

AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

8/20/2017

In our series we have proven beyond dispute that America was founded and flourished as a Judao-Christian nation. Today we add to this important series with some thoughts about Thomas Jefferson.

I WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT JEFFERSON.

A. Liberals have tried to demean Jefferson;

1. They say he approved of separation between church and state.
2. They say it was his desire to eradicate Christianity from America.
3. They claim he is the creator of our secular educational system

B. Jefferson has been painted as a;

1. Atheist
2. Infidel
3. Deist
4. Skeptic

II. WHAT HISTORY SAYS ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF JEFFERSON

A. Let's notice some facts about his religious belief system:

1. He attended a Christian school and was taught by Christian Pastors.
2. He regularly attended the largest church in America at that time housed inside the Capitol building in Washington.
3. He served on the vestry of the Anglican Church
4. He attended the Anglican Church regularly but also attended;

- a. Presbyterian churches
 - b. Methodist churches
 - c. Baptist churches
5. Jefferson included a prayer in each of his two inaugural addresses.
6. Jefferson had 110 personal friends who were clergymen.
7. Jefferson not only attended church but supported them financially.
- a. He supported his personal church financially
 - b. While President he financially supported ten different churches.
 - c. He gave money to pastors
 - d. He gave money to Christian Schools
 - e. He gave money to Christian Colleges
 - f. He gave money to Bible societies
8. Jefferson was a daily Bible student of the Word
- a. He read the Bible in English
 - b. He read the Bible in Greek
 - c. He read the Bible in Latin
 - d. He read the Bible in French.
- B. While functioning in Government Jefferson provided a means for religion.
- 1. He signed bills appropriating money for chaplains in Congress.
 - 2. He signed bills appropriating money for chaplains in the armed services.
 - 3. He signed the "Articles of War" which "earnestly recommended all officers and soldiers, diligently attend Divine services."

C. Jefferson approved additional churches in Washington to be located in the;

1. War Office

2. Treasury building

D. Jefferson ordered the Marine Band to play for the services.

III. JEFFERSON SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF AND ACTS ON HIS RELIGIOUS VIEWS

A. In a letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush dated April 21, 1803 Jefferson said; "My views...are the result of a life of inquiry and reflection and very different from the anti-Christian system imputed to me by those who know nothing of my opinions."

B. In a letter to the Rev. Samuel Miller Jefferson said; "I consider the government of the United States as interdicted from meddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, disciplines, or exercises. This results from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment of religion, or the free exercise there, but also from that which reserves to the states the powers not delegated to the United States. Certainly no power over religious discipline has been delegated to the general government. It must thus rest with the states as far as it can be in any human authority."

C. In another letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush Jefferson said; "I am a Christian."

D. His letter of renown written to the Danbury Baptist of Danbury, Connecticut stated; "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man and his God, that he owes account to none other for faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state."

- E. At the request of President Jefferson Congress ratified a treaty with a tribe of Indians.
 - 1. They voted to give \$100.00 for an annual subsidy for the support of a minister to minister to the Indians.
 - 2. The treaty also included money for the “erection of a church.”
 - 3. Members of Congress understood the value of imparting Judeo-Christian values among the Indians and the need for advancing Biblical values.
- F. Three other times during the tenure of Jefferson lands were given to the Indians “for the sole use of Christian Indians and the propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.”
 - 1. Jefferson signed the treaty into law
 - 2. Never once did Jefferson consider vetoing it on the basis that it violated the First Amendment or his own “wall of separation” metaphor.
- G. When Jefferson was Governor of Virginia;
 - 1. He called for a state-wide Day of Prayer.
 - 2. He praised the use of a county courthouse in Charlottesville for religious services.
 - 3. He approved legislation giving legal sanction to religious observances.
- H. Jefferson founded the University of Virginia;
 - 1. Jefferson designated space in the Rotunda for chapel services.
 - 2. Jefferson expected students to attend weekly divine services.
- I. The ACLU has vastly falsely criticized Thomas Jefferson