



“Introduction to the Constitution” Series

Lecture 3: “The Principles of the Constitution: Separation of Powers and Limited Government”

Presented by Larry Arnn, President, Hillsdale College

In his third lecture, Dr. Arnn describes the Constitution - in particular, the concepts of separation of powers and limited government.

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

Lecture Notes:

Comprehension Questions

1. Fill in the blanks:

_____ is the great feature of the Constitution from outside of the government. From inside the government, the great feature is _____ of _____.

2. a. What was James Madison's response to the states' concerns about the power of the federal government consuming the powers of the states?

2. b. What Amendment overturned that power?

3. What branch of government did the Founders think was the most dangerous, and why?

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does separation of powers interfere with the bureaucratic state?

2. How is federalism related to the separation of powers?

3. In what ways are representation and limited government related to each other?

Comprehension Question Answers

1. Representation is the great feature of the Constitution from outside of the government. From inside the government, the great feature is Separation of Powers.
2. a. The state legislatures are responsible for electing the members of the Senate.
2. b. 17th Amendment.
3. The legislative branch, because it is closest to the sovereign, the people.

Additional Notes: