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American Minute with Bill Federer

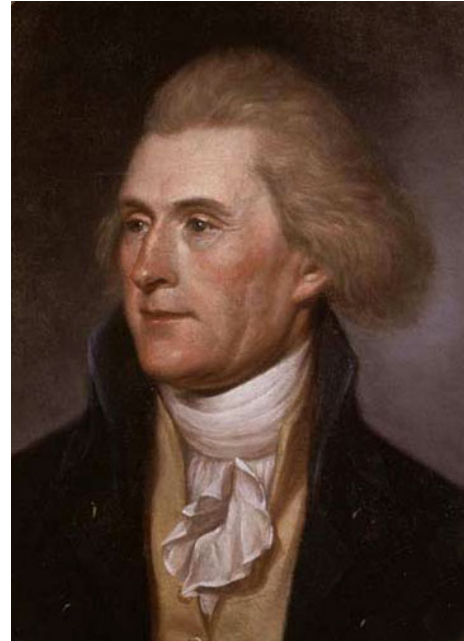
Jefferson's views on Jesus, Christianity, Religious Freedom, Rights of Conscience, Indians, Islam, Slavery, States' Rights & more

Thomas Jefferson was born April 13, 1743.

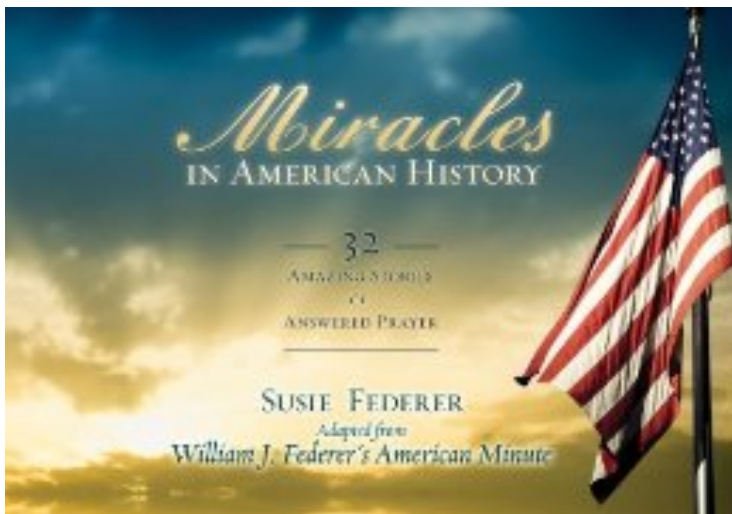
He was baptized in the **Anglican Church**.

His father died when he was 14 years old.

In 1760, he began attending the **College of William and Mary**, where he was educated by **Anglican ministers and professors** ... [continue reading American Minute here](#) ...



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On January 1, 1772, **Jefferson** married **Martha Wayles Skelton** on the Wayles estate, the service being presided over by a pair of **Anglican priests**.

Martha helped raise money for the state's militia during the Revolution.

Their **six children** were **baptized** in the **Anglican Church**.

Sadly, **five children died before Jefferson did**, being buried with **Anglican religious services**.

As **Virginia** was an established **Anglican Colony**, **Jefferson** could never have held **public office** unless he had been a faithful **Anglican**, as **officeholders** had to take the **Oath of Supremacy**.

Echoing Patrick Henry's "give me liberty or give me death" speech, March 23, 1775, **Jefferson** composed **The Declaration of the Causes and Necessity for Taking Up Arms**, which was passed by the Continental Congress on July 6, 1775:

"A reverence for **our great Creator** ... must convince all ... that **government** was instituted to **promote the welfare of mankind** ...

We gratefully acknowledge, as signal instances of the **Divine favor** towards us, that **His Providence** would not permit us to be called into this severe controversy, until we were **grown up to our present strength** ...

We most solemnly, before **God** and the world, declare ... **the arms** we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, **we will ... employ for the preservation of our liberties**;

being with one mind **resolved to die freemen rather than to live slaves.**"

In the Continental Congress, **Jefferson** drafted the **Declaration of Independence**, 1776, which refers to

God four times:

- Laws of Nature and of **Nature's God**;
- All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their **Creator** with certain unalienable Rights;
- Appealing to the **Supreme Judge of the World**;
- Firm reliance on the protection of **Divine Providence**.

Nearly **three-quarters** of the **Signers of the Declaration of Independence** were "Low Church" **Anglicans**.

In 1785, after the Revolutionary War, the **Anglican Church** in America transitioned into the **Episcopal Church**, of which **Jefferson** was a member.

He was a regular donor to **St. Anne's Episcopal Church** in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Henry S. Randall, author of *The Life of Thomas Jefferson* (NY: Derby & Jackson, 1858), was the only biographer who personally interviewed **Jefferson's** immediate family. He wrote:

"Jefferson ... attended church with as much regularity as most of the members of the congregation—sometimes going alone on horse-back, when his family remained at home ...

He generally attended the **Episcopal Church**, and when he did so, always carried his **prayer-book** and **joined in the responses and prayers of the congregation ...**

He contributed freely to the erection of **Christian churches**, gave money to **Bible societies** and other religious objects, and was a liberal and **regular**

contributor to the support of the clergy."

On May 24, 1774, **Thomas Jefferson** drafted a Virginia Resolution calling for a **Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer** to be observed the day British ships blockaded Boston's harbor.

Jefferson became a friend of the Baptist dissenters, taking a public stand for **religious freedom**.

He helped to **disestablish** the **Episcopal Church** as Virginia's official state denomination.

In 1777, **Jefferson** organized the independent **Calvinistical Reformed Church**, which met in the Charlottesville Courthouse.

As recorded by Julian P. Boyd in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, **Jefferson** drafted church bylaws titled "**Subscriptions to Support a Clergyman in Charlottesville**," February 1777:

"We the subscribers ... desirous of encouraging and supporting the **Calvinistical Reformed Church**, and of deriving to ourselves, through the ministry of its teachers, the **benefits of Gospel knowledge** and religious improvement ... by regular education for **explaining the holy scriptures** ...

Approving highly the political conduct of the **Revd. Charles Clay**, who, early **rejecting the tyrant and tyranny of Britain**, **proved his religion genuine** by its harmonies with the **liberties of mankind** ...

and, conforming **his public prayers** to the spirit and the injured rights of his country, ever addressed **the God of battles** for victory to our arms ...

... We expect that the said **Charles Clay** shall perform **divine service** and **preach a sermon** in the town of

Charlottesville on every 4th ... Sunday or oftener if a regular rotation with the other churches ... will admit a more frequent attendance.

And we further mutually agree with each other that we will meet at **Charlottesville** ... every year ... and there make a choice by ballot of three wardens to **collect our said subscriptions** ... for the use of **our church.**"

That same year, fellow church member Col. John Harvie introduced **Jefferson's Bill for Religious Freedom in the Virginia Legislature.**

The Boston newspaper *Christian Watchman* printed on July 14, 1826 an unverified story that **Jefferson** dined with **Baptist Pastor Andrew Tribble:**

"ANDREW TRIBBLE was the Pastor of a small **Baptist Church**, which held its monthly meetings at a short distance from **Mr. JEFFERSON'S** house, eight or ten years before the American Revolution.

Mr. JEFFERSON attended the meetings of the church for several months in succession, and after one of them, asked **Elder TRIBBLE** to go home and dine with him, with which he complied.

Mr. TRIBBLE asked **Mr. JEFFERSON** how he was pleased with their **church government?**

Mr. JEFFERSON replied, that it had struck him with great force, and had interested him much; that he considered it **the only form of pure democracy that then existed in the world**, and had concluded that it would be the **best plan of Government for the American Colonies.**"

Thomas F. Curtis wrote in *The Progress of Baptist Principles in the Last Hundred Years* (Charleston, S.C.: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1856):

"A gentleman ... in North Carolina ... knowing that the venerable **Mrs. (Dolley) Madison** had some recollections on the subject, asked her in regard to them. She expressed a distinct remembrance of **Mr. Jefferson** speaking on the subject, and always declaring that it was **a Baptist church** from which these views were gathered."

President Calvin Coolidge stated at the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1926:

"This preaching reached the neighborhood of **Thomas Jefferson**, who acknowledged that his '**best ideas of democracy**' had been secured at **church meetings.**"

Jefferson described **Baptists** as having the spirit of "**primitive Christianity**" in his letter to Rev. Davis Biggs, John Foster and the **Baptist Society of Portsmouth and Norfolk**, January 20, 1804:

"The satisfaction which you express, on behalf of **the Baptist society** of the town of Portsmouth, with ... the late acquisition of territory (Louisiana) by just and peaceable means, rather than by rapine and bloodshed, is in **the genuine spirit of their primitive Christianity**, which so peculiarly inculcated the doctrines of peace, justice, and good will to all mankind."

Jefferson was **Governor of Virginia**, 1779-1781.

As **Governor**, he signed a Proclamation in 1779 appointing a **Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer**:

"Whereas ... Congress ... hath thought proper ... to recommend to the several States ... humbly to approach the **throne of Almighty God** ...

that he hath ... been a shield to our troops in the hour of danger, pointed their swords to victory ...

and above all, that he hath diffused **the glorious light of the Gospel**, whereby, through the merits of **our gracious Redeemer**, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory.

... Resolved ... to appoint ... a day of public and solemn **Thanksgiving to Almighty God ...**

that he would grant to **His church**, the plentiful effusions of **divine grace**, and **pour out his Holy Spirit on all Ministers of the Gospel;**

that he would bless and prosper the means of education, and **spread the light of Christian knowledge through the remotest corners of the earth ...**

and finally, that he would establish the **independence** of these United States **upon the basis of religion and virtue ...**

Given under my hand and the seal of the commonwealth, at Williamsburg, this 11th day of November, **in the year of our Lord, 1779**, and in the fourth of the commonwealth. **-THOMAS JEFFERSON"**

Jefferson's wife, **Martha**, died in 1782, and was buried with an **Anglican service**.

In grief over her death, **Jefferson** burned their personal letters and closed himself in his room for three weeks, only coming out to ride horseback through his estate.

His daughter, **Martha 'Patsy' Jefferson**, described how he wept for hours:

"In those melancholy rambles I was his constant companion ... a solitary witness to many a violent burst of grief ... the violence of his emotion ... to this day I do not describe to myself."

Trying to help, **Congress** asked **Jefferson** in 1784 to be the U.S. ambassador to **France**.

France was going through a **deistic period of "French infidelity"** prior to the **bloody French Revolution and Reign of Terror**.

After this time, **Jefferson** entertained **more liberal "deist-Christian" leaning views**, through in later life he was described simply as a **"liberal Episcopalian."**

In 1826, the year he died, **Jefferson** donated \$200 toward the construction of **Christ Episcopal Church in Charlottesville, Virginia**.

While **Jefferson** was in **France**, his Bill finally passed the Virginia Legislature as the **Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom**, January 16, 1786:

"Almighty God hath created the mind **free ...**

All attempts to influence it by **temporal punishments ...** tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy ... and are a departure from the plan of **the Holy Author of religion,**

who being **Lord** both of body and mind, yet **chose not to propagate it by coercions** on either, as was in **His Almighty power** to do, but to extend it by its **influence on reason alone."**

Jefferson would not have supported **"temporal punishments"** of sharia "rida" apostasy laws, as they **violate individuals' consciences** and impose the death penalty on those who leave Islam.

He would not have allowed the state to **violate parents' religious beliefs** by forcing the transgender grooming of their innocent children.

He would not have approved the state **coercing** individuals to have substances injected into their bodies **against their consciences.**

In 1789, just as the **French Revolution** was beginning, **Jefferson** left Paris and returned to America.

He served as **Secretary of State** under **President Washington**, 1790-1793.

Jefferson was **Vice-President** under **President John Adams**, 1797-1801.

In 1801, **Jefferson** was inaugurated the 3rd U.S. President, stating:

"Enlightened by a **benign religion**, professed, indeed, and **practiced in various forms**, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man;

acknowledging and adoring **an overruling Providence**, which by all its dispensations proves that it delights in the **happiness of man** here and **his greater happiness hereafter ...**

And may that **Infinite Power** which **rules the destinies of the universe** lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity."

In his third Annual Message, October 17, 1803, Jefferson wrote:

"Let us bow with gratitude to that kind **Providence.**"

In his second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1805, **Jefferson** wrote:

"I shall need, too, the favor of that **Being** in whose hands

we are, **who led our fore fathers, as Israel of old**, from their native land, and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessaries and comforts of life: who has covered our infancy with his **Providence** ... and to whose goodness I ask you to **join with me in supplications.**"

Jefferson attended the **Protestant Sunday church services** held in the **U.S. House of Representatives.**

Margaret Bayard Smith, wife of Samuel Harrison Smith, publisher of the *National Intelligencer*, wrote of **Jefferson's** attendance at church services in the House of Representatives:

"**Jefferson** during his whole administration was a **most regular attendant.** The seat he chose the first day sabbath, and the adjoining one, which his private secretary occupied, were ever afterwards by the courtesy of the **congregation**, left for him."

Catherine Mitchill, wife of New York Senator Samuel Latham Mitchill, wrote to her sister of how she accidentally stepped on **Jefferson's toe** at end of the House Chamber church service, being:

"... so prodigiously frighten'd ... that I could not stop to make an apology, but got out of the way as quick as I could."

Historians, such as Mark A. Beliles, Dr. Jerry Newcombe, and Stephen McDowell, have researched in depth Jefferson's beliefs.

In his first Annual Message, December 8, 1801, **Jefferson** stated:

"We devoutly return thanks to the **beneficent Being** who has been pleased to breathe into them the spirit of conciliation and forgiveness."

In his second Annual Message, December 15, 1802, he stated:

“Those pleasing circumstances which mark the goodness of that **Being** from whose favor they flow and ... for **His bounty** ... still blessed with peace and friendship abroad; law, order, and **religion**, at home.”

Jefferson wrote to Nicolas Dufief, January 20, 1804:

"I am desirous to obtain two copies of the **New Testament** in Greek or Greek & Latin, both of the same edition exactly; and two others in English, both also of the same edition."

Jefferson wrote to Rev. Joseph Priestley, January 29, 1804:

"You have undertaken the task of **comparing the moral doctrines of Jesus with those of the ancient Philosophers** ... You cannot avoid giving, as preliminary to the **comparison**, a digest of **his moral doctrines, extracted in his own words from the Evangelists**, and leaving out everything relative to his personal history and character. It would be short and precious.

With a view to do this for my own satisfaction, **I had sent to Philadelphia to get two Testaments Greek of the same edition, & two English**, with a design to cut out the **morsels of morality**, and paste them on the leaves of a book, in the manner you describe as having been pursued in forming your *Harmony*. But I shall now get the thing done by better hands."

Jefferson wrote to Methodist minister Rev. Henry Fry, May 21, 1804:

"At the time of his death he (Priestley) had just finished a work which I am anxious to see printed. It was a

comparative view of the morality of Jesus & of the ancient philosophers."

Jefferson wrote to Rev. Henry Fry, June 17, 1804:

"At my request Dr. Priestly wrote a **comparative view of the moral doctrines of Jesus and of the ancient philosophers**, which he finished just before his death. It is not yet printed, nor have I seen it."

In 1803, **Jefferson** approved purchasing the **Louisiana Territory** from Napoleon, **doubling the size of the United States**. He sent **Lewis and Clark** to explore it, 1804-1806.

Jefferson compiled ***The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth Extracted Textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French and English*** first in 1804, then again in 1816.

He initially prepared this with the intention of having a book of ethics to help **Christianize and civilize the Indians**, reasoning that if they were given the entire Bible, they may want to emulate the Old Testament accounts of warfare.

He wrote on the cover page:

"The Philosophy of Jesus of Nazareth -- extracted from the account of his life and doctrines as given by Matthew, Mark, Luke & John -- being an abridgement of the New Testament for the use of the Indians unembarrassed with matters of fact or faith beyond the level of their comprehensions."

Jefferson's administration negotiated a **Treaty with the Kaskaskia Indians**, December 3, 1803:

"And whereas, the greater part of the said tribe have been **baptized and received into the Catholic church**

to which **they are much attached,**

the **United States will give annually for seven years one hundred dollars towards the support of a priest of that religion, who will engage to perform for the said tribe the duties of his office** and also to **instruct as many of their children** as possible in the rudiments of literature.

And the United States will further give the sum of **three hundred dollars** to assist the said tribe in the **erection of a church."**

Jefferson wrote to Henry Dearborn, August 3, 1804:

"We have in other instances **encouraged the cooperation** of the **Quakers** in **Indian civilization**, it is to be considered whether we may with advantage do the same with other sects."

Jefferson wrote to Charles Thomson, Jan. 9, 1816:

"I have made this wee-little book ... which I call ***The Philosophy of Jesus***. It is a paradigm of **his doctrines**, made by cutting the texts out of the book and arranging them on the pages of a blank book, in a certain order of time and subject.

A more beautiful or precious morsel of **ethics** I have never seen; it is a document in **proof that I am a real Christian**, that is to say, **a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus**, very different from the Platonists, who call me an infidel, and themselves Christians and preachers of the gospel, while they draw all their characteristic dogmas from what its **Author** never said nor saw."

Jefferson wrote to Benjamin Rush, August 8, 1804:

"I have also a little volume, a mere & faithful compilation

with I shall some of these days ask you to read as containing the exemplification of what I advanced in a former letter as to **the excellence of the Philosophy of Jesus of Nazareth.**"

Franklin Roosevelt said on the **400th Anniversary of the Printing of the English Bible**, October 6, 1935:

"Learned as **Jefferson** was in the best of the ancient philosophers, he turned to the **Bible** as the source of his higher thinking and reasoning ...

He held that the **Bible** contained the **noblest ethical system** the world has known.

His own compilation of the selected portions of this **Book**, in what is known as **Jefferson's Bible**, bears evidence of the **profound reverence** in which he held it."

In 1904, the 57th Congress, in order to restrain unethical behavior among politicians, voted:

"That there be printed ... for the use of Congress, 9,000 copies of **Thomas Jefferson's Morals of Jesus of Nazareth**, as the same appears in the National Museum."

Though he owned and studied a Qur'an, **Jefferson** concluded that the **ethics and morals of Jesus** were **superior to all others**, as he wrote to William Canby, Sept. 18, 1813:

"**Of all the systems of morality, ancient or modern**, which have come under my observation, none appear to me so **pure** as that of **Jesus.**"

He wrote to Jared Sparks, November 4, 1820:

"I hold the precepts of **Jesus** as delivered by Himself, to be **the most pure, benevolent and sublime which**

have ever been preached to man."

Jefferson wrote to Joseph Priestly of **Jesus**, April 9, 1803:

"**His system of morality was the most benevolent and sublime** probably that has been ever taught, and consequently **more perfect than those of any of the ancient philosophers.**"

Jefferson wrote to John Adams, July 5, 1814:

"The **doctrines** that flowed from the lips of **Jesus** himself are within the comprehension of a child."

Jefferson's objection to **religious establishments** can be traced back to his experiences in **colonial Virginia**, which had **established the Anglican Church** since 1606 to 1786.

Establishment meant:

- mandatory membership,
- mandatory attendance,
- mandatory taxes to support it, and
- no one could hold public office unless he was a member.

Other Protestant Christian denominations were considered "dissenters," and Catholics were prohibited from entering the colony, not having a church there till 1795.

Jefferson considered the **hierarchical church government**, with its political entanglements from the **British Monarch** being its head, as a **corruption** of the original early church model.

The **King of England** being the head of Anglican Church, caused a **conflict of allegiances** during the

Revolutionary War.

Colonists would go to church services and hear **Anglican clergy defending the King**, then leave the church services, **pick up weapons and fight the King.**

Colonists considered clergy's actions as a **corruption of the Gospel.**

Jefferson wrote in his "Notes on Religion":

"Bishops were always mere tools of the crown."

As mentioned earlier, **Jefferson** wrote in his **"Subscriptions to Support a Clergyman in Charlottesville,"** February 1777:

"Approving highly the political conduct of the Revd. Charles Clay, who, early rejecting the tyrant and tyranny of Britain, proved his religion genuine by its harmonies with the liberties of mankind."

Jefferson wrote to Henry Fry, June 17, 1804, that he was supportive of the **doctrines of Jesus** while **critical of Anglican clergy, whose head was the king.**

"I consider the doctrines of **Jesus** as delivered by himself to contain the outlines of the **sublimest system of morality that has ever been taught** but I hold in the most profound detestation and execration **the corruptions which have been invented by priestcraft and established by kingcraft."**

Jefferson wrote April 21, 1803, to Dr. Benjamin Rush, also a signer of the Declaration:

"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.**

To the **corruptions of Christianity** I am, indeed, opposed; **but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself.**

I am a Christian in the only sense in which he wished any one to be; **sincerely attached to his doctrines in preference to all others."**

In 1813, **Jefferson** wrote to **John Adams**:

"In extracting the pure principles which **Jesus** taught, we should have to strip off the **artificial vestments** in which they have been muffled ... there will be found remaining the **most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man."**

He continued his letter to **Dr. Benjamin Rush**, April 21, 1803, stating of **Jesus**:

"His system of morals ... if filled up in the style and spirit of the rich fragments He left us, would be **the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man ...**

1. He corrected the Deism of the Jews, confirming them in their belief of **one only God**, and giving them juster notions of **His attributes and government.**

2. **His moral doctrines** ... were **more pure and perfect than those of the most correct of the philosophers** ... gathering all into one family under the bonds of love, charity, peace, common wants and common aids. A development of this head will evince the peculiar **superiority of the system of Jesus over all others.**

3. The precepts of philosophy, and of the **Hebrew code**, laid hold of **actions only**. He pushed his scrutinies into **the heart of man**; erected his tribunal in the region of his thoughts, and purified the waters at the fountain head.

4. He taught, emphatically, the **doctrines of a future state** ... and wielded it with efficacy as **an important incentive**, supplementary to the other **motives to moral conduct.**"

Jefferson told Benjamin Waterhouse, June 26, 1822:

"The doctrines of Jesus are simple, and tend all to the **happiness of man.**

1. That there is **one only God**, and he all perfect.

2. That there is a **future state of rewards and punishments.**

3. That to **love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself**, is **the sum of religion.** These are the great points on which he endeavored to reform the religion of the Jews ...

Now, which of these is **the true and charitable Christian?** He who believes and acts on **the simple doctrines of Jesus?** ... "

He continued:

"Had **the doctrines of Jesus** been preached always as pure as they came from his lips, **the whole civilized world would now have been Christian** ...

How much wiser are the Quakers, who, agreeing in **the fundamental doctrines of the gospel**, schismatize about no mysteries, and, keeping within the pale of common sense, suffer no speculative differences of opinion ... to impair **the love of their brethren.**"

Jefferson wrote "**Notes on Religion**," possibly in October of 1776 for use in speeches to Virginia's House of Delegates regarding the disestablishment of the

Episcopal Church (*The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Paul Leicester Ford, editor, New York & London, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904-5, Vol. 2):

"Episcopal government in Religion in England is it's similarity to the political government by a king. No bishop, no king.

This then with us is a plea for **government by a presbytery** which resembles **republican government ...**

The Presbyterian spirit is known to be **so congenial with friendly liberty**, that the **patriots** after the restoration finding that the humor of people was running too strongly to exalt **the prerogative of the crown** promoted the **dissenting interest as a check and balance**, & thus was produced the Toleration Act ..."

Jefferson added in his "Notes on Religion":

"The Gentiles have the law written in their hearts, i.e. the law of nature: to which adding a faith in **God's** & his attributes that **on their repentance he would pardon them**, they also would be justified.

This then explains the text '**there is no other name under heaven by which a man may be saved,**' i.e. the defects in good works shall not be supplied by a faith in **Mahomet Foe**, or any other **except Christ ...**"

Jefferson concluded:

"The fundamentals of Christianity as found in the Gospels are:

1. Faith,
2. Repentance.

That faith is everywhere explained to be a belief that **Jesus was the Messiah** who had been promised. **Repentance** was to be **proved** sincerely by good works

...

The fundamentals of Christianity were to be found in the **preaching of our Saviour**, which is related in the **Gospels ...**

What are fundamentals? The **Protestants** will say those doctrines which are clearly & precisely delivered in the **Holy Scriptures ...**

If we are **Protestants** we reject all tradition, & rely on the **Scripture alone**, for that is the essence & common principle of all the **Protestant churches ...**

The care of **every man's soul** belongs to himself.

But what if he neglect the care of it? Well what if he neglect the care of his health or estate, which more nearly relate to the state. Will the magistrate make a law that he shall not be poor or sick?

Laws provide against injury from others; but not from ourselves. **God** himself will not save men **against their wills."**

In his papers at the **Library of Congress**, is the **Lord's Prayer**, which **Jefferson** carefully wrote out as a block of consecutive letters.

In regards to the **First Amendment**, **Jefferson's** view was that it **limited the Federal Government**, as he wrote to Samuel Miller, January 23, 1808:

"I consider the **Government** of the U.S. as **interdicted (prohibited)** by the Constitution **from inter-meddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline, or exercises.**

This results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the **establishment or free exercise**

of religion, but from that also which reserves to the States the powers not delegated to the U.S (9th & 10th Amendments) ..."

He continued:

"Certainly **no power** to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been **delegated to the General (Federal) government**. It must then rest with the States as far as it can be in any human authority ...

I do not believe it is for the **interest of religion** to invite the civil magistrate to direct its exercises, its discipline, or its doctrines ...

Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times for these **exercises**, and the objects proper for them, **according to their own particular tenets.**"

Jefferson defended States' Rights against **unconstitutional usurpation by the Federal Government**, writing the **Kentucky Resolutions** in 1798.

Madison wrote the similar **Virginia Resolutions**.

Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions stated:

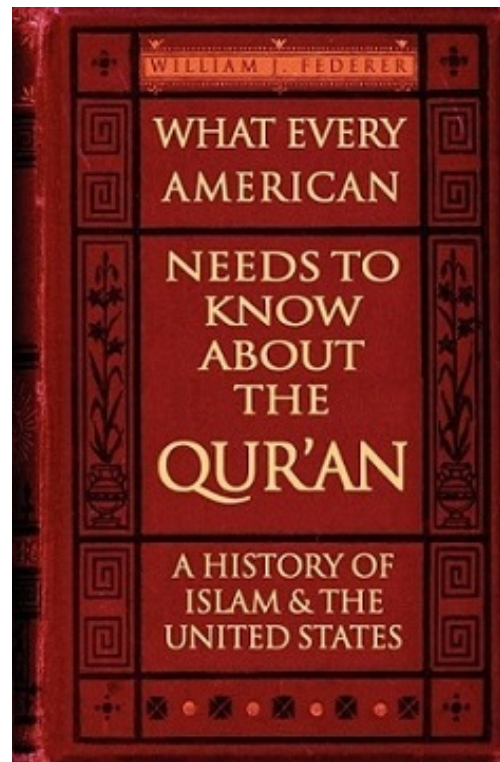
"Whensoever the **general government** assumes **undelegated powers**, its acts are unauthoritative, **void**, and of no force ...

That in cases of **an abuse** ... where **powers are assumed which have not been delegated**, a nullification of the act is the rightful remedy ...

Every State has a **natural right** ... to **nullify** of their own authority **all assumptions of power by others** within their limits; that **without this right** they would be **under**

the dominion, absolute and unlimited, of whosoever might exercise this right of judgment for them."

[What Every American Needs to Know About the Qur'an-A History of Islam and the United States](#)



While **Jefferson** was **U.S. Minister to France**, 1785-1789, he met with the **Muslim Ambassador** from Tripoli to **negotiate freeing hundreds of captured U.S. sailors held in dungeons.**

Jefferson asked what the United States had done to provoke the **Barbary attacks.**

He recorded the answer, March 28, 1786:

"The **ambassador** answered us that it was written in their **Qur'an**, that **all nations which had not acknowledged the Prophet were sinners**, whom it was the right and **duty of the faithful to plunder and enslave**; and every **mussulman** who was **slain in this warfare** was sure to **go to paradise.**"

Jefferson, in 1788, arranged for **John Paul Jones** to fight for **Russia** against the **Muslim Ottoman navy.**

Immediately after being inaugurated the **third U.S. President**, **Jefferson** received a demand from the

Muslim Pasha of Tripoli for \$225,000 as an extortion tribute payment or he would declare war on the United States.

Jefferson refused and sent over the **U.S. Navy and Marines** in the **First Muslim Barbary Pirate Wars**.

In his First Annual Message, December 8, 1801, **Jefferson** stated:

"Tripoli ... of the **Barbary States** ... permitted itself to (announce) **war** on our failure to comply ... The style of the demand admitted but one answer. **I sent a small squadron of frigates into the Mediterranean ...**

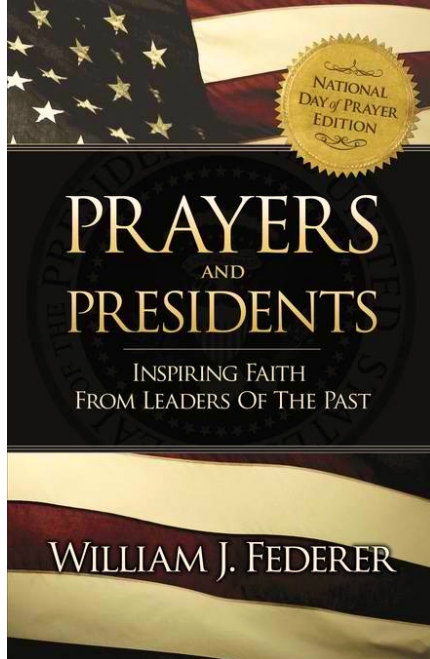
We are bound with peculiar gratitude to be thankful to **Him** that our own peace has been **preserved through a perilous season.**"

When the *USS Philadelphia* was captured by **Tripoli** in 1803, **Jefferson** sent in **Navy and Marines**, led by:

- **Commodore Edward Preble,**
- **Consul General William Eaton,**
- **Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, and**
- **Lieutenant Presely O'Bannon.**

The victory is remembered in the **Marine hymn** line "to the **shores of Tripoli.**"

[Prayers & Presidents - Inspiring Faith from Leaders of the Past](#)



Jefferson's original rough draft of the Declaration of Independence contained a line **condemning the slave trade** of King George's Royal African Company:

"He has waged **cruel war against human nature itself**, violating its most sacred Rights of Life and Liberty in the **persons of a distant people** who never offended him, **captivating and carrying them into Slavery in another hemisphere**, or to incur **miserable death**, in their **transportation thither**.

... This **piratical warfare**, the opprobrium [disgrace] of Infidel Powers [reference to Muslim slave trade], is the warfare of the *Christian* King of Great Britain.

He has **prostituted** his negative for **suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit** or to restrain an **execrable commerce**, determined to keep open a **market where men should be bought and sold**, and that this **assemblage of horrors** might want no fact of distinguished die."

Unfortunately, delegates from **South Carolina** and **Georgia objected**.

Since the Declaration had to be **unanimous**, and since **panic gripped Congress** with news of the British

invading New York, the **anti-slavery line was omitted.**

Twenty years after the Constitution was written, **Jefferson** signed the "**Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves,**" with the U.S. Coast Guard tasked with catching slave trading ships.

Jefferson told Congress, December 2, 1806:
"... to **withdraw** the citizens of the United States from **all further participation** in those **violations of human rights** which have been so long continued on the **unoffending inhabitants of Africa**, and which the **morality**, the reputation, and the best interests of our country, **have long been eager to proscribe.**"

This was the same year **Christian British statesman William Wilberforce** was pushing through Parliament **Britain's "Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade."**

A **notorious muckracker named James T. Callender** came to Virginia to **dig up dirt wherewith to smear Jefferson.**

Callender had also accused Alexander Hamilton and others in assorted **spurious allegations.**

Callender heard that there were children of mixed race on Jefferson's plantation and began spreading a rumor.

The **Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society** discredits these accusations, stating:

"Even though Monticello relies on the **DNA tests** as 'proof' that Thomas Jefferson fathered the children of **Sally Hemings**, there was **no DNA of Thomas Jefferson.** The DNA used in these tests came from the **descendants of Field Jefferson**, Thomas Jefferson's **uncle.**"

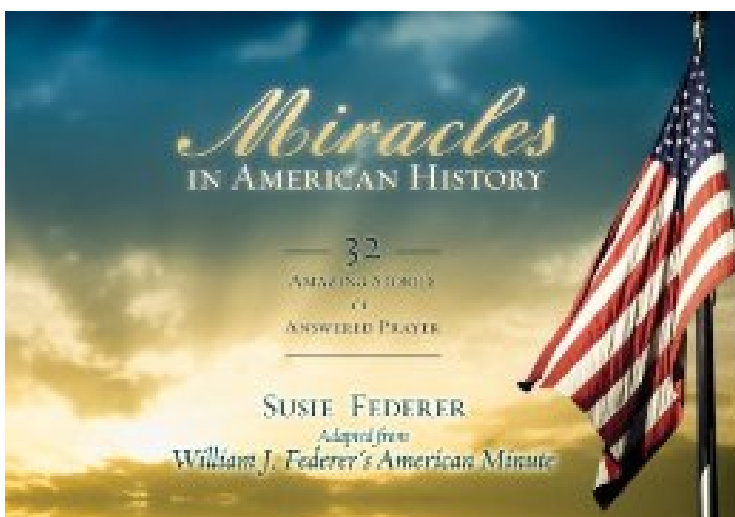
In 2001, a commission of scholars issued a 450 page report that DNA tests only showed that **Hemings'**

youngest son, **Eston Hemings**, could have been fathered by any male of the **Jefferson family**.

"The circumstantial case that **Eston Hemings** was fathered by the **president's younger brother (Randolph Jefferson)** is many times stronger than the case against the president himself."

The 13-member commission noted that:

- A slave's memoirs assert that **Randolph Jefferson** (1755-1815) often spent time playing the fiddle and dancing with the slaves when he visited Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home.
- Thomas Jefferson had invited **Randolph** -- who lived about 20 miles away -- to visit Monticello shortly before Hemings became pregnant with Eston.
- Descendants of Eston Hemings passed down the story that Eston was fathered by "Thomas Jefferson's uncle." Both of Jefferson's paternal uncles had died before Eston was conceived, but the report points out that Jefferson's daughter Martha referred to **Randolph** as "**Uncle Randolph**."
- Sally's childbearing years probably corresponded to the years in which **Randolph** was a widower.



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Jefferson founded the **University of Virginia**.

His plan was in report of the commissioners, 1818, which included:

"All sects of religion on an equal footing ... with ... provision ... for giving **instruction in the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages**, the depositories of the originals, and of the **earliest and most respected authorities of the faith of every sect**, and for courses of ethical lectures, developing those **moral obligations** in which **all sects agree.**"

He wrote in a report to University directors, October 7, 1822:

"The relations which exist **between man and his Maker**, and the **duties** resulting from those relations, are the most interesting and **important to every human being**, and the **most incumbent on his study and investigation** ...

A remedy ... of promising aspect, which, while it **excludes the public authorities** from the domain of public **religious freedom**, will give to the **sectarian schools of divinity** the **full benefit of public provisions** ... to **establish their religious schools** on the confines of the University ...

Such an arrangement would ... leave inviolate the **constitutional freedom of religion**, the **most inalienable and sacred of all human rights.**"

Jefferson encouraged the teaching of religion by recommending a school of **"Theology and Ecclesiastical History."**

On April 7, 1824, the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia, of which James Madison was a member, approved Jefferson's regulations:

"Should the **religious sects** ... establish within or adjacent to ... the University, **schools for instruction in the religion of their sect**, the students of the University will be free, and expected to **attend religious worship** at the establishment **of their respective sects** ...

Students of such **religious school** ... shall be considered as **students of the University** ... **entitled to the same privileges** ...

The upper circular room of the rotunda shall be reserved for a library. One of its larger elliptical rooms on its middle floor shall be used ... **for religious worship.**"

He outlined responsibilities of the professor of ethics:

"The proof of the being of a **God, the Creator, Preserver, and Supreme Ruler of the Universe**, the author of all the relations of **morality**, and the **laws and oblations** which these infer, will be in the province of the **professor of ethics.**"

Jefferson corresponded with **John Adams** and his wife, **Abigail**.

When **Abigail** died in 1818, **Jefferson** wrote to **John** that:

"... it is of some comfort to us both that the term is not very distant at which we are to deposit, in the same cerement, our sorrows and suffering bodies, and to **ascend** in essence to an **ecstatic meeting with the friends we have loved & lost** and **whom we shall still love and never lose again.**"

John F. Kennedy remarked at a Dinner Honoring Nobel Prize Winners of the Western Hemisphere. April 29, 1962:

"Ladies and gentlemen:

I want to welcome you to the White House ...

I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered together at the White House, with the possible exception of when **Thomas Jefferson** dined alone.

Someone once said that **Thomas Jefferson** was a gentleman of 32 who could calculate an eclipse, survey an estate, tie an artery, plan an edifice, try a cause, break a horse, and dance the minuet."

Inscribed on the **Jefferson Memorial** in Washington, DC, are his words:

"God who gave us **life** gave us **liberty**. Can the **liberties of a nation** be secure when we have removed a conviction that **these liberties are the gift of God?**

Indeed I tremble for my country when **I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever.**"

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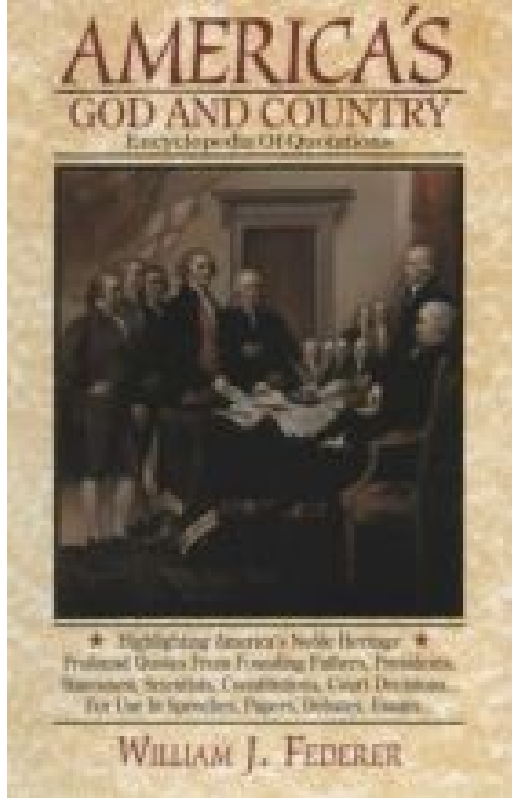
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