

"Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"

To whom is Patrick Henry speaking? Who is he trying to persuade? When politicians give speeches today, are these two audiences always the same? Why or why not?

How does Henry prepare his audience for the fact that what he's about to say may be offensive to them? Do you think this is a good idea?

In what way does Henry indicate that allegiance to God is his most important duty?

What are the "illusions of hope" to which Henry refers?

What is a siren song?

What does Henry mean by "temporal salvation"?

In what way might our country benefit today by electing officials who are "willing to know the whole truth -- to know the worst and to provide for it"?

To what historic event is Henry referring when he says, "Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss."

What does Henry mean when he says, “we have prostrated ourselves before the throne”?

Does Henry provide sufficient evidence to support his assertion that “There is no longer any room for hope”?

Are present-day Americans “lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope”?

Do you think today’s politicians believe that “There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations”? If so, do they make this belief known in their public speeches? What about in their legislative actions?

Consider Henry’s famous line, “Give me liberty or give me death!” Do you think this was a sincere statement? A dramatic exaggeration? A combination of the two?

Which do our current political leaders seem to value more: liberty or reelection? Explain your answer.

Henry repeatedly asks rhetorical questions and then follows them with decisive answers. Do you think this is an effective means of building an argument?

How many Biblical allusions can you find in this speech? Which scripture passages are referenced?