



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Legislative Leadership: Impacting The World

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*Last week, we reviewed how a handful of leaders changed the course of human history. Charles and John Wesley and George Whitefield led the campaign to confront the culture, bringing 200 years of prosperity to America and England. Earlier, we studied how several kings of Israel and Judah cleansed the land, won God's favor, and brought peace and prosperity to the nation. Today, we highlight the leadership of William Wilberforce, a legislator who led the fight to reverse the degradation of the human race, touching the lives of millions.*

### INTRODUCTION

Kings David, Solomon, Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah were sovereign rulers. They had the authority and power to stop pagan temple prostitution, sacrifice of children, the practice of witchcraft and other evils that degrade humans. Each of these kings won the favor of God and man, bringing peace and prosperity to their nation. Could a single legislator impact the modern world for good?

### CONDONING SIN/EXPECTING BLESSINGS

*Isaiah 1:15-17 "When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow." Says the LORD.<sup>1</sup>*

Young William Wilberforce became convinced that national sin was inviting God's judgment on the British nation. At twenty-one, William had been elected the youngest member of the House of Commons. At first, he partied in the limelight of high public office. John Newton, reformed slave trader turned pastor, counseled William to use his God-given talent to bring blessings to the nation. In 1785 William committed himself to eliminating slavery and reforming morality in the British Empire, a mission of daunting scope!<sup>2</sup>

### TRANSFORMING A NATION

It was estimated that one fourth of the British economy was tied to slavery. Most of the nobility and wealthy were directly or indirectly connected to business associated with slavery. Most of the public did not see this as evil. While drafting his first bill to abolish slave trade, William was stuck with colitis, confining him to bed for months with severe stomach pain. His legislative attempts failed repeatedly over the next twenty years. William had begun to assemble a team of champions. Dubbed the Clapham Sect, many Christian supporters moved to the suburb of Clapham to join the cause. They pioneered tactics to educate the public with interviews, banners, slogans, books, pamphlets, posters and boycotts. The bill to **end the slave trade** passed in 1807. His colleagues in the House stood and applauded as William wept. The Clapham Sect worked another twenty years to **ban slavery and encourage virtue** in Britain. They initiated nearly seventy non-profit organizations to champion their cause. William Wilberforce died in 1833, three days after the first successful vote to abolish slavery.<sup>3</sup> The next **six decades** are referred to as Britain's golden Victorian era due to the reformed culture and prosperity during Queen Victoria's reign.

### CONCLUSION

God honored the lifetime work of Wilberforce and his team of reformers. The British nation was blessed abundantly and millions of humans were ultimately freed from slavery throughout the world. While England prospered, America saw civil war, and France suffered revolution, executing thousands of dissenters by guillotine. Who will champion for our good today?

### A PRAYER

My Lord and my God, help us to gain Your favor as we transform our families, our communities, our State and Nation. I pray in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>The Holy Bible, New King James Version. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). 1982.

<sup>2</sup>Steven G. Dyer, Transforming a Nation. (Steven G. Dyer). 2010. p45.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p54.