



“Introduction to the Constitution” Series

Lecture 2: “The Principles of the Constitution: Representation”

Presented by Larry Arnn, President, Hillsdale College

In his second lecture, Dr. Arnn describes the Constitution - in particular, the concept of “representation.”

The study guide below is designed to aid in the comprehension of the first lecture, as well as provide a basis of discussion for group learning.

Lecture Notes:

Comprehension Questions

1. What was one of the great complaints of the Progressive movement?
2. Government by consent is the first guarantee of what two things?
3. What did Madison mean by factions?
4. What is meant by the term sovereign? Who in the United States is sovereign?
5. What are two advantages of representative government?

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it necessary to have the arrangements of government in the Constitution rather than simply having majority rule?
2. Discuss ways in which the good of the individual is inseparable from the good of the community.
3. Discuss Adam Smith's example of "the butcher and the baker" and how they relate to self-interest and harmony in a society.
4. In what sense can the principles of limited government and separation of powers can be reduced down to representation?

Comprehension Question Answers

1. That a minority in a group can place limits on the power and authority of a majority of the group.
2. Limited government and freedom.
3. A group animated by a passion or an interest adverse to the rights of other people.
4. To be sovereign is to be the source of political authority. In the United States, the People are sovereign.
5. It allows sovereignty to be located outside the government and it allows the country to expand and yet be governable.

Additional Notes: