CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen

Richard Allen · *1833 · Allen's English*

I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My mother and father and four children of us were sold into Delaware State, near Dover, and I was a child and lived with him until I was upwards of twenty years of age, during which time I was awakened and brought to see myself, poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. Documenting the American South. For grades 9–12. Gravity. Quote Allen, not a later slogan only.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read Richard Allen's Life as he opens it—born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew of Philadelphia—and then follow, with gravity, the selling into Delaware, the awakening, and the later gospel labours?

"I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My"

Opening of the Life

He dates his life from the year of our Lord, and from a name: born 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. His mother and father and four children of them were sold into Delaware State, near Dover; he lived there until he was upwards of twenty, and in that time was awakened and brought to see himself poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. Teach that beginning, with gravity, for grades 9–12. The later pages are the gospel labours, including the work from which the African Methodist Episcopal Church would grow. Quote Allen, not a later slogan only, and do not make a spectacle of anyone's suffering. This hosted text is from Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the 1833 life.

KEY CHARACTERS

Richard Allen
Born in 1760, a slave to Benjamin Chew of Philadelphia, who writes of his awakening and of his later gospel labours

His mother and father, and the four children
Sold with him into Delaware State, near Dover

The mercy of God, in the opening
Named in the first paragraph: without that mercy he must be lost; shortly after, he obtained mercy through the blood of Christ

HOW TO BEGIN THIS LIFE

> *"I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My"*
>
> Opening

> *"during which time I was awakened and brought to see myself poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. Shortly"*
>
> Opening

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

In the Year of Our Lord 1760

OPENING OF THE LIFE

I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. The first sentence holds a date, a master, and a city.

- Keep "year of our Lord," "February 14th," and Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia.
- 9–12. Gravity.
- Quote Allen, not a later life.
- Do not soften the word he uses of his condition.

> *"I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My"*
>
> Opening of the Life

02

Sold into Delaware, near Dover

OPENING OF THE LIFE

My mother and father and four children of us were sold into Delaware State, near Dover. The household is sold together, and named as such.

- Keep "four children of us," and Dover.
- Gravity; no spectacle.
- 9–12.
- The family is not a backdrop only.

> *"My mother and father and four children of us were sold into Delaware State, near Dover"*
>
> Opening of the Life

03

Upwards of Twenty Years of Age

OPENING OF THE LIFE

And I was a child and lived with him until I was upwards of twenty years of age. The opening already covers a childhood and a youth, under that sale.

- Keep "upwards of twenty years of age."
- 9–12. Gravity.
- The later freedom and ministry are not this sentence.
- Quote this English.

> *"and I was a child and lived with him until I was upwards of twenty years of age, during"*
>
> Opening of the Life

04

Awakened, and the Mercy of God

OPENING OF THE LIFE

During which time he was awakened and brought to see himself poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. Shortly after, he obtained mercy through the blood of Christ. The Life is already a conversion as well as a record of bondage.

- Keep "awakened," "poor, wretched and undone," and "without the mercy of God must be lost."
- 9–12.
- The gospel labours grow from this mercy.
- Do not replace his words with a later slogan only.

> *"during which time I was awakened and brought to see myself poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost. Shortly"*
>
> Opening of the Life

05

The 1833 Life, and the Later Labours

THE EDITION

This hosted text is the 1833 Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours, from Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Quote Allen. Later pages tell the labours, and the work from which the African Methodist Episcopal Church would grow; teach them as his, with gravity. For grades 9–12. One map cannot teach the whole book. Do not make a spectacle of anyone's suffering.

- Name 1833, and the source.
- The opening is the birth, the sale, and the awakening.
- Gravity throughout.
- A life before God, and a ministry, in his English.

> *"I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia. My"*
>
> Opening of the Life

A life dated from the Lord

A household sold, remembered

An awakening, and a refuge

Gospel labours, later

His own English, 1833

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. "I was born in the year of our Lord 1760, on February 14th, a slave to Benjamin Chew, of Philadelphia." Keep every name and date.
2. The household was sold into Delaware State, near Dover. Gravity; no spectacle.
3. In those years he was awakened, saw himself poor, wretched and undone, and without the mercy of God must be lost.
4. The 1833 life, from Documenting the American South, for grades 9–12. Quote Allen, not a later slogan only. Later gospel labours belong to the same book.

Quotations are verbatim from the Allen's English, Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/allen-life-experience-and-gospel-labours/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.