



The North Texas Church of Freethought

BULLETIN

The Fellowship of Unbelievers

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Sunday, August 7th, 2011

NEXT SUNDAY AT THE WESTIN DFW AIRPORT !!

Next month's service, on September 4th, 2011, and for that month only, we will meet at the Westin DFW Airport across the highway on the north-west corner of 114 and Esters. Then, in October and thereafter, we will be back here at the Sheraton Grand Hotel on the SE corner of 114 and Esters each first Sunday of the month. October is Freethought Month and October 12th is Freethought Day!

A MORE PERFECT UNION

Thomas Jefferson and others, referred to collectively as "The Founders," set the United States on its course with the 1776 Declaration of Independence and, later, with the 1787 US Constitution, the oldest written basis for a government of any in existence. These documents celebrate the inalienable rights of human beings and the aspirations of all who came to America seeking freedom. But they also made unspoken alliance with the systematic violation of such rights, ignoring those who were brought to America in chains to be enslaved. It was hoped, though in shamefully vague ways and without specifics, that slavery would be limited and ultimately eliminated. Instead, the solution to the problem was put off, compromised over, and delayed until it eventually erupted in the most destructive war that this the United States has ever endured. 970,000 were killed, 4 million slaves were freed, and the nation was reconstituted as one that prohibited involuntary servitude as well as depriving anyone of "the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States," giving Congress, in addition to its enumerated powers, "power to enforce" these protections.

Well before this, in the last years of his life, Thomas Jefferson had a clearer idea of what he only "trembled" about in the years between 1776 and 1787. In 1820 he wrote in one of his many letters [to John Holmes, April 22, 1820]:

"But this momentous question [of slavery, addressed in 1820 by the Missouri Compromise], like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper. I can say, with conscious truth, that there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any practicable way. The cession of that kind of property, for so it is misnamed, is a bagatelle which would not cost me a second thought, if, in that way, a general emancipation and expatriation could be effected; and gradually, and with due sacrifices, I think it might be. But as it is, we have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other. Of one thing I am certain, that as the passage of slaves from one State to another, would not make a slave of a single human being who would not be so without it, so their diffusion over a greater surface would make them individually happier, and proportionally facilitate the accomplishment of their emancipation, by dividing the burthen on a greater number of coadjutors. An abstinence too, from this act of power, would remove the jealousy excited by the undertaking of Congress to regulate the condition of the different descriptions of men composing a State. This certainly is the exclusive right of every State, which nothing in the constitution has taken from them and given to the General Government. Could Congress, for example, say, that the non-freemen of Connecticut shall be freemen, or that they shall not emigrate into any other State?

I regret that I am now to die in the belief, that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be, that I live not to weep

over it. If they would but dispassionately weigh the blessings they will throw away, against an abstract principle more likely to be effected by union than by scission, they would pause before they would perpetrate this act of suicide on themselves, and of treason against the hopes of the world."

Fortunately, at the time Jefferson wrote these words, there was a boy of 11 who would grow up to lead the country through the conflagration that Jefferson feared. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln's enemies sought to portray him as an extremist, as someone who would break up the union or plunge it into war in order to immediately end the institution of slavery. Douglas played what we now call "the race card" at every turn, prompting Lincoln to respond, at the 4th of his debates with Douglas in Charleston, IL:

"I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races."

Yet only a bit more than 2 months previously, in Chicago, Lincoln had said:

"Let us discard all this quibbling about this man and the other man, this race and that race and the other race being inferior, and therefore they must be placed in an inferior position; discarding our standard that we have left us. Let us discard all these things, and unite as one people throughout this land, until we shall once more stand up declaring that all men are created equal."

**COMING NEXT MONTH:
 "LABOR & CAPITAL"
 Labor Day is September 5th
 But What About Capitalism?
 Are Labor and Capital as Incompatible
 as Science and Religion?
 SEPTEMBER 4, 2011 !!
 WESTIN DFW AIRPORT
 NW CORNER OF 114 AND ESTERS**

**YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS
 TO THE NTCOF ARE NEEDED,
 APPRECIATED,
 AND TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!!**

All NTCOF events can be found through our website calendar (yes, website update is in process thanks to Sarah and Rusty Nejd!!) , or through our meetup page, from which you can RSVP, at: - www.meetup.com/church-of-freethought -
JOIN THE NTCOF MEETUP GROUP !!!

Social Luncheon: Today, immediately after our Service, join us for lunch and discussion at the Golden Corral Buffet and Grill in Grapevine, located just across from the Grapevine Mills Mall, at 2605 E. Grapevine Mills Circle, phone (972) 874-7900. To reach Golden Corral from the Sheraton, cross over the freeway and make a left onto John W. Carpenter Freeway (114) going west. Then take the first exit RIGHT onto International Parkway (121), then Grapevine Mills Parkway exit. Turn LEFT on Stars and Stripes Way, continuing on to E. Grapevine Mills Circle.

Freethought Salon: Get together to discuss today's service topic or other conundrums of interest to Freethinkers. Second Sunday monthly, over breakfast, at the Hilton Vineyard in Grapevine this month; see the meetup site!

Game Night: The regular game night crew meets nearly every Friday night at the IHOP on 2310 Stemmons Trail (I-35), near Northwest Highway (Loop 12). Plan to arrive at about 7:30 PM, and stay late playing Risk, Rummikub, and other fun games!

Secular Singles: Freethinkers have met their life-partners with whom they have begun families through the Secular Singles group. Check the meetup site for the next date, time and location!

**"Those who deny freedom
 to others deserve it not for
 themselves."
 - Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)**



DFWCOR

Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason

The North Texas Church of Freethought
 The Fellowship of Unbelievers

Presenters: Tim Gorski & David Burgess
 Music "Faithless Companions"
 Jay Purrington, Kevin & Cathy Smith,
 Ed McGuire & Scott Williams

And check out faithlesscompanions.com !!!

Welcome Coordinator Mark Barnick
 Videographer John Gauthier
 Minister: Dr. Tim Gorski

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