

Reflection and Hope

July, 2017

Slavery had been a sin and abomination of man, and before God, since the time of the Pharaohs and the Israelites; since indentured servitude and bondage of the Irish – white slavery - in Ireland, the Caribbean and Colonial North America by Nobility over serfs, and since African slavery came to North America in the Triangular Trade in the early 1600's; at the beginnings of white settlement of the continent.

The parties involved in this shame are three:

1. Colonial America as the largest purchasers and end-users of human property.
2. England (and Portugal before them to South America and the Dutch to New York in the 1600's.) as the traders and brokers of this commodity for tobacco, indigo, sugar, molasses, cotton and other needed commodities.
3. Africans as the suppliers of the product for profit from captured prisoners of tribal conflict.

In America, Robert E. Lee reflected as a U. S. Colonel in a Texas fort during the Mexican War after his graduation from West Point that he had hoped that Christianity as a binding moral force between the North and South would end slavery. He learned that that did not and the Civil War was to come just a couple decades later.

Gods and Generals ladies and gentlemen; it was about Gods and Generals. We were so fervently and profoundly a Christian country in that time. Both sides believed incongruously that God was on their side. You will know that when you look back at the history of that time. And you will know that we did not act accordingly.

Our God gave us free will and is abundantly patient, allowing us to sin until we discover what is right.

William Wilberforce fought in the English Parliament for years until slavery was abolished some decades before our Civil War. England abolished it and he ruined his health fighting for it while his faith drove him to accomplish it. His was truly the story of Amazing Grace.

The greatest regret of my life is that I was not born ten years sooner. Had I been 23 instead of 13, I would have marched for Civil Rights with Martin to Selma and Montgomery in the 50's and stood proudly before him in front of the Lincoln Memorial in D.C. in the 60's when he spoke. It would have been the crowning glory of my lifetime.

So instead, all I could do was to write those achievements into the lives of the characters in my books – both black and white men; my heroes as proxies for what I would have wished to have done.

But I have hope in my faith that my grandchildren by the end of their lives will see the fulfillment of racial harmony, the final step, come true as I never saw in my lifetime.