



The Fifteenth Amendment

By
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Day 4

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Scriptures for Mediation

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

James 2:8-9

Critical Race Facts!

In Hernando, Mississippi, in 1935, Reverend T. A. Allen tried to start a sharecropper's union among local impoverished and exploited Black laborers. When white landowners learned that Reverend Allen was using his pulpit to preach to the Black community about unionization, they formed a mob, seized him, shot him many times, and threw him into the Coldwater River.

Prayer:

Lord, we cannot erase our history, but parts of it is so bad that our nation is trying to prevent it from being discussed and taught.

Help us to live a life and leave a legacy that's pleasing to you, and that we can be proud of. In Jesus Name Amen.

Questions to Ponder

How have you attempted to change something in your past that you are not proud of?

The Fifteenth Amendment was passed by Congress and adopted in the United States Constitution in 1870. It was written to protect the voting rights of the Black American men after the Civil War. Even though the act was passed, black citizens still received numerous practices of discrimination to prevent them from voting. Some of these practices included having to pay poll taxes, having to take literacy tests, intimidation, and all kinds of act of violence. These practices were known as the Jim Crow Laws.

I was the ninth of twelve children born to the Austin and Sarah Riddick (both deceased), and grew up in a small rural community (Hodges Ferry). It was located in what was then called Norfolk County. It is now called Chesapeake. This location is the site of the Chesapeake Square Mall shopping area. My father was very protective of all of his children, but he had to especially warn the boys to stay away from the neighborhoods where the white people lived. Those neighborhoods were known to have members of the Ku Klux Klan living there. A lot of the homes had the lawn ornaments with the black faced jockey holding a lantern. It was only in the later years and with much protest that they painted the faces white.

Long after my father died in 1974, I found out from my older sister Betty, that my father helped to organize a civic league for our community. The monthly meetings were held in our home. The main items on the agenda were to teach them about the importance of voter registration and the importance of paying their poll taxes. Many of them couldn't read nor write, so my mother would assist them with their applications. With the strong support of this group, a lot of improvements were made in the community.

In 1996, while attending my former church, I had the privilege of working as an election officer and serving as an Assistant Chief. Aside from all of the other duties that I had, one of my duties, just like my father, was to assist people in registering to vote. My last year of doing this was 2016----- the year that Donald Trump won the Presidential Election. But on a good note, it was the year that we joined Zion.

In Matthew 5:6, Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." We know that someday God will come to deliver justice and right every wrong, but until that time, we have the opportunity to participate in making God's justice a reality here on earth.