

# *Teaching* **Lincoln's Gettysburg Address**

**Chuck Teague**

## **PART ONE: The Underlying Contention**

- A. Introduction to the Address
  - 1. An American icon
  - 2. A special moment in history
  - 3. Words worthy of honor
- B. Background
  - 1. Lincoln reaches back to our nation's birth (1776)
  - 2. If conceived in freedom, issues to be resolved:
    - a. How to do democracy?
    - b. How to maintain a union?
    - c. Is freedom to be shared equally?
  - 3. A constitution (1787) to make it better
    - a. So many details set forth
    - b. One huge issue left unresolved: slavery
- C. A prairie lawyer grapples with the problem
  - 1. Does union trump equality?
  - 2. Can we endure half slave and half free?
  - 3. A map of three Americas: free, slave, and undecided
- D. A clash of propositions
  - 1. Stephens: African slavery both natural and constitutional?
  - 2. Founders: All created equal.
  - 3. The rupture of the Union

## **PART TWO: The Magnitude of the Crisis**

- A. Time line of the conflict
  - 1. Lincoln elected
  - 2. South Carolina initiates a string of secessions
  - 3. A new nation
  - 4. Lincoln inaugurated
  - 5. Geographic layers

6. Significant battles
    - a. Federals winning in the west
    - b. But Confederates strong in the east
  7. Emancipation Proclamation: a response to war
  8. Gettysburg a crucial battle and reason for the address
- B. The horrors of war
1. Photographs of dead Americans
  2. Americans killing each other in the cause of freedom
  3. A favorite song on both sides: “The Battle Cry of Freedom”
  4. “Freedom” the so-called reason for assassination
- C. Gettysburg: the Battle