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| Grade Level: High School | Study Unit: American Revolution | Lesson Topic: Congress | Resource Materials: Aitken Bible Preface |
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Objective:

High school students will understand the actions of **Congress** during the American Revolution. In addition, students will see how the colonies pursued economic, political, and religious freedom. Finally, students will explore how the desire for all three freedoms was demonstrated by Congress approving the Aitken Bible.

Procedure:

- Explanation of how Congress formed and progressed
 - First Continental Congress convened in 1774.
 - Met because of the Intolerable Acts
 - Second Continental Congress convened from 1775 to 1781.
 - Met shortly after the start of the Revolutionary War
 - Adopted the Declaration of Independence in July 1776
 - Congress of the Confederation convened from 1781 to 1789.
 - Met under the Articles of Confederation in March 1781, after ratification
 - Adopted the Constitution of the United States of America in September 1787
- Class discussion of why Congress pursued economic, political, and religious freedom
 - Congress defended the colonies when the British restricted these freedoms.
 - Economic restriction: for example, with the Boston Port Act of 1774, the British closed the port of Boston to business as punishment for the Boston Tea Party.
 - Political restriction: for example, with the Massachusetts Government Act of 1774, the British gave power over Massachusetts to the British-appointed governor.
 - Religious restriction: for example, by funding the Church of England, whose clergy were loyalists, the British helped to make the Church state-sponsored in five colonies.
- Explanation of the Aitken Bible as an example of how Congress pursued all three freedoms
 - Second Continental Congress chose two chaplains from different denominations in October 1777.
 - This showed Congress, unlike the British, would not favor one denomination.
 - Congress of the Confederation asked the chaplains to review the Aitken Bible in September 1782.
 - Although the Congress of the Confederation could not tax and so had limited means to offer financial support, it issued an official approval of Robert Aitken printing the Bible in 1782, with no acknowledgment of the British license which had prohibited the printing of the Bible in America.
 - Thus, Congress would let printers profit from the Bible (economic freedom).
 - Thus, Congress would not hold a license on the Bible (political freedom).
 - Thus, the British could not stop the printing of the Bible (religious freedom).

Closure/Review:

The class will discuss Congress in colonial America. What were the three freedoms Congress defended? What are some of the ways the British restricted these freedoms? Since the British made money printing the Bible, how did Congress approving the Aitken Bible show economic freedom? Since the British held a license on the Bible, how did Congress approving the Aitken Bible show political freedom? Since the British prohibited printing the Bible in America, how did Congress approving the Aitken Bible show religious freedom?