



Abraham Lincoln's Baltimore Address, Lesson Two

Level: Grades 3-12

Today we'll be taking a closer look at a section of the Baltimore Address. It was a speech delivered by President Abraham Lincoln in Baltimore, Maryland in 1864, which was the third year of the Civil War. Because this speech was delivered so long ago, the language that Abraham Lincoln uses is very different from the way we speak now. Imagine that this speech is being given today and is being broadcast online and on tv. Your job is to update Abraham Lincoln's words so that people in 2020 will understand them. To make this task easier, I have underlined some of the words and phrases and have defined them for you below the speech.

Calling to mind that we are in Baltimore, we cannot fail to note that the world moves. Looking upon these many people assembled here to serve, as they best may, the soldiers of the Union, it occurs at once that three years ago the same soldiers could not so much as pass through Baltimore. The change from then till now is both great and gratifying. Blessings on the brave men who have wrought the change, and the fair women who strive to reward them for it!

But Baltimore suggests more than could happen within Baltimore. The change within Baltimore is part only of a far wider change. When the war began, three years ago, neither party, nor any man, expected it would last till now. Each looked for the end, in some way, long ere to-day. Neither did any anticipate that domestic slavery would be much affected by the war. But here we are; the war has not ended, and slavery has been much affected how much needs not now to be recounted. So true is it that man proposes and God disposes. But we can see the past, though we may not claim to have directed it; and seeing it, in this case, we feel more hopeful and confident for the future.

Calling to mind-remembering

Assembled- brought together

Serve- help

As they best may-as best as they can

Union-the North

Pass-walk

Gratifying- satisfying

Wrought-made

Strive-try

Party- side in the war. The two sides were north and south.

Ere- before

Recounted-said

Man proposes and God disposes- these words were taken from a 600 year old Christian book (not the bible). The man who wrote the book is saying that people try to figure out the steps to take but he believes that God is the one who directs those steps.

If you still have energy after updating this section of Lincoln's speech for Americans today, here are a couple more things to think about.

In the middle of this section of the speech, Abraham Lincoln says that three years ago, Union soldiers could not pass through Baltimore. What does he mean? Why can the Union soldiers pass through Baltimore now? What happened?

At the end of this section of the speech, Abraham Lincoln says that we can see the past and it makes us more hopeful and confident in the future. What do you think he means? What has happened that makes him feel better about what will happen in the future?

For more information on the Civil War, you can visit

<https://classroom.freckle.com/#/social-studies-units/3edff3bb-d597-4719-ae57-83d48453dbfd>