

Not to burst your bubble, but Benjamin Franklin also said "Lighthouses are more useful than churches." Oh, John Adams said "This would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it." Here are a few others you may want to chew on before you preach your ignorances. "As I understand the Christian religion, it was, and is a revelation. But how has it happened that millions of fables, tales, legends, have been blended with both Jewish and Christian revelation that have made them the most bloody religion that ever existed?"-John Adams. "To talk of immaterial existences is to talk of nothings. To say that the human soul, angels, god, are immaterial, is to say they are nothings, or that there is no god, no angles, no soul. I cannot reason otherwise... without plunging into the fathomless abyss of dreams and phantasms. I am satisfied, and sufficiently occupied with the things which are, without tormenting or troubling myself about those which may indeed be, but of which I have no evidene."- Thomas Jefferson

I am offended that you would use one of our founding fathers to promote your religion. These men came up with the idea of separation of church and state. So before you continue to pray on the minds of the weak, do some research. Read a history book or even google it. Stop living your lives based on a book that was written thousands of years ago that has caused countless amounts of death, prejudices, and ignorance. Open your eyes and hearts to other things. Your fundamentalist views are destroying the evolution of the mind.

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Dear Joseph,

Thanks for your note regarding the Benjamin Franklin quote and the conversation we are attempting to begin with it. I appreciate your giving us the chance to hear and respond to your points of contention.

I actually love American history and particularly enjoy reading biographies of the founding fathers. One thing I've learned from my reading is that there was no single worldview that they held. Instead there was enormous diversity of thought, both politically and religiously. Some were devoted followers of Jesus Christ, some were not.

However, John Adams, whom you quoted, was a follower of Christ. If you care to read about him David McCullough's biography, which came out maybe 5 or 6 years ago, is excellent. Your quotation of him is really interesting if only because it is taken from its context in such a way as to entirely change its apparent meaning. Here again is what he said, only in its broader context:

*Twenty times in the course of my late reading have I been on the point of breaking out, 'This would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion at all!!!' But in this exclamation*

*I would have been as fanatical as Bryant or Cleverly. Without religion, this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in polite company, I mean hell. - John Adams*

Does it seem to you that whoever shared that quote with you in its more selectively excerpted form was trying to persuade you of something that isn't so?

I won't bore you with additional quotations, but as you suggested, a quick Google search will turn up scores of comments revealing the breadth of views held by the founding fathers, and the positive role which Christianity played in many of their lives, including Ben Franklin. You might even find that those who weren't followers of Christ were not nearly so antagonistic to faith as you might have been led to believe.

Of course all of this is neither here nor there. On our website we are not seeking to build a case for Christianity upon someone's quote. We just think that Franklin is witty and insightful and that his lighthearted and offhand comment is a great conversation starter. His observation that good things in creation suggest something about the character of the creator is worth pondering.

That is our real point. We hope to encourage you to consider the evidence in your life, and in the life of Jesus, that demonstrates that God loves you. Because we are convinced that he does, and that he'd like you to know it.

I hope your semester is going well.

Best,

Tim Henderson