

## AMERICA'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

8/27/2017

Once again we look at our most important Christian Heritage. Some of the great heroes of the past are being vilified wrongly in today's world.

### I. SOME PRESENT FACTS ABOUT ROBERT E. LEE

- A. In my junior senior year of high school we had our Junior Senior Banquet at the old Robert E. Lee Hotel in Winston Salem.
- B. There is an outcry to remove any statues of him both here in our state and across America.
- C. This past Saturday Duke University removed a statue of Robert E Lee from its chapel entrance
- D. Across our country the move is on to remove certain statues of past associations

### II. SOME WRONG THINGS STATED ABOUT ROBERT E. LEE.

- A. One of the fabricated statements being said about Lee is that he was a racist.
- B. Let's notice some facts about that statement
  - 1. Fact-Robert E. Lee opposed slavery!
  - 2. Lee inherited slaves from his wife's estate.
  - 3. After inheriting the slaves from his wife's estate he freed them.
  - 4. Lee freed them long before the Civil War began.
  - 5. It is interesting that General U. S. Grant who supposedly fought the war to free the slaves;
    - a. Owned slaves himself.

- b. He did not free his slaves until after the war was over
  - c. The Emancipation Proclamation only applied basically to the Southern States.
6. One of his former slaves whose name was Willian Mac Lee;
- a. Choose to stand by Lee's side throughout the war
  - b. He served Lee as his cook and confidant.
  - c. He said of Lee; "I was raised by one of the greatest men in the world. There was never one born of a woman greater than Gen. Robert E. Lee."
- C. In a letter to his wife dated December 27, 1856 Lee stated; "Slavery as an institution is a moral and political evil in any country...I think, however, a greater evil to the white than to the black race. The doctrine and miracles of our Saviour have required nearly two thousand years to convert but a small part of the human race, and even among the Christian nations what gross errors still exists."
- D. After the war ended Lee returned to his home in Richmond.
- 1. The following Sunday he attended services at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.
  - 2. On that day the church was celebrating Holy Communion;
    - a. Before the war slaves were required to sit in a balcony in the rear of the church
    - b. When it came time for the Lord's Supper a newly freed slave strode to the front of the church and knelt beside the whites to drink from the same communion cup.
    - c. The Anglican priest and the congregation froze, not knowing what to do next.

- d. From the rear of the church, Lee walked forward and knelt beside the former slave.
- e. Side by side the free black man and the defeated General drank from the same chalice.

### III. GENERAL LEE WAS A BORN AGAIN MAN

- A. Lee wrote to his chaplains who stated they were praying for him and stated; “I can only say that I am nothing but a poor sinner, trusting in Christ alone for salvation.”
- B. Lee’s chaplain, Rev. J. Willian Jones, stated; “If I ever came in contact with a sincere, devout Christian—one who, seeing himself to be a sinner, trusted alone in the merits of Christ, who humbly tried to walk the path of duty, looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of his faith, and whose piety constantly exhibited itself in his daily life—that man was General R. E. Lee.”

### IV. GENERAL LEE WAS A BIBLE BELIEVING MAN

- A. Lee once remarked to his Chaplain; “There are things in the Old Book which I may not be able to explain, but I fully accept it as the infallible Word of God, and receive its teachings as inspired by the Holy Spirit.”
- B. Those who knew him well stated; “Even in the midst of his most active campaigns he made time to read a portion of God’s Word every day.”
- C. During the war General Lee helped to provide Bibles and prayer-books to the men at his own expense.
- D. After the war he was offered and accepted the presidency of the Rockbridge Bible Society in Lexington, Virginia;
  - 1. Under his leadership he stated that the primary objective of the Bible society was to place a Bible in every home in the South.

2. Lee admonished folks to; "Read the Bible, read the Bible."

E. Lee stated about the Bible; "In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength."

#### V. GENERAL LEE WAS A CHURCH GOING MAN.

A. He regularly attended the services of his own church taking heed to Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

B. "His pew was immediately in front of the chancel, his seat in the chapel was the second from the pulpit, and he always seemed to prefer a seat near the preacher's stand. He always devoutly knelt during prayer, and his attitude during the entire service was that of an interested listener or a reverential participant."

C. While at Washington College, his seat in the chapel was never empty when services were being held.

D. His habit was to attend church wherever he was stationed.

#### VI. GENERAL LEE WAS A MAN OF PRAYER

A. When traveling and coming upon his soldiers along the roadside he would join his troops in prayer services;

1. He would dismount from his horse, Traveller

2. He would uncover his head

3. He would kneel in reverence to engage in prayer with his soldiers and chaplain.

B. In a letter in part to his soldier's Lee stated; "Let us confess our many sins, and beseech him to give us a higher courage, a purer patriotism and more determined will: that he will convert the hearts of our enemies"