



“In God We Trust”: Reevaluating George Washington’s Religious Faith

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Introduction

- Importance of such a topic.
- Research Question:
 - Was George Washington a Christian?

Debates Over Washington's Faith

- Historical portrayal: Christian
- 20th-century shift
- Boller: Deist assertion
- Lillback: Challenged narrative
- Ongoing debate: Deism vs. Christianity

Soft vs. Hard Deism

- Crucial distinction in debate over Washington's beliefs
- Historians struggle with Washington's use of "Providence"
- Debate over Washington's religious identity hinges on this distinction
- Historians categorize Washington as "Soft" Deist to reconcile interpretations
- This research refutes Washington being a "Soft" Deist

Christian?

- Acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Actions that follow the idea of being a Christian
- The following questions:
 - Did Washington believe God play an active role in human affairs?
 - Did Washington Attend Church or participate in Church functions?
 - Did Washington actively pray, study scripture, and understand the word of God?
 - Did Washington participate in communion, if he did not than why?

Providence in Washington's Life

- A letter to John Augustine Washington, on July 18th, 1755.
- Robert Jackson letter, August 2nd, 1755.
- Letter to Samuel Langdon, September 28th, 1789.
- Letter to the Hebrew Congregation.

Washington's Church Attendance

- Anglican Church affiliation
- Short, factual journal entries on church attendance
- Active roles as vestryman and church warden
- Continued attendance during war and presidency

Scriptural References

- Washington frequently referenced scripture.
- Notably, he quoted Micah 4:4.
- His biblical language extended to public communications.
- Reflects his deep reverence for religious teachings.

Washington's Practice of Prayer

- Eyewitnesses documented Washington's prayer habits.
- He showed deep scripture understanding in public prayers.
- Privately, he prayed, read the Bible, and sought Providence's guidance.
- His practices reflected Christian beliefs more than Deism.

Understanding Communion

- Lifelong Anglican communicant until the Revolutionary War.
- Ceased communion during the war due to leading a rebellion.
- Resumed communion post-war, showing forgiveness and restoration.
- Used biblical imagery related to communion in his writings.

Conclusion

- Washington's beliefs aligned with Christian principles.
- He actively participated in religious practices.
- His writings and actions reflected a deep reverence for God.
- Washington should be regarded as a Christian figure.

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