Thomas Jefferson: The Life Journey

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was the founding father and the third president of America for 2 consecutive terms. He is considered to be one of the greatest and most intellectual presidents, that helped this nation to become very powerful. Before his success as president, he had several other important political positions like governor of Virginia for two years, minister to France, secretary of state, vice president to President John Adams and many more significant political positions. Also, he is the author of the Declaration of Independence, the author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and the founding father of the University of Virginia.

Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743, at Shadwell plantation in Western Virginia. Thomas Jefferson was a son of Peter Jefferson and Jane Randolph. His father was a successful planter that own few slaves and his mother Jane Randolph was a member of one of Virginia's most distinguished families. His father, Peter, was a successful farmer as well as a skilled surveyor and cartographer who produced the first accurate map of the Province of Virginia. He died when Jefferson was 14 years old.

Early in 1758, Jefferson began attending the school of Reverend James Maury, whom Jefferson credited as 'a correct classical scholar.' He was attending school with Reverend Maury for two years before entering the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg when he was seventeen.

At William and Mary, he studied primarily under Dr. William Small. Jefferson described that teaching as, 'my great good fortune, and what probably fixed the destinies of my life. "

Jefferson was also guided by George Wythe that guided him into the practice of the law.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence which is defined as the formal statement written by declaring the freedom of the thirteen American colonies from Great Britain. Even though there were many changes that were done on that same document, it was adopted on July 4th, 1776.

Jefferson is the author of The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. This was also known as Bill 82, and it was a document for separation of the church from the state. Jefferson was referred to as a Republican yet contradicted this role in some ways by not believing in formality or ceremony, and his strict belief in the separation of church and state, which was contradictory of Republican beliefs. Therefore, it is logical that Jefferson considered being author of Virginia's religious freedom a major accomplishment. Jefferson was a firm believer in the following of the constitution. He believed that the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom was essential in religious freedom and a precursor of the first amendment of the constitution, hence a major accomplishment in his belief.

Thomas Jefferson is the founding father of the University of Virginia. Jefferson's idea was to develop a school in which students and faculty will support and learn from each other. While he was majorly a politician, Jefferson had a passion for intellectual pursuits, which is predictively

why he considered the University of Virginia one of his major accomplishments. Jefferson believed ignorance to be the enemy of freedom, and there needed to be good schools for future leaders. He believed educating people was a good way of leading an organized society. It was the first university to offer a full array of electives as well as possess a library rather than a chapel, further enforcing his beliefs in separation of church and state.

In 1801 Jefferson was elected to be the third President of the United States and he did this job excellent for two consecutive terms, he was reelected in 1805. As president, Jefferson sought to reduce the cost and size of the federal government, which was one of his major goals initially. Jefferson's most significant accomplishment as president was the Louisiana Purchase. He managed to increase the overall size of the USA by buying a land of more than 350 million acres for fifteen million dollars.

Thomas Jefferson was one of the greatest and most intellectual presidents in America. He left specific instructions to engrave his tombstone with three specific accomplishments he considered his greatest. According to Jefferson, these three accomplishments were being the author of the Declaration of Independence, the author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and the founding father of the University of Virginia. Ironically, Jefferson did not mention a few obvious accomplishments during his lifetime such as his role as the third president of the United States for eight years, his vice presidency, his role as governor of Virginia, and many more. For the most part, it is understandable that Jefferson listed these items as his primary accomplishments, considering his political opinions and personal pursuits, much of which was compromised within his presidency.

In conclusion, it is understandable to which accomplishments Jefferson considered his greatest. While his presidency was monumental, many goals and beliefs he had were compromised. His contribution toward the Declaration of Independence, the Statute of Religious Freedom for Virginia, and the University of Virginia were most aligned with Jefferson’s interests and belief systems.

References:

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