

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview
Short Film: “Walter Williams – Why the Founders Did Not Want a Democracy”
(12–15 Minutes)
(TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY)

Goal

This short film (7:34) explains the dangers of democracy as a form of government.

Instructions

1. Play this short film for students; tell them to take notes on main ideas/interesting facts:

<https://youtu.be/IDs7uBRsRY4>

2. Put students in pairs/groups and have them discuss for 3-5 minutes, then as a class.

3. **Notes:**

- The word “democracy” is not in any of America’s founding documents (Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, etc.).
- U.S. Constitution is NOT a “majoritarian” document (President not elected by majority vote; President can veto a bill, and only 2/3 of Congress can override his veto)
- Presidents who promised to uphold the Constitution wouldn’t be elected, because so many Americans are hooked on handouts from other Americans.
- James Madison vetoed a bill in 1794 to help refugees, because he said there’s no part of the Constitution that allows Congress to spend money on benevolence.
- 2/3 to ¾ of the U.S. budget is made up of handouts/transfer payments from some Americans to others.
- Madison: “Charity is not a legitimate function of government.”
- Federalist Paper #45: “The powers delegated to the U.S. government are few and well defined and restricted mostly to external affairs. Those powers left to the states are indefinite and numerous.”
- Man’s history has been control and abuse by leaders; man’s biggest enemy has been government.
- 60 million killed in 19th century; 100 million were murdered by government in 20th century.
- Bill of Rights language: “Congress shall not ___, ___, ___, etc.”
- Second Amendment is misunderstood by most (“The founders wanted to protect our right to arms so we could go deer and duck hunting!”), but the purpose of the Second Amendment was to keep the people armed in case government became tyrannical.
- Many Americans love government, because it steals on their behalf from some and gives it to them—it does something they would be arrested for if they did it!

Ask students:

- “What are some ways that some Americans want others to be stolen from, and the money given to them?
Answers will vary, but students might say welfare payments, government schools, health care, jobs, etc.
- “How does democracy as a form of government allow this to happen?”
AWV, but if a simple majority gets to vote on something, then the minority has to go along with it in a democracy, even if that bill voted upon violates their rights.
- “Why do you think so many today support the idea of democracy/majority rule?”
AWV, but many probably think it sounds fair/reasonable/participatory, not considering the dangers.