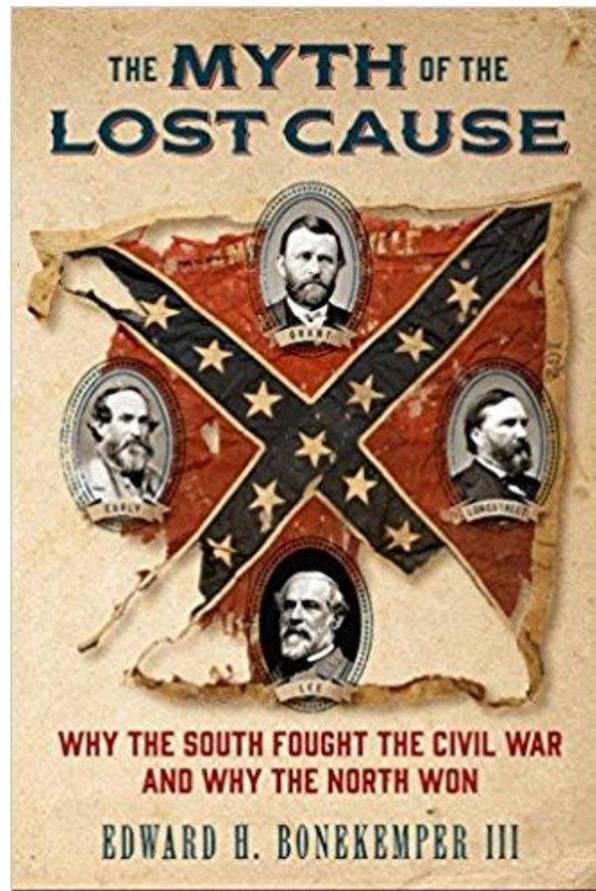


Don't blame Jesus Christ for the Myths of the Lost Cause of antebellum South



Don't blame Jesus Christ for the Myths of the Lost Cause of Antebellum South.

In examining the nexus between a current culture and Christianity throughout history, I have noted at least ten periods in which a prevailing culture hijacked, subverted, distorted, and then pressed Christianity into its evil service for its own socio-economic-politico gain: (1) by Rome/Constantine (313), (2) by the crusades (1100-1300), (3) by the inquisitions (1231-1834), (4) by colonialism/imperialism (1400-1800), (5) by the antebellum South in America (1650-1863), (6) by reconstruction (1863-1877), (7) by Jim Crow South (1877-1960), (8) by Nazi Germany (1930-1940), (9) by consumer/prosperity Gospel (1950-2018), and (10) by modern political Christianity on the Right and the Left (1950-2018).

In examining antebellum South, I have recently discovered what is known as the Myth of the Lost Cause. I am still in shock about how much I had been a victim of this socio-economic-politico revisionism.

I was born in the South, educated in the South, and very much enculturated by the South. I have always loved the South, and I continue to love the South. However, when it comes to choosing

between Christianity/Truth versus my sentiments regarding my beloved homeland, Truth must always take precedence over my feelings.

The evidence against the mythical contentions of the Lost Cause is simply too overwhelming to ignore. In sum, there are at least seven myths that continue to have deleterious effects on America's socio-economic-politico attitudes. The seven myths of the Lost Cause:

1. Slavery was a benevolent institution for all involved but was dying by 1861. There was, therefore, no need to abolish slavery suddenly, especially by war.
2. State's rights, not slavery was the cause of secession and the establishment of the Confederacy and thus of the Civil War.
3. The Confederacy had no chance of winning the Civil War and did the best it could with the limited resources it had.
4. Robert E. Lee, who led the Confederates to near-victory, was one of the greatest generals in history.
5. James Longstreet caused Lee to lose the Battle of Gettysburg and thus the Civil War.
6. Ulysses S. Grant was an incompetent "butcher" who won the war only by brute force and superior numbers.
7. The Union won the war by waging unprecedented and precedent-setting "total war."

After reading original statements made by leaders of the South at the time of succession (instead of various revisions/myths after the fact), it is obvious that the contentions of the Lost Cause are false. Furthermore, after reading the original documents of succession, I am glad the Confederacy lost the Civil War. I believe that the Confederacy's stated goals and ideology should offend the sensibility of anyone living in our times—especially the sensibilities of anyone who calls himself a follower of Jesus Christ.

Moreover, as Christians, we ought to be able to look history squarely in the face and call it for what it was. Only by discarding myths of the past can we move forward to an honest future. I can understand and even forgive an unbeliever for his lack of commitment to the Whole Truth—after all, He rejects Jesus Christ who is the Truth at the most ultimate level. However, there is no excuse for any Christian to reject any Truth let alone the values of Jesus Christ due to his own personal socio-economic-politico desires. Given that every human being must make something transcendent, I understand the unbeliever who makes his politics, culture, and cherished history transcendent. I fully understand the desires of Southerners to sanitize their past. However, for Christians Truth, the Whole Truth, must remain the issue in life.

The most fundamental problem throughout all of the issues in this period, as well as in all of the other periods above, is mammon, which just is the socio-economic-politico dasein. Let us remember that it is not like God did not warn us of worshipping the idols of consumerism as we have noted in

Revelation 18:11 "And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: 12 "merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 13 "and cinnamon and incense,

fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men."

By the way in the above Scripture, the Apostle John is criticizing his own nation of Rome, calling her a harlot. Furthermore, many Christians in the first century were murdered because they put Jesus Christ above their nation, which they were supposed to worship above all. They were tagged as unpatriotic. Yet, they were the most patriotic to the principles of justice, which is crucial to the survival of any nation.

When the wealth of consumer goods becomes the god, it is but a small step to treating human beings as mere commodities as noted in above passage. We see the same problem in politics today where political opponents are regularly demonized and dehumanized and treated like commodities to use, discard, or even attack. In every case, the goal is always for a better socio-economic-political life--Mammon.

May God give us the grace to rise above it all and bring the value, dignity, grace, justice, and love of Christ to the issues at hand. May the Lord give us the strength to avoid being hijacked by the Democrats or the Republicans by remaining faithful to Jesus Christ and Truth as such.

A good scholarly resource on the Myth of the Lost Cause is available in book form at https://www.amazon.com/.../162.../ref=oh_aui_detailpage_o00_s00... as well as in audio format at <https://www.audible.com/.../The-Myth-of-the-Lost-C.../B01IDYDJVQ>.

Let's avoid the myths that can so easily hijack our Christian mindset and ethics. Let us be better informed, and thus be better enabled to increasingly love God with ALL our MINDS (Matt 22:37-40) and defend our priceless Christian faith, which is always under attack by the socio-economic-political forces.

In His Matchless Grace,

Pastor Don