Declaration Of Independence – One Word Truth Essay, Research Paper

In The Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson outlines four universal truths that the colonists had in common: equality, life, liberty, and happiness. Out of these four words, I chose liberty as the word that most exemplifies truth in the document. Liberty has many meanings, all of which applied to the American colonists as they attempted to get out of British control. Through enacting a separation from a political paradigm, overturning political and theological thought, and gaining the right to form a government however they saw fit, the logic behind liberty makes it the best example of truth in the Declaration.

One definition of liberty is that it means a separation from an oppressor and the oppressed. When feudalism ended around the 16th century, the surfs gained liberty from the vassals, and they were no longer under their control. Similarly, in America after the signing of the Declaration and the Revolutionary War, the colonies were no longer under the control of the king. Jefferson established that the right to liberty was given to them by God (Creator). This outweighed the commonly held idea that a king was chosen by God to rule.

Another definition of liberty is that one does not conform to what is commonly accepted by others. For instance, if one would wear a polka-dot sport coat with clown shoes every day, it could be said of that person that they take great liberty in what they wear. Likewise, the Founding Fathers went against the norm that a subject should follow the king at all times by declaring their independence from the crown. This helped overturn common political and theological thought.

The final definition of liberty is probably the most common interpretation, the freedom to do as one pleases. After the document was signed and the Revolutionary War ended, the newly freed colonists could do whatever they wanted. They did not have British trade restrictions, they could choose their own government, and no longer had British troops controlling what they did. The former king’s subjects became citizens with a voice.

By separating from Britain, sidestepping conformity, and gaining freedom, the word liberty reworks the rhetoric of truth to creating a way for the colonists to remove themselves from British authority. All four words Jefferson established as truths were held dearly by the colonists, enough to transform their political and theological situation. The colonists stood by the truths so emphatically that they were compelled to write the Declaration. In fact, the rest of the Declaration of Independence relates directly to liberty, where Jefferson lists grievances against King George III, he shows where the King abridged their liberty. The logic behind liberty makes it the closest word to truth in the historic work.