

SLIDE	NOTES
1	In this module we discuss the basics of learning The United States Constitution so as to empower ourselves to advocate for the inspired principles contained within it.
2	<p>WHY STUDY Q: Why study The Constitution?</p> <p>Anim1: Quote President John Taylor * Religion is a form of Politics...The two are mutually dependent. * It is not good enough to know...We must know <i>well enough</i> to be able to teach. * Notice that President Taylor is also not mentioning specific parties, he is talking general political philosophy.</p> <p>Anim2: Quote President Joseph F. Smith We should always remember that Christ Himself raised up the Founding Fathers in order to establish the Constitution, and The Constitution needs to be defended. * Quote (D&C 101:80)</p> <p>Anim3: Quote President Benson said: Q: How can we save something we know very little about?</p> <p>Q: What's in The Constitution that is so important to where Christ would cause it to come about "through the shedding of blood" in the Revolutionary War?</p> <p>We will discuss the United State Constitution in the next module. If we don't know much about it, we can't save it from those who would want to destroy it.</p>
3	<p>CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS * The constitution does not <i>grant</i> freedom. ... Based on the Natural Rights definition of justice, freedom is an inalienable right of every individual citizen independent of any government document. * The purpose of the Constitution however, is to <i>protect</i> our freedoms.</p> <p>Anim1: Pillars (Bill of Rights) * When it came time to ratify the constitution, anti-federalists felt the new constitution gave the federal government too much power at the expense of the states and that the Constitution lacked protections for people's individual rights. * To help satisfy Anti-Federalist opposition to ratification of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights (which consists of the first 10 amendments) was written and adopted.</p> <p>Anim2: 1st Amendment * For example, consider the 1st amendment which explicitly describes 4 "pillar" freedoms.</p> <p>Anim3: Freedom of Religion * The first "pillar freedom" prohibits the government from making laws EITHER establishing religion, OR prohibiting the free exercise of religion. * This idea of NEITHER establishing OR prohibiting embodies the idea of "separation of Church and State" * Even though that phrase isn't explicitly stated in the Constitution itself, the meaning is equivalent. * This necessarily means the same religious liberty granted to Latter-day Saints, is also granted to every other religion, and we must learn to coexist without stepping on each other's rights.</p> <p>Anim3: Freedom of Speech The second "pillar freedom" prohibits the government from cutting off free speech.</p>

	<p>Anim3: Freedom of the press The third "pillar freedom" prohibits the government from cutting off a free press.</p> <p>Anim4: Freedom of peaceable assembly The fourth "pillar freedom" prohibits the government from cutting off the right of the people PEACEABLY to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.</p> <p>* If you are going to actually have freedom of religion, you have to be free to speak, to publish, and assemble...Without these pillar freedoms there can be no freedom of religion.</p> <p>* Other freedoms in the bill of rights include the right to bear arms, the right against unreasonable search and seizures, protection of rights to life, liberty, and property, rights of accused persons, etc.</p> <p>Anim5: 9th and 10th Amendment * The 9th and 10th amendments state that the government has <i>only</i> the specific powers explicitly granted in the Constitution, and not a blank check to assume more powers. * All other powers are retained by the people or the States.</p>
4	<p>STUDYING THE CONSTITUTION There is a lot to the Constitution Q: With such a big task of understanding all of these concepts, how should we go about studying the constitution as a whole?</p> <p>Anim: Maps We simplyfy it, and go about it just like we would when visiting a zoo.</p> <p>Q: What do you generally do the first time you go to an amusement park, theme park, or zoo? * You get a map of the attractions. * With a map of the zoo you know your way around the zoo. * Studying the constitution is no different. With a map of the constitution you know your way around the constitution. * We need to break it down into smaller parts, classify, categorize, and put together a map.</p>
5	<p>CONSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW MAP We are going to go through building a simplified map of the Constitutional attractions. When we are finished, everyone should be able to walk up to a white board, draw it out, and easily explain it.</p> <p>Anim1: Highest Level At the highest level, you can comprehend the entire Constitution with 3 boxes and 3 numbers: 1:7:27</p> <p>Anim2: Preamble One Preamble</p> <p>Anim3: Articles Seven Articles</p> <p>Anim4: Amendments Twenty-Seven Amendments including the first 10 which are called the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>* The Constitution is the document that created the United States...Before this time, the United States didn't really exist, but was a loose confederation. * The previous experience of the early 13 states with the Articles of Confederation among the original 13 States was a disaster.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The government under the Articles of Confederation was far too weak to enforce laws and therefore had no real power. * Each state conducted their own foreign policy. * Each State printed their own money and levied their own taxes which made trade extremely difficult. <p>Anim5: Preamble The preamble is a single sentence "mission statement" for the Constitution as a whole. * It answers the question "Why the Constitution?" with six reasons. Quote</p>
6	<p>LEGISLATIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Next, we understand the 7 Articles * Each of the seven articles are subdivided into <i>sections</i> containing specific <i>clauses</i> enumerating specific governmental authority. <p>Anim1: 7 boxes Drilling down a level, we can understand each of the articles with 7 boxes Anim2: Quote Article 1 Describes the Legislative Branch Anim3: Quotes Various sections in Article 1 describe Monetary Clauses</p> <p>Anim4: Purse Easily remember the legislative power as the "Power of the Purse"...along with other powers involving MAKING laws.</p>
7	<p>EXECUTIVE</p> <p>Next, we understand the Executive Branch in Article 2</p> <p>Anim1: Quote President Anim2: Quotes Militia Clauses Anim3: Sword</p> <p>Easily remember the executive power as the "Power of the Sword"...associated with ENFORCING laws.</p>
8	<p>JUDICIAL</p> <p>Next, we understand the Judicial Branch in Article 3</p> <p>Anim1: Quote Courts Anim2: Gavel</p> <p>Easily remember the judicial power as the "Power of the Gavel"...associated with INTERPRETING laws.</p>
9	<p>OTHER ARTICLES</p> <p>Moving quickly through the other articles.</p> <p>Anim1: Article 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Describes unifying relations between the states such as citizens of one state being entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in another state. * The process for admitting new states is described. * A guarantee of republican form of government to every State in the Union. Anim2: Unify Easily remember the State Relations with the word "Unify".</p> <p>Anim3: Article 5 Describes the Constitutional amendment process Anim4: Adapt Easily remember the amendment process with the word "Adapt".</p>

	<p>Anim5: Article 6 Describes the supremacy of the Constitution as the ultimate law of the land, and governmental officers bound by oath to uphold the Constitution.</p> <p>Anim6: Oath Easily remember the Constitution supremacy with the word "Oath".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Our National governmental representatives take an oath of obedience to the Federal Constitution, NOT an oath of obedience to any specific person. * Abraham Lincoln recognized the supremacy of the Federal Constitution and kept the Federal Union together throughout the Civil War conflict. <p>Anim7: Article 7 Describes the ratification process required from the original 13 states.</p> <p>Anim8: Adopt Easily remember the ratification process with the word "Adopt".</p>
10	<p>AMENDMENTS</p> <p>Other helpful parts to the "Constitutional Zoo" include an overview of the Amendments and Checks and Balances.</p> <p>Anim1: Quotes Overview Bill of Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The first 10 amendments called the "Bill of Rights" were added at ratification time to address specific protections that opponents felt were lacking. <p>Anim2: Quotes Other Amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The subsequent 17 amendments were added at specific times to address specific issues that came up such as abolition of slavery, women's right to vote, two-term limit for the president, and so on... * Just because we have the ability to do amendments doesn't mean we are necessarily improving the constitution. If we do amendments wrong, we can tear down the constitution by potentially undercutting the protections put in place with the original intent. <p>It is important to understand an overview of the CHECKS AND BALANCES the founders put in place as protections. Like the game Rock-Paper-Scissors each having a specific power over the other.</p> <p>Anim3: Quotes Under the Executive Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The President can grant Federal Pardons, appoints Federal judges, veto congressional laws, and call special sessions of congress. <p>Anim4: Quotes Under the Judicial Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The Supreme Court can Declare Congressional legislation or Presidential actions as unconstitutional. <p>Anim5: Quotes Under the Legislative Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Congress can override presidential veto, not approve presidential treaties, impeach a president, impeach judges, and overrule court decisions by amending the Constitution. <p>Q: What happens when the checks and balances don't function?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * More or less than this cometh of evil. * There are many historical examples of sweeping executive orders and supreme court decisions legislating from the bench which undercut protections of Natural Rights.
11	<p>SWEEPING OR ELASTIC CLAUSES</p> <p>Q: So with all of this specific structure and language, what is it about The Constitution that needs protecting and saving?</p> <p>Anim1: Interpretation of Sweeping or Elastic Clauses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Certain "sweeping or Elastic clauses" have been interpreted at times throughout our history in a way that allows the federal government to take on more powers than perhaps the founders originally intended. <p>Anim2: 4 Clauses</p>

* Consider the following Four examples which include language that is a little broad and open to interpretation allowing latitude in things not specifically mentioned in the Constitution to be implemented in order to facilitate the specific powers that are listed.

Anim3: General Welfare Clause

Quote For example: Consider the content of The General Welfare Clause

Q: Do you see any potential problems with this?

* The devil is in the details of what "General Welfare" means. Politicians can usurp a lot of power in the name of "General Welfare".

Anim4: Interpretation

* An originalist interpretation comes from a perspective of a Constitutional Republic, Based on Natural Rights definition of justice, in a limited government with enumerated powers.

* A statist interpretation usurps power in a way the framers didn't intend, based on an administrative state implementing the social good definition of justice, in an unlimited government with all kinds of implied powers.

Q: What is the potential problem with the power to collect taxes?

Anim5: INTENT: Welfare

* This takes us out of the "*Content*" discussion and into an "*Intent*" discussion

* Chapter 17 of President Benson's book "An Enemy Hath Done This" is called "Taxation - A Power to Destroy"

* Where the perspective of the founders era was a *free and open market* economy facilitating the general welfare of the whole country...

* The perspective of the progressive era is an oppressive tax system used by the government to redistribute wealth and establish "Social Justice" through expansion of the *welfare state*.

Anim6: Commerce Clause

Quote The *content* of the commerce clause gives Congress the power to regulate commerce among the states.

Anim7: INTENT: Commerce

* Where the perspective of the founders era was to *unleash* the power of a fair and free market.

* The perspective of the progressive era is a highly *regulated* market controlled by the government into *socialized institutions* such as collectives and unions.

Anim8: Necessary and Proper Clause

Quote The *content* of the necessary and proper clause gives Congress the power to implement laws for unforeseen issues necessary to carry out their specific delineated powers.

Anim9: INTENT: Necessary and Proper

* Where the perspective of the founders era was to ensure limited, and enumerated powers.

* The perspective of the progressive era is for the government to assume unlimited bureaucratic powers to become an overly powerful *administrative state*.

Anim10: Supremacy Clause

Quote The *content* of the supremacy clause makes the Constitution and associated Federal Laws have primacy over State law.

Anim11: INTENT: Supremacy

* Where the perspective of the founders era was to ensure a constitutional republic.

* The perspective of the progressive era is to gradually consolidate federal power away from the States and the people to an *absolute central power*.

SUMMARY

Q: If there wasn't a problem with The Constitution being attacked, then what was president Benson and many other prophets warning us about?

* The ongoing battle is between The Natural Rights definition of justice and The Social Good definition of justice.

* At this point in our nation, we have drifted from Natural Rights and in some measure are all Welfare State Socialists now.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Expansion of the Welfare State, Socialization of The Economy, Rise of a Bureaucratic Administrative State, and the Consolidation of Central Power are the biggest examples of progressive changing of intent. * All of this happened by simple re-interpretation of language instead of the formal amendment process as was supposed to happen. * By redefining meaning away from the original intent, the formal amendment process was bypassed and we ended up with a different document moving our country away from a natural rights definition of justice to a social good definition of justice. * The reason for "befriending" then is to be vigilant and take back our rights, that many of us haven't even realized we have lost. * Befriending The Constitution means befriending the original intent. Anything more or less than this "cometh of evil".
12	<p>Befriending The Constitution</p> <p>Q: If Latter-day Saints are justified in "befriending" the constitution, then why would we be reluctant or think it "inappropriate" to stand up anywhere and bear testimony to these political principles laid out by Christ himself?</p> <p>Anim1: Quote President Ezra Taft Benson Anim2: Quote Joseph Smith</p> <p>Joseph Smith and President Benson, obviously were not timid in "befriending" the U.S. Constitution in a religious setting...neither should we.</p> <p>Anim3: Quote Joseph Smith (Kirtland Temple dedication)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * YES, the Constitution of the United States can be tied directly to Jesus Christ, and, therefore, clears the bar of appropriateness in ANY Church setting—including temple dedications. * With all the political troubles going on today, increasingly there are Latter-day Saints who believe that what is needed is for a modern-day Captain Moroni to rise up among us and hoist a "title of liberty" in the air for all us to rally behind, (Alma 46:13, 36), * This sentiment is an enormous error on our part ... our Latter-day Captain Moroni has already arrived, but he was actually a General ... George Washington who was unanimously elected to preside over the Constitutional Convention. * The "title of liberty" for our day has already been hoisted and it is called the Constitution of the United States. * It is now up to us to defend and protect it.
13	Questions?