**Body 3 – Explain one way that "The Crucible" dramatizes Jefferson's view.**

**"The Crucible" dramatizes Jefferson's view by offering us the corrupt priest, Rev. Parris.**

**Body 4 – Explain a second way.**

**The play also brings Jefferson's view to life in showing the corruption of the court and Gov. Danforth.**

**Body 5 – Explain a third way.**

**Innocent people are put to death.**

