

Amazing Grace (2007)

A Video Analysis on the Effects of Historical Globalism (aka Slavery)

This powerful film recounts the celebrated English reformer's (William Wilberforce) fierce battle to abolish slavery in the British Empire. The film opens as the 18th century (1700's) is trailing to a close. Eight years of fruitless effort promoting abolition have left William Wilberforce (a junior member of Parliament in the House of Common – Great Britain) demoralized and depleted. One observer comments that he's given his youth and his health to a failed cause. Chronic illness has forced Wilberforce to retreat to the home of his cousins Henry and Marianne Thornton to rest and reassess his wherewithal to keep championing an unpopular idea.

The Thorntons introduce Wilber to Barbara Spooner, a fiery young woman whose zeal for the abolition movement matches his own. As he recounts his history to her, lengthy flashbacks fill in his backstory and introduce us to an idiosyncratic cast of supporting characters who play important roles in the battle against slavery.

1. Describe the opening scene of the movie:

What does this reveal about Wilberforce?

2. Describe what motivates these major characters:

William Wilberforce:

William Pitt:

Barbara Spooner:

Oludah Equiano:

Thomas Clarkson:

Lord Tarleton:

Duke of Clarence:

Henry Thornton:

Lord Fox:

3. Wilberforce gives a quote while in the country about his mission in life "God has set before me two great objects:_____

And _____.

4. List some of the achievements of Wilberforce: (use pre-film viewing)

5. Explain the significance of the following quotes:

Pitt; "We're too young to realize certain things are impossible. So we'll do them anyway."

Wilberforce: "Remember that smell....Remember that God made men equal."

Newton: "God sometimes does His work with gentle drizzle, not storms."

Newton: I can't help you, but do it, Wilber. Do it. Take them on. Blow their dirty, filthy ships out of the water... Do it, for God's sake."

Hannah Moore: "We understand that you're having problems choosing whether to do the work of God or the work of a political activist. We humbly suggest you can do both."

Pitt: "I'm scared, Wilber. At this moment, I wish I had your faith."

Barbara Spooner: "I stopped taking sugar in my tea at the age of 14. I was convinced there was slave blood in every lump of sugar."

Having heard all of this, you may choose to look the other way..., but you can never say again that you did not know. William Wilberforce 1759-1833