

What Thomas Jefferson thought About Neglecting the Lord's Day

A Bill for Punishing Disturbers of Religious Worship and Sabbath Breakers.

Thomas Jefferson

It is interesting that they often quote out of context Thomas Jefferson's letter containing the words "a wall of separation between church and state." It seems odd they don't seem to find his other writings. Here is footnote in #68 from McGowan vs. Maryland. It is about a law drafted by Thomas Jefferson. They would lead you to believe that Thomas Jefferson was almost an atheist.

[Footnote 68] 2 Papers of Thomas Jefferson (Boyd ed. 1950) 555. The bill was entitled: "A Bill for Punishing Disturbers of Religious Worship and Sabbath Breakers." It also forbade the arrest for any civil cause of any minister of the gospel while engaged in public preaching or performing religious worship in any church, and punished any person who should maliciously disturb any worshipping congregation or misuse any minister therein. There is evidence to attribute the original draft of the provision to Jefferson, id., at 314-321; in any event, we know that, with the other revisers, he studied and reworked every bill in the revision until it satisfied him. Autobiography, in I Writings of Thomas Jefferson (Memorial ed. 1903) 66.

Work on Sunday - Off on Wednesday?

It is just common sense that there are some jobs that must be done on Sunday, like attending to a Nuclear reactor in a power plant. You don't just turn off the lights and go home for the day. We need Police and Fire. Hospitals and so on. Is God a God of common sense and does he allow exceptions. The answer is "Yes" and there are examples in the Bible of permitted work on the Sabbath. (Brother Pharisee might disagree.)

[Footnote 86]

Mass. Gen. Laws Ann., 1958, c. 149, 47 to 51. Section 47 provides:

"Whoever, except at the request of the employee, requires an employee engaged in any commercial occupation or in the work of any industrial process not subject to the following section or in the work of transportation or communication to do on Sunday the usual work of his occupation, unless he is allowed during the six days next ensuing twenty-four consecutive hours without labor, shall be punished by a fine of not more than fifty dollars; but this and the following section shall not be construed as allowing any work on Sunday not otherwise authorized by law."

Section 48 provides:

"Every employer of labor engaged in carrying on any manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishment or workshop . . . shall allow every person . . . [with exceptions: see 49, 50] employed in such manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishment or workshop at least twenty-four

consecutive hours of rest, which shall include an unbroken period comprising the hours between eight o'clock in the morning and five o'clock in the evening, in every seven consecutive days. No employer shall operate any such manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishment or workshop on Sunday unless he has complied with section fifty-one. . . ."

Section 51 is:

"Before operating on Sunday, every employer subject to section forty-eight . . . shall post in a conspicuous place on the premises a schedule containing a list of his employees who are required or allowed to work on Sunday, and designating the day of rest for each. No [366 U.S. 503] employee shall be required or allowed to work on the day of rest designated for him."