God and the Founders

Madison, Washington, and Jefferson

Did the Founding Fathers intend to build a “wall of separation” between church and state? Are public displays of the Ten Commandments or the phrase “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance consistent with the Founders’ understandings of religious freedom? In God and the Founders, Dr. Vincent Phillip Muñoz answers these questions by providing new, comprehensive interpretations of James Madison, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson. By analyzing Madison’s, Washington’s, and Jefferson’s public documents, private writings, and political actions, Muñoz explains the Founders’ competing church-state political philosophies. Muñoz explores how Madison, Washington, and Jefferson agreed and disagreed by showing how their different principles of religious freedom would decide the Supreme Court’s most important First Amendment religion cases. God and the Founders answers the question, “What would the Founders do?” for the most pressing church-state issues of our time, including prayer in public schools, government support of religion, and legal burdens on individuals' religious consciences.

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*Madison, Washington, and Jefferson*

VINCENT PHILLIP MUÑOZ

*University of Notre Dame*
For my parents

Vicente Serapio Muñoz, Jr., and

Mary Emma Muñoz
I must admit moreover that it may not be easy, in every possible case, to trace the line of separation between the rights of religion and the Civil authority with such distinctness as to avoid collisions & doubts on unessential points.

James Madison to Rev. Jasper Adams, 1833
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