

WILBERFORCE

William Wilberforce was a leader in the abolition of slavery in England during the early 1800's. Wilberforce was a believer that practiced his faith through the political system of England; his principle or basis for social reforms was Christianity and the expression of God's love for man regardless of race, creed, or color. In 1833, shortly before his death, England passed the legislation to illegalize slavery and slave trading in British territories. For the Africans, this act meant that captives could be protected by the British Navy from being transported through British waters; it meant that fewer Africans would find themselves in bondage, enslaved and destitute...if they survived the voyage and process.



The Evangelical church was a vanguard for social reform, and in particular, the inhuman treatment and enslavement of the African. In England as well as the United States, segments of the church took this matter to God and considered their participation to be ordained by him – it was their responsibility on the basis of what is right, what is of God regardless of the costs and circumstances. .

British statesman and reformer, born in Hull, England, and educated at the University of Cambridge. In 1780 he was elected to Parliament, where he was an eloquent supporter of the Tory program advocated by the British prime minister William Pitt the Younger. Wilberforce embraced Evangelical Christianity in 1784 and along with other Evangelicals, later devoted himself to the social reform activities of the so-called Clapham sect. The fight to abolish the slave trade soon attracted Wilberforce, and he became the abolitionist movement's chief spokesman in the House of Commons.

In 1807 Wilberforce secured enactment of legislation prohibiting the trade. He joined the struggle for the complete abolition of slavery and in 1823 was a founder of the Anti-Slavery Society. Ill health forced his retirement from Parliament in 1825. The Emancipation Bill abolishing slavery became law one month after his death. Wilberforce fought for other causes, notably for Roman Catholic emancipation

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