



Speeches for Civic and Legal Groups

Motive Matters

Why do some public displays containing manger scenes or the Ten Commandments violate the Establishment Clause while others don't? On first glance, the cases seem inconsistent and confusing, but closer examination reveals that we can predict the results by asking two questions. How does the display incorporate the religious elements? And what is the government's motive? This speech will show that the Establishment Clause display cases are consistent with these two practical tests.

The First Amendment Wasn't

Did you know that the First Amendment was actually the third; that its author, James Madison, didn't believe it was necessary; or that Thomas Jefferson wasn't there when it was written? This speech explores the history of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and provides insight into the question, "What did the founders think the First Amendment meant?"

God in the Classroom

In 1943, the Supreme Court ruled that schools cannot require students to salute the flag if doing so conflicts with their religion. In 1962, the Supreme Court ruled that states cannot encourage public schools to start the day with prayer. Put another way, the 1943 case said schools cannot lock God out of the classroom, and the 1962 case said schools cannot invite him in. So who can bring God into the classroom? This speech will discuss the general principles the U.S. Supreme Court has used to answer that question.