

### Answering Question #3

3. The goal of America's founders was to establish a government that would give certain unalienable rights to its citizens.
- a. True
  - b. False

The statement above is false. According to official United States government documents, rights do not come from government; rights come from God. The first part of the Declaration of Independence clearly defines the view of the founders regarding the source of our rights and the purpose of government. In the opening words of the second paragraph, the philosophy and purpose of government is laid out in simple terms:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.— That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men..."*<sup>7</sup>

#### *Philosophy of Government: Rights Come from the Creator*

The basic philosophy of the American form of government is this: Rights come from God. We should never assume that our rights come from government. Doing so is to allow government the place in our minds and hearts that should be occupied by God alone.

#### *Purpose of Government: to Protect Our God-given Rights*

The basic purpose of the American form of government is to protect the rights that God gives to the people. This supports the idea that government is an institution established by God, a concept taught in the Scriptures (see Romans 13:1-4).

These basic ideas came from something that the founders called natural law, which they cited in the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. They declared that *"the Laws of Nature and Nature's God entitled them"*<sup>6</sup> to independence and freedom. To them, these God-given rights were naturally understood. In other words, *"We hold these truths to be self-evident,"* means this should be obvious to anyone who considers it.

May we let these two simple and foundational concepts be burned into our minds: 1) Rights come from the Creator; and 2) The purpose of government is to protect these rights. Then we will have the ability to recognize much of what is good and bad in government.