

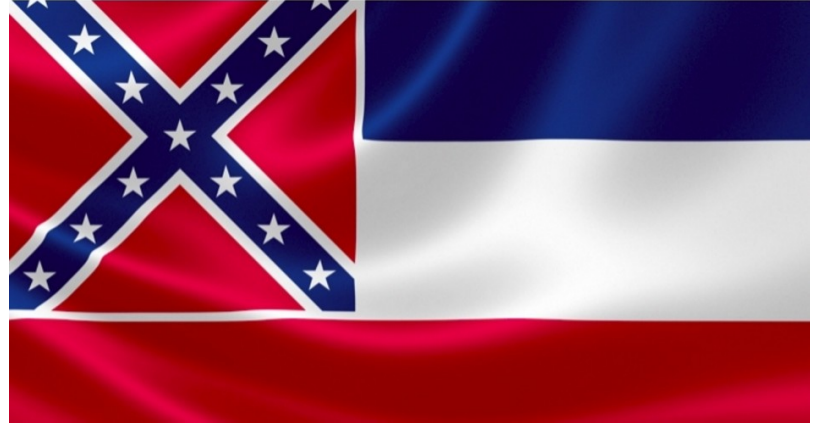


Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 27, 2020

## Satanists Liken “In God We Trust” on New Mississippi Flag to Confederate Emblem; Threaten Lawsuit

Calling “In God We Trust” “divisive” and likening its government use to saying “In Satan We Trust,” the Satanic Temple has threatened a lawsuit if Mississippi puts our official national motto on its new flag.

The latter is the plan, too. For while the public is engaged in devising the Magnolia State’s new flag — approximately 600 proposals have been submitted thus far — a new state law sets two conditions for its design: It cannot include the Confederate emblem (whose presence inspired its alteration, of course).



And the flag *must* include our national motto, “In God We Trust.”

The same law also created a nine-member commission, which will put a single design on the ballot for Mississippians’ approval. “If voters accept it, that will become the new flag,” [reported](#) the *Charlotte Observer* last week. “If voters reject it, the commission will draw a new design following the same two rules, and that will go on the ballot later.”

But already rejecting it is the aforementioned Satanic Temple; this isn’t surprising because Satanists have already rejected God. Yet their threatened lawsuit matters because while most Americans don’t share Satanists’ contempt for Him, too many Americans do share their First Amendment misconceptions.

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As to this, MSN.com [tells us](#) that a “letter sent by the Satanic Temple to Attorney General Lynn Fitch [of Mississippi] cites constitutional concerns regarding the First Amendment, saying the phrase ‘In God We Trust’ is not representative of all Mississippians.”

It certainly isn’t, but this is irrelevant. Most everyone is offended by something, most everything offends someone, and nothing represents everybody. Whether it’s a message relating to multiculturalism, environmentalism, female empowerment, Black Lives Matter, or something else, some people will take exception to it. Pleasing all of the people all of the time is not a prerequisite for government embrace of a symbol or sentiment.

The Satanic Temple also drew an equivalence between the Confederate flag and our national motto, calling the former a “divisive symbol of exclusion” and the latter “a divisive phrase of exclusion.” It said that replacing one with the other “does not eliminate exclusion, but rather moves it from one group to a collection of others.”

Again, though, this is unavoidable. Just consider that *any* flag is “exclusive” in the above sense because it won’t “represent” those who reject it (e.g., the American flag doesn’t represent the cultural revolutionaries who despise it).



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Further making the Satanists' case, "the letter points out that including the words 'In Satan We Trust' on the flag would likewise cause Christians to 'be a bit put off,'" MSN also informs.

This is all-too-common sophistry. Here's how the con works: Tendentiously categorize things — under the heading "religious" or "secular," for example — then insist that all within that socially constructed category must, for some odd reason, be treated precisely the same way.

Applying this consistently reveals the folly. Would we, for instance, insist on considering and treating liberalism, conservatism, Marxism, libertarianism, and Nazism identically because they all fall under the heading "ideology"? Is saying "I trust the Salvation Army" the same as saying "I trust the KKK" because both statements reference "organizations"?

Since nothing can represent everyone and since government will embrace *some* symbols and sentiments, *qualitative* judgments must be made. And, no relativism here, God and Satan aren't close to equivalent.

Our history reflects this standard. As I recently [pointed out](#), the Founding Fathers opened the very first Congress with exclusively Christian prayers, they remained exclusively Christian for most of our history, and even today are mainly so.

Thus, claiming such behavior violates the Establishment Clause implies the preposterous: that the Founders didn't understand First Amendment — the document they themselves crafted!

The courts have recognized this constitutional reality as well. As MSN.com points out, "In [O'Hair v. Blumenthal](#), the court noted that language in Supreme Court cases indicates that the national motto, and its use on coin and currency, does not infringe on First Amendment rights."

The SCOTUS also ruled in 2014 in *Town of Greece v. Galloway* that even though the town had "mostly Christian clergy delivering frequently sectarian prayers before an audience that often included average citizens with business to conduct," these "facts didn't make what the Greece Town Board did unconstitutional," [reported USA Today](#) at the time.

The mistake often made here is in not realizing that the First Amendment forbids only the central government's "establishment" of religion.

It does not prohibit government *showcasing* of religion.

Thus, showcasing a particular religion (or theist idea) is not synonymous with establishing a particular religion. (So there needn't be a Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster [display](#) alongside a Nativity scene at Christmastime.)

So, yes, we can have a government that acknowledges God *and* also a separation of Satan and state. Of course, certain people will continue claiming otherwise, as effecting a separation of Satan and statistis is a more complicated matter.

*Image: Thinkstock*

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