

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview. Enlightenment Survivor
(10–15 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Goal

Students distinguish between ideas in the Enlightenment that Christians could reasonably support and ideas that conflict with Christianity.

Instructions

1. Do this activity as a class. Tell students: “You must survive the Age of Reason without falling into two extremes: (a) rejecting all reason or (b) worshiping human reason.”
2. Read each statement below, and ask for students. Students must answer with one of these:
 - Accept
 - Reject
 - Accept with Caution

Statements/Suggested Answers/Key:

- Scientific discoveries help humans better understand creation.
Accept
 - Human reason should replace the Bible as mankind’s highest authority.
Reject
 - Government power should be limited because humans are flawed.
Accept
 - People should be free to produce and trade voluntarily.
Accept (*Economics: A Christian Worldview* discusses this in more detail.)
 - Truth can only come through scientific experimentation.
Reject
 - Separating government powers helps prevent tyranny.
Accept
 - Religion is unnecessary because mankind can solve its own problems.
Reject
 - Reason is useful, but human beings are still sinful and limited.
Accept
 - A society should remove all religious influence from public life.
Reject
 - An idea first promoted during the Enlightenment must automatically be anti-Christian.
Reject
3. Ask the class: “What’s more dangerous: rejecting reason completely, or treating reason like a god?”
(Students often have some lively answers for this one!)

Debrief

- Ask students to come up with a brief statement that sums up the Christian view of reason. (Students might come up with something like “There’s nothing wrong with using reason, just with exalting it above God.”)
- Share this famous verse in the Bible: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).