

Thomas Jefferson

Author of the Declaration of Independence and third President of the United States

Freedom

"My God! how little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people on earth enjoy!"

"We have spent the prime of our lives in procuring [for the youth of America] the blessing of liberty. Let them spend their lives in showing that it [freedom] is the great parent of science and of virtue; and that a nation will be great in both, always in proportion as it is free."

"I swear upon the altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free... it expects what never was and never will be."

"Timid men prefer the calm of despotism to the tempestuous sea of liberty."

"I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than to those attending too small a degree of it."

"When governments fear the people, there is liberty. When the people fear the government, there is tyranny. The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government."

"Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost."

"The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants."

Righteousness

"God who gave us life, gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift from God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever...."

"The reason that Christianity is the best friend of Government is because Christianity is the only religion that changes the heart."

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

"Can the liberties of a nation be secure, when we have removed the conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?"

U.S. Constitution

"A Bill of Rights is what the people are entitled to against every government, and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inference."

"The beauty of the second amendment is that it will not be needed until they try to take it."

"In matters of Power, let no more be heard of confidence in men, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution."

Government

"The course of history shows that as a government grows, liberty decreases."

"Experience hath shewn, that even under the best forms [of government] those entrusted with power have, in time, and by slow operations, perverted it into tyranny."

"The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as they are injurious to others."

"To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical."

"The true foundation of republican government is the equal right of every citizen in his person and property and in their management."

"Does the government fear us? Or do we fear the government? When the people fear the government, tyranny has found victory. The federal government is our servant, not our master!"

Society

"The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not."

"If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their money, first by inflation and then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around [the banks], will deprive the people of their property until their children will wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered."

"Laws that forbid the carrying of arms ... disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes. Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants, they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man."