

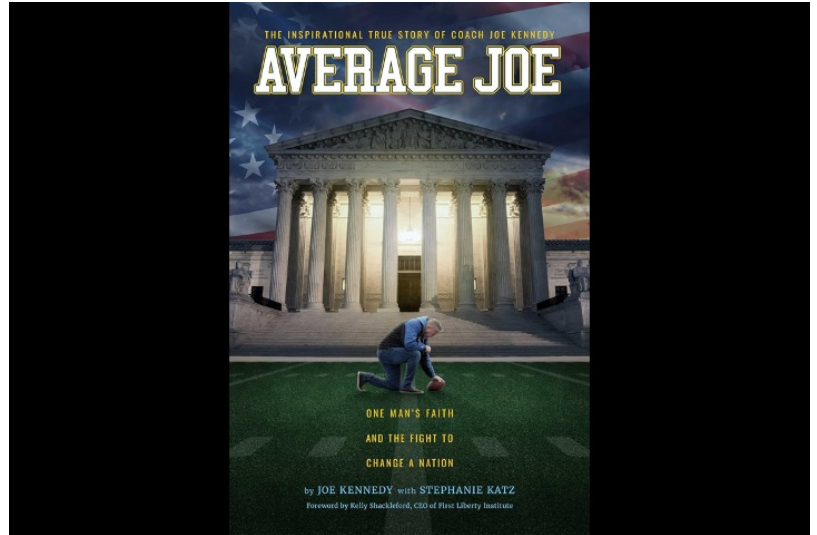


Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 30, 2023

Football Coach Joe Kennedy Pens Book on How a Commoner Can Make a Difference

[In an interview at The Daily Signal last week](#), Joe Kennedy, the football coach whose Supreme Court ruling is now obliterating the “separation of church and state” canard, expressed an eternal truth:

If you could take a [common man] like me and change the path of the nation as far as religious freedom and the First Amendment goes, imagine what He could do with some other people if they just gave [Him] a chance.



[Amazon.com](#)

His autobiography, *Average Joe: The Coach Joe Kennedy Story*, was released last week, and [is being touted at Amazon](#):

The victory in *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* opened the door for thousands of previously settled cases regarding public prayer to be reexamined with a friendlier eye to personal religious expression.

It is said that big gates swing on little hinges, and Kennedy’s story certainly qualifies as a little hinge on the big gate of the war on religious freedom in America. His story scarcely needs repeating, but the ruling from the Supreme Court in June 2022 bears repeating. Time and again Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch exposed the lie that has driven the war against faith for more than a hundred years.

But first it must be remembered that the Founders of the American Republic debated on just how to word the First Amendment in such a way as to protect the private religious freedom of an individual from governmental tyranny, and the result was this: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

It was their best way of protecting sovereign citizens from being forced to acknowledge a government-sanctioned religion in violation of their personal right to express their faith in God in their own way.

But even that effort wasn’t sufficient for the church elders of the Danbury Baptist Association of Connecticut. In 1802 they wrote to the new president of the Republic, Thomas Jefferson, asking him for clarification of just what the Founders meant a decade earlier in penning the First Amendment.

Jefferson responded:

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should “make no law



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respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.

Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation on behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties.

The Bill of Rights Institute noted that Jefferson's phrase "wall of separation between Church & State" has been twisted and abused to further evil ends:

This phrase became so famous that many have come to believe it is in the Constitution, though it is not. Jefferson's letter has been used by the Supreme Court, including Justice Hugo Black, as "almost an authoritative declaration" as to the Founders' intent for the Establishment Clause.

Of course it is not, but much damage has been done to the religious foundations of the culture by and through its misuse.

That is what makes the ruling in *Kennedy* so important. As Justice Gorsuch wrote for the majority:

Here, the [Bremerton School] District suggests that any visible religious conduct by a teacher or coach should be deemed—without more and as a matter of law—impermissibly coercive on students.

In essence, the District asks us to adopt the view that the only acceptable government role models for students are those who eschew any visible religious expression....

Such a rule would be a sure sign that our Establishment Clause jurisprudence had gone off the rails. In the name of protecting religious liberty, the District would have us suppress it....

We are aware of no historically sound understanding of the Establishment Clause that begins to "mak[e] it necessary for government to be hostile to religion" in this way.

Gorsuch called out the twisting of Jefferson's response in order to further the undermining of the religious foundation of the Republic:

In truth, there is no conflict between the constitutional commands before us. There is only the "mere shadow" of a conflict, a false choice premised on a misconstruction of the Establishment Clause....

And in no world may a government entity's concerns about *phantom constitutional violations* justify actual violations of an individual's First Amendment rights. [Emphasis added.]

Father Michael P. Orsi, the Roman Catholic priest who hosts *Action for Life TV*, exposed the lie, calling it a "bludgeon" to obliterate all traces of religious faith in the culture:



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Jefferson sought to reassure [his readers] that the First Amendment guaranteed that an American “owes account to none other for his faith or his worship” — that there was “a wall of separation between Church & State.”

This famous phrase resonates down to today, though in different ways.

Some point to it as proof that in the United States each person is free to worship and believe as individual conscience dictates. Some are relieved that no one must submit to a government-enforced religion.

Others, however, have insisted that Jefferson’s “wall of separation” restricts churches and clergy from getting involved in politics.

This erroneous interpretation has been repeated so often that many people assume it must be true. Yet the “wall of separation” was purely a metaphor by which Jefferson sought to express the effects of the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment.

No reference to a “wall of separation” exists in any of our founding documents.

[But] the idea has made a dandy bludgeon....

Father Orsi called on churches to stand up against the lie:

Churches must defend truth and the reality that God’s law supersedes human intention. When the mythical “wall of separation” excludes Judeo-Christian values from the public square, when faith and morality have no influence, society crumbles.

We believers must insist that our faith leaders challenge this persistent myth. And we must stand behind them when they’re bludgeoned for championing God and defending religious freedom. Our future as a nation depends on it.

So said America’s first president, George Washington, in his farewell address:

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports....

Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

That is what makes *Kennedy* such an important victory in the war against faith currently raging in our nation. And all it took was one man, standing against the tide, along with the patience of Job and faith in God.

In an interview at *Christian Post*, Kennedy concluded:

Not to sound really cliché, but I really am an average guy. There’s nothing remarkable about me.



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But God can take a person like me, and just change the whole trajectory of the United States and bring God right back into the public schools. That's pretty amazing.

So, if people get involved and they let God use them, it's going to be amazing to see what happens to America over the next few years.

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