

## 2004-05 Dallas Executive Precepts Program

Sponsored by the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions  
Princeton University

### Religion and Politics

The topic of this year's seminar will be **Religion and Politics**. In classical paganism, religion was in the service of the state because the goal of religion was to petition the gods for the good of the state. The development of Socratic philosophy and Christianity challenged this view. They proposed that the purpose of human existence was to flourish, not so much in this life as in the next. They concluded that the state's purpose should be to prepare the souls of its citizens for the next life. In the first four classes we will look at this debate. During the last four classes, we will consider how in the modern period the desire for religious freedom, and for intellectual freedom more broadly, has led people to try to turn politics away from questions of the soul and limit it to affairs strictly of this world.

### Schedule and Reading List

- October 15, 2004: Plato, **Apology**
- November 19, 2004: Augustine, **City of God** (selections)
- December 10, 2004: Machiavelli, **The Prince** (selections)
- January 14, 2005: Shakespeare, **Richard II**
- February 18, 2005: Milton, **Paradise Lost** (selections)
- March 18, 2005: Calvin, **Institutes of the Christian Religion, III.19, "Of Christian Liberty"**
- April 15, 2005: Mill, **On Liberty** (selections)
- May 20, 2005: Solzhenitsyn, **Gulag Archipelago**, Volume II, Part IV.
- June 17, 2005: Precept conducted by Professor Robert P. George
- Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance
  - Jefferson's Letter to the Danbury Baptists
  - George Washington's National Day of Thanksgiving Proclamation of October 13, 1789
  - Lincoln's proclamation of a National Day of Prayer and Fasting on September 26, 1861 (issued after the defeat of the Union army at Bull Run)

- Lincoln's proclamation of a National Fast day on March 30, 1863
- Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address