

~~General~~ "We are verily guilty concerning ^{our} ~~brother~~!"

By the grace of God having been fully convinced that slavery, perpetual involuntary servitude, is a condition of wrong to man & on the part of the Master of sin against God, I feel ^{it} a duty to myself as well as to Society to make known in a public manner, that I most heartily repent of all part that I have heretofore voluntarily taken in supporting this unholy system of wrong & oppression -

Instructed from my earliest childhood to regard as my inferiors all who belong to the sable race of Africa, & being in bonds myself to that unhallowed prejudice which presumes the black man was designed by God to be the white man's ~~slave~~ it was not until the year 1833 (Nov 8th) when I was 27 years of age, that my attention was drawn to the subject of American slavery - a ^{number} of ~~an~~ Anti Slavery Pamphlet was put into my hands; at first I threw it from me with disdain; but after a few hours, to gratify curiosity, I condescended to give it a perusal. The object of the Pamphlet was to show that the doctrines of M^r Calhoun when applied to the colored people in bondage were

of equal force as when brought in defence of the
white man's rights. I had imbibed the political
principles of this distinguished Statesman; but
I now felt the force of his arguments as ap=
plied where I had never anticipated their ap=
plication. It was an entirely new thought
to me, & as I also felt the religious obligation
to have regard to the interests & rights of my
fellow-man as well as my own, I trembled
at the prospect of having to diminish my
means of support by yielding to my convic=
tions of duty. Yet I was on the point of pro=
claiming freedom at once to all on my planter=
tion; but a second thought directed me to the Bi=
ble as the proper source from which to learn
my obligations & my duty. A few hours exa=
mination with a mind ^{unconsciously} warped by interest, &
blinded by prejudice brought me to the conclu=
sion that the Bible taught that Man has a
right to hold his fellow-man as property. It
was easy for me, ^{in my ~~such~~ circumstances} to perceive that Canaan's curse
was God's charter to them & Japhet's posterity to
make Africans their slaves. It was easy to regard

Abraham as the prototype of an American
slave holder. It was easy to understand the
tenth commandment as a security to the slave
holder against the covetousness of his neighbor.
It was easy to consider the servitude under
the Mosaic law as strictly analogous to
that in which I held my own slaves. It
was easy to pervert the New Testament precepts
to servants of submission to wrong & to masters of regard for
the interests of those servants, into a right on
the part of the one to retain the other in bon-
dage - In a word, it was easy for one who
wished it so, to find in the Bible a sanction
for American Slavery. And I became readily
convinced that Abolitionism was fanaticism,
& that Abolitionists were deserving the exe-
cration of the American People & the indigna-
tion of Almighty God. I wrote in vindication
of slavery to prove that the Bible sanctioned
it. My Essays were published in the Charleston
Mercury with commendation & I rejoiced that
the light of truth ~~my vision~~ had fallen so brightly on my vision.

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On the first of January 1835 I commenced editing
a religious paper in Charleston S.C. In this pa-
per I honestly expressed my convictions in favor
of slavery & zealously defended the institution when-
ever I had a suitable opportunity. I read but
little on the other side of the question, for it
was regarded unsafe in that community to
receive abolition documents, & in addition
to this (as I myself conceived) necessary precau-
tion, I felt so satisfied that my own views
were correct & that our proslavery principles
were incontrovertible, that I sought not
for anti-slavery information. I thought I
had light enough, & felt secure in my own
interpretation of the scriptures. Some few of
the papers with which I exchanged did ven-
ture occasionally to call our attention to
the subject, but without much attempt at
argument or reason. Feeling themselves de-
pendent upon patronage for support they were
cautious how they touched so delicate a subject.

and I reposed with much quietude on the infallibility of my own conclusions. But in July of the same year I received a paper containing Dr. Wayland's Chapter on Personal Liberty, an extract from his Elements of Moral Science just then published. This produced a powerful effect on my feelings, & I began to doubt the correctness of the views I had been entertaining. I thought, however, after reading ^{the article} a second time that I had detected its errors, & I sat down to write ~~an article~~ ^{something} in reply. After writing three pages on human rights, I found my own argument leading to such anti-republican conclusions as to startle myself. I then made a second effort at reply, but was, despite of myself, ^{compelled} to modify my views on slavery. I saw that I must either give up my republican principles or admit that slavery in its origin was unjust, & that if freedom be a good, slavery is an evil. Yet

I ^{did} ~~could~~ not perceive how I could be blamed
for the bondage of my slaves, inasmuch as
they were slaves before they came into my
possession. I had an apprehension that those
born on my place were made slaves by
myself, but I was inclined to think that
the responsibility could not rest on me,
as I was only acting in agreement with
the laws of the country. [To my mind too
the Bible seemed to justify the practice
of slavery although its principles might
be opposed to the principle of slavery. I was
greatly troubled. I read Dr. Wayland's treatise
about seven times over. I found in
Rees Cyclopaedia some thoughts on the sub-
ject. I was anxious, exceedingly anxious
to have the subject fully before me; but
I dared not have in my house any aboli-
tion publications, & so I had but a poor op-
portunity to find materials to work against
my interest & my prejudices. With me, all

was doubt - I could arrive at no definite conclusions - I saw clearly that slavery & republicanism were not consistent; but I thought slavery was justifiable on the ground of necessity - Our fathers had fixed it upon us - It was interwoven into the policy of the country, & a general emancipation I feared would be ruinous. Many would be reduced to poverty by it - It then occurred to me that if necessity was the law by which it must be justified, that law would not apply to myself since I could grant freedom to those I had & then not be reduced to want. On the whole I was in such state of doubt that I felt it my duty to chose the safe side, & since I had a perfect right to liberate my slaves, but thought it at least possible that slavery was sinful, I made up my mind to offer to my slaves.

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the liberty to go either to Liberia or any
free state they might chose - I made
them the proposal distinctly, fully and
honestly; but what could the poor crea-
tures do? They had no knowledge of other
countries, they knew not to what want
they might be reduced in a strange land
& I could give them no satisfactory in-
formation. For I was not possessed of it
myself - They had been accustomed
to regard me a kind master, & they pre-
ferred to ~~remain~~^{be} among the connexions
they had formed in the neighborhood. They
therefore chose to remain where they were,
& to work in my service. I dismissed
my overseer, & left my plantation to their
almost entire control, determined to supply
them with what they needed in proportion
to the proceeds of the crops they made -

No sooner did I take this step than I became the
 object of calumny & abuse - although I had broken
 no law of the state; had interfered with
 no man's privileges; had not urged my troubles
 upon any one; & was doing no more than
 a conscientious man was obliged to do; I was
 nevertheless so threatened & vilified that it was
 a question whether I ought not at once to
 leave the country for my personal safety.
 That I was not an abolitionist was made
 evident by the continued vindication of
 the system of slavery in the paper I was
 editing in Charleston, for although I had
 given up the defence of slavery in the ab-
 stract, yet I still apologized for it on the
 ground of necessity; ^{and my} ~~my~~ course with re-

gard to my slaves was my own private
 affair. But <sup>"Millions of opening mouths to flame belong
 and in my slowness is I furnish I with a tongue
 and gourd with listening ears the flying words is puny"</sup> ~~it was made public by malice~~
 "Rumor was the messenger of defamation," & every thing
 was greatly exaggerated as ~~malice~~ ^{malice} increas-
 ed its publicity - ^{yet} even then I had such

an opinion of the Abolitionists - that I would
rather have been called an apapin than
an Abolitionist. ^{But suspicions were strong against me &} ~~XXXX~~ an effort was made
by ~~a~~ christian people to take patronage
from my paper, because I would no longer
say that slavery was right in itself
& ought to be supported - A minister of
the Gospel, of my own denomination, & one
of the most respected in that region of coun-
try, expressed it as his opinion that my
paper ought not to be supported. He be-
came so excited in conversation with
me that he was not in a state of mind
to understand what my real sentiments
were - Yet this Minister was my person-
al friend for whom I still have the
highest regard, & who I am sure did not
feel conscious how he was affected by
prejudice & self interest - It became e-

very where rumored that I was an Abolitionist; it was reported that for my incendiary movements I was arrested & confined in Barnwell jail. Twice did I receive intelligence of a determination to tar & feather me. Members of Churches would walk out as soon as I rose in the pulpit to preach. I was informed that in Barnwell District it was a subject of agitation whether I should not be kept from their pulpits. Now was the persecution confined to myself, my slaves were afraid to leave the plantation lest they might be abused, until as a question of humanity I thought I had better sell them than retain them in my possession. My own relatives would tell me of the impolicy of allowing my slaves so much more privilege & so much better

fore than other masters gave. Indeed my regard for them, my anxiety for my own family, my sympathy for my friends, the appeals to my feelings, the vituperation & abuse, & the threats of violence all conspired ~~there~~^{to} hinder me from coming to any definite conclusion with regard to the morality of slave holding, & I began to think I must have been morbidly sensitive on a question that to other minds seemed so clear; that I had been in error in the course I had adopted with regard to my slaves; & I was forced by public sentiment to let the subject alone until I could regain my standing in the community. But I settled it in my own mind that as soon as ~~possible~~^{I could} come away without being driven away

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 & my standing in my own denomination
 should be regained, & ^{the way was clear} ~~the way was clear~~ ~~the way was clear~~ ~~the way was clear~~
 fore me, I would leave the jurisdiction
 of Lynch law & place myself in a
 condition to examine the subject until
 my conscience could be fully satisfied
 either that slavery was or was not a
 wrong & a sin - I gave up my paper,
 I retired from all public associations
 & kept as private as possible until my
 persecutors were silenced, & defamation
 had ceased. In the mean time I had no
 thing to read on the subject of slavery,
 & my mind tho' not satisfied was quiet.
 Finally the time came when ^{from my stand} ~~without~~ ~~from~~ ~~from~~ ~~from~~
 ing as a Minister ~~Christian~~ & my position
 credit to my ~~personal~~ ~~character~~ in my
 own denomination, I had the strongest per-
 sonal inducements to remain at the South.
 It was then that I took the opportunity to
 come to this State. But before I came the

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question must be settled what shall I do
with my slaves? I dared not attempt their
freedom under the circumstances of the case,
I could not with safety to themselves leave
them without a protector; I was offered
the market price for them in cash; this
I refused because I knew not where they
were to go; I then proposed to my brother-
in-law to let him have them on a cre-
dit of seven years at somewhere about
\$200. ^{per} each than I had been offered
for them in cash - They had connexions
among his slaves, & it suited them best to
belong to him - I did this under the con-
scientious impression that it was the best
plan which the circumstances of the case
allowed me to adopt - And retaining three
of my slaves I came to this state - I
came with my prejudices strong against ^{the} Ab-
olition ^{Society}, & these prejudices were increased

The movements of a few unwise mem-
 bers of that Society, the temper & spirit of
 whose minds ^{are} ~~it~~ enough to do injury to any
 cause. But I determined to give ^{Abolitionists} ~~them~~ a
 hearing, to investigate their principles & to
 satisfy myself on the subject of slavery - I ac-
 cordingly subscribed for the Philanthropist
 although I almost felt like polluting my
 fingers whenever I touched ~~it~~ ^{it} - Weld's Bi-
 ble argument I examined - it vexed me be-
 cause its ^{style} ~~language~~ eloquence seemed to be
 the language of bitter passion, & I lost the ar-
 gument in my anger with the author - I sig-
 ned my pen with the hope I could reply to
 it, & wrote six pages of objections to the
 author's ~~temper~~ introduction, but when I
 came to dispose of his argument, Oh my
 conscience, I found myself ^{already} convinced
 that he had truth on his side, that slavery
 was wrong, however I might be scorched by the

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turning eloquence of the writer - I could ca-
cil, but I could no longer say that the
Bible sanctioned slavery, ^{& I gave what I had written to the flames.} I determined to
emancipate fully the three slaves I had
retained, although they were then worth
not less than \$2200. Since that time
I have carefully investigated the proceed-
ings of the Anti-Slavery Society, & the prin-
ciples of their constitution, until I ^{have} become
heartily sorry that I ever ^{allowed} ~~took up~~ the cry
of "fanaticism" against them, ^{to hinder the} ~~truth from shining into my own mind, &~~
~~heartily regret of having joined in the~~
~~my heart from~~ ~~any similar~~ sympathizing with them in
the noble spirit of their philanthropic
enterprise - I rejoice now that I am e-
manipated from that infamous prejudice
which enslaved me to error & to wrong,
& by which even now thousands of my fel-
low citizens, ^{even in the free states yet} are ~~now~~ imprisoned ⁺ in darkness.

Satisfied that slavery is a wrong to man & an
 sin against God, ^{on my late visit to the} I ~~have written a letter~~
 South I proposed to the gentleman to whom
 (the sale amounted to about \$10,000)
 I sold out to recant, but he declined it.
 After I returned I wrote him a letter of
 which the following is an exact copy-

Cincinnati Ohio Jan 4th 1840

Dear Edward

I have a proposition to make to
 you which I do not know how you will
 receive. It is to get from you all the ne-
 groes I sold you & their issue at the price
 you took them - or rather as many of them
 as I can secure freedom to. There may be
 some of them so situated as to refuse to come
 into a free state for their freedom. But what
 I wish of you is to let me have them all
 if I can secure freedom to all, or as many
 of them as I can possibly succeed in emanci-
 pating. I feel that slavery is sinful & that

I was wrong to see - those I had - I had no right
from God to them, & that convinced I shall
never be easy in mind until I can get
them out of bondage fairly & honestly. I
have thought about this matter from
beginning to end, & as I love my Saviour,
I feel that I ought to clear my skirts
entirely of the responsibility of slavery.
If it must continue let the responsibility
rest upon those whose consciences
allow them to uphold it. But I cannot
stand my convictions on this subject any
longer, & I now throw the responsibility
entirely upon yourself if those slaves I
sold you be not emancipated. I make
you the distinct offer to take them back.
If you refuse the account stands between
you & God. I do my duty in making you
this appeal, & you must carry the matter
to the judgment seat of Christ. But I beg,
you, Edward, to ponder the subject well

Before you refuse - remember that
 These are immortal souls whom you are
 to meet at the bar of God. Oh, let them
 not have it then to say, we were in
 wisdom & you comforted us not. I sur-
 pose it will be a struggle in your mind
 what to do; but, Edward, for the sake of
 making some of the sordid dust of the earth
 let not your heart disregard the welfare
 of these poor slaves. I can get them here,
 & here provision can be made for them
 in one of the counties in this State, where
 they can have opportunity to rise in cha-
 racter as well as worldly prosperity. Let
 me know if you are willing to do it &
 then I can adjust the matter for them.

I will not occupy any part of this
 letter to prove to you that slavery is
 wrong, that it has no sanction in the word
 of God; but to show you what I think
 about it I send you a little tract that

²⁰ has been one of the means of settling my mind. It may help to get your consent to let me have the negroes back.

Omit My love to Charlotte & the children

Your affectionate brother
Matthew Brisbane

P.S. Let me know what you will take for June, & if I can get Jeffrey, should you be willing to let me have their wives Diana & Daphney W.B.B.

To Edward A Peeples
Lawtonville So Cal

My object in exhibiting this letter is ^{not only} to show that I have the conviction ~~not~~ ^{only} that slavery is wrong, but that I am ~~not~~ ^{not} unwilling to make restitution for the wrong I did in selling those slaves that had a just right to demand of me their liberty, but whose ignorance ^{on Christian forbearance} & weakness ^{by nature} prevent their seeking that justice that belongs to them.

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And now it will necessarily be asked, how
I arrived at the conclusion that slavery is
a wrong to man &
a sin against God - I will answer this
first as a man & then as a Christian -

As a man I honor the principles of
our Declaration of Independence - I believe
that our noble fathers spoke the truth
when they declared ~~that~~ "These truths to be
self evident: - that all men are created
equal, that they are endowed by their cre-
ator with certain unalienable rights; that
among these are life, liberty & the pursuit
of happiness." ^P There are some things so
obvious that their very simplicity makes
it ^{ridiculous to attempt} difficult to prove them - And hence it is
that our noble fathers made no attempt
to prove that all men are created equal,
that they have a natural right to liberty;
they did not dream that their sons would
be such simpletons as to require proof of this;

and hence instead of attempting to demonstrate
it, they called it a self evident truth - And
there is not a man who has the spirit of
a man, but feels he has as natural a right
to freedom & independence as the proud
monarch ^{who sits upon a} ~~upon~~ ~~his~~ throne - And as a man
conscious of my own rights, & jealous of those
rights, I feel that that man is degraded
who is so humbled as not to know he has
a right to liberty & ^{independence} ~~freedom~~ - As a Chris-
tian he may submit to wrong, but as a
man he must feel that it is ^{tyranny} ~~power~~ alone
that makes him a slave - What intelli-
gent man is there who, when left to the im-
pulses of his nature uncontrolled by the grace
of God, does not exclaim "Give me liber-
ty or give me death?" Yes, do not Chris-
tians themselves fight for freedom, & ^{did} ~~not~~
not he who lives in the hearts of his coun-
trymen as the Father of our Independence
fight for the liberty we ^{enjoy} ~~have~~ & was not Washington

a christian? I do not say that ^aChristian
ought to fight even for liberty; but this
I say that such is his consciousness of
right to liberty - that it is hard to con-
vince him that it is christian for hear-
ance to submit to slavery. It is a self
evident truth that man, immortal man
has the charter of freedom written in his
heart, & nothing but injustice or want
can make him a slave - And as I value
my consistency, as I value my principles,
those principles taught by Franklin,
Jefferson & Washington, <sup>I into which I was indoctrinated by such men as Har-
millon, Waring & Mayhew</sup> I will respect the
rights of man whatever be the color of
his skin. And as I value justice God
forbid that I should ^{dishonour humanity} ~~desecrate~~ liberty
^{ignorant}
by making even an African my slave.
I ^{may} ~~am~~ not ^{indeed be} prepared to say with Cawper
"I had much rather be myself the slave"
but this I do say that ^{if} ~~he~~ ^I will to own
a slave, ^I ~~deserve~~ ^{myself} to be a slave.

And now as a Christian I will answer
how I conclude that slavery is a wrong
to man & a sin against God. It is because
slavery is a wrong to man that it is a sin a-
gainst God, for God has said Love thy
neighbor as thyself. Shall I teach you
from the Bible that American slavery
is a wrong to man? Is not the Bible it-
self given for the good of man & does it
not say to all search the scriptures? but
do not the laws of slavery forbid man to
read the ~~Book~~ ^{read the} ~~that~~ ^{the} church ^{God has} that sent him
to mark his way to Heaven? And is
not this a wrong to man? Does not the
Bible say What God hath joined toge-
ther let not man put asunder? & do
not the laws of slavery empower the
wicked man to separate husbands & wives,
& tear the infant from its mother's breast?
And is this no wrong to man? Do not

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American laws declare that a colored man's word shall not be taken in a court of justice? & is ^{he} not refused a jury trial? and are these no wrong to man? Is it no wrong, no oppression to keep a man in such a condition that he must stand a cruel spectator to see his master abuse & chastise the partner of his bosom, and allow his own children to be scourged before his face? Is it no wrong to chain the immortal mind of man & ~~to~~ ~~xxx~~ ~~xxx~~ however noble & gifted the intellect which God has given him to forbid the intellectual training of ^{immortal} that mind? Is it no oppression to starve the soul & prevent the growth of its moral powers? Is it no wrong, no oppression, ~~to~~ when professing christians will not allow their fellow christians in the same church with them

to enjoy equal church privileges with ~~them~~^{them}, tho' God has enjoined them to have no respect of persons? Are all these things & vastly more that might be named no wrong to man? I know my Bible better than to believe it upholds a system like this. And you know that if the Bible did sanction such wrongs as these you could not prevail upon men to believe the Bible to be the book of God. No. teach such a doctrine as this, & you dare not call the New Testament the glad tidings of salvation. The Ministers voice would become powerless, & infidels would revel in ~~their~~ triumph & victory. Does not the Bible teach us that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men," that ~~do not~~^{all men} are our neighbors, & that we must love our neighbor as ourselves? Then do not belie the Bible by the assertion that it sanctions such a system of legalized ^{oppression} as American slavery.

But will it be said that these oppressions are
rather the abuse of slavery than slavery it-
self, & tho' the Bible condemns these wrongs
it sanctions ^{a condition} ~~slavery~~ of involuntary servi-
tude? I answer that these things are the
very essence of slavery; teach the slave
to read & he will ^{steadily} ~~learn~~ your Declaration
of Independence until it kindles in his
bosom the free spirit of Patrick Henry. Teach
him to read & he will learn that ^{his} ~~slave~~ ^{Daniel}
master is a tyrant & that ^{Christian forbearance alone will} ~~that slavery is too~~ ^{allow} ~~to be borne~~ ^{him to endure his bondage -}
Let the laws forbid the vio-
lent separation of husbands & wives & kin-
dred; let the colored man be allowed to bear
testimony in a court of justice; give him a
right to a jury trial; give him the right
to defend his wife & children from abuse
& wrong; repeal all laws that restrain his
mental & his moral improvement; enact laws
& enforce them ^{to prevent} ~~forbidding~~ ^{requiring} ~~masters~~ ^{masters} ~~from~~ ^{to give}
to their servants ^{freedom & all} ~~that which~~ ^{whatever} "is just & equal";

and let Christians give their colored brethren
equality of church rights - Let these things
be done, & the Abolition Society is dissolved
instantly - These oppressions are not the
mere abuse of slavery - They are the bone
& sinew of involuntary servitude - With-
out them slavery could not exist a day.
And does the Bible uphold a system, which
requires oppression to support its existence?
Never, no, never - ^{It is a calamity upon the} ~~The Bible teaches that~~
~~never~~ ^{Bible to say that} ~~or for,~~ it does - I look into the
Old Testament & there when I am not blind-
folded by my interests & my prejudices I
learn that slavery was regarded as a curse
to be made use of as a punishment for
crime; that it guarded against involuntary
servitude by forbidding all slave trade;
that it enjoined that who so stealth a man
& selleth him, or if he be found in his hand
he shall surely be put to death; that

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it provided for the freedom of those who by
poverty & misfortune ^{might be brought into} ~~were in a state of~~
bondage, either at the expiration of six years
or of forty nine years at most; that it secur-
ed the servant against cruel treatment, by
demanding his freedom for the loss of even
a tooth; that it required the Master to give
up his bondman whenever his kindred or him-
self ~~could~~ ^{might} be able to redeem him; ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~forbids~~ ^{forbids} the restoration of
~~the~~ ^{the} ~~very~~ ^{very} ~~reverse~~ ^{reverse} of ~~that~~ ^{that} one to slavery who
ran away from his master. ~~And~~ There too
is the history of that people whom the
Lord with a mighty hand delivered from
Egyptian bondage & whose Master he pe-
nished with tremendous plagues. I then
look into the New Testament, & I find Jesus
standing up in the Synagogue & taking for
his text that verse in Isaiah "The Spirit of
the Lord is upon me, because he hath an-
ointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor,

he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted,
 to preach deliverance to the captives, & recover-
 ing of sight to the blind, to set at liberty
 them that are bruised." I see that when
 he did lead captivity captive & gave gifts
 unto men that they who first imbibed the
 precious doctrines of his gospel had all
 things common & among them could there-
 fore have been no distinction of Master &
 slave - I see that his apostle preached
 that the law was made for men stealers,
 & that tho' one who was bound should not
 seek to be loosed, yet if he could have his
 freedom "use it rather" - & he taught Masters
 to give unto their servants that which is
 just & equal - & to Philemon he wrote that
 he had authority from Christ to enjoin it
 upon him to receive back Onesimus not as
 a servant, but a brother beloved, tho' he would
 rather him do it willingly than of necessity -

and I read another Apostle saying, "Go to now
 ye rich men, weep & howl for your miseries
 that shall come upon you. Your riches are
 corrupted, & your garments are moth eaten.
 Your gold & your silver is cankered; & the
 rust of them shall be a witness against
 you, & shall eat your flesh as it were
 fire. Ye have reaped treasure together for
 the last days. Behold the hire of the laborers
 who have reaped down your fields, which
 is of you kept back by fraud crieth; & the
 cries of them which have reaped are enter-
 ed into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."
 "These things, ye all the principles of the
 Christian religion teach me, that no man
 can be a slave holder without trampling
 upon some of those principles; without
 neglecting the great law, ~~&~~ Love Thy
 neighbor as thyself" — Think not that
 modern abolitionists alone teach the doctrine that

slavery is a sin. Some of you admire much
 the distinguished Methodist Adam Clarke and
 if I were to be the author of such language
 as he has used in his commentary on this
 subject with regard to slave holders, I know
 not whether tarring & feathering would be con-
 sidered by some mild enough for me. Hear
 what he thought of Christians owning slaves.
 He says "In heathen countries slavery was in some
 sort excusable: among Christians, it is an enormi-
 tity & a crime for which no atonement has scarcely
 been made by an adequate state of punishment." ~~And~~ ^{Now}
~~that was only~~ ^{was Adam Clarke the only Methodist} ~~that~~ ^{who} thought
 slavery a sin; John Wesley, the father of Methodism
 declared: "Liberty is the right of every human
 creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air. And
 no human law can deprive him of that right,
 which he derives from the law of nature." Nor
 did Methodists only thus testify to the sin of sla-
 very. You who admire the eloquent Robert Hall
 hear what he said "The claims of the planters

to hold their negroes in perpetual bondage
 is initiated in its origin; & having commenced
 in an act of injustice, can never acquire
 the sanction of right." If then I have
 erred in my judgment of what the scriptures
 teach in regard to such slavery as exists in these
 United States, ^{There is some reason for my error} I have the consolation of knowing
^{when} ~~say that~~ some of the most eminent Ministers
 of the Gospel have erred before me. And I
 am sure, it must be time ^{to suspect} ~~to reflect~~ that
 slavery is a sin against God, when such men
 as Clarke & Beecher & Robert Hall & Francis
 Beayland so regard it.

Having thus satisfied myself that slavery
 is wrong, I forthwith abandon it & I shall no
 longer be responsible for its existence. Now
 can I conceive of any middle ground between
 right & wrong. If slavery be wrong, it cannot
 be right. And as I prefer to be right, ^{as I} ~~I~~ ^{revere} ~~reverence~~
 the principles of the Christian religion above all
 things else, I will endure poverty, yea, die in

hospital before I will ~~let any presumption~~ ^{any longer allow myself}
~~self to be~~ the instrument of aiding & abetting
a system of wrong against my fellow man &
of sin against my God. Yes, before I will
practice contrary to the principles of the Gospel
I profess to love, I will hate father &
mother & wife & children & friends, & all things
I trust my God ^{for that peace which passeth all}
~~understanding~~ ^{to bring me off more than} & which the world can neither give
~~conquer~~ nor take away. If the scriptures be rather
dark on this subject, perhaps they are so, for
the same reason that Jesus spoke to the Jews
in parables; "because they seeing, see not; &
hearing they hear not; neither do they understand;
for this people's heart is waxed gross, & their ears
are dull of hearing, & their eyes they have closed;
lest at any time they should see with their eyes,
& hear with their ears, & should understand with
their heart & should be converted." ^{I therefore} ~~I am~~
~~have no wish to~~ - But to my mind the conviction
~~and have to condemn their slavery~~
^{that the principles of the Gospel are incompatible with American slavery}
has come, & acting upon that conviction I separate
myself from it, & leave it for those who have easier

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consciences, to maintain a system which originated in breaches of the 8th & 10th Commandments of God's Moral Law, & can only be supported by doing violence to ^{the Gospel of} ~~those~~ Jesus Christ -
~~Rules of Law~~

But it may be asked how is it that so many wise & good men can continue in the practice of holding their fellow men in bondage, if it be indeed so opposed to the principles of the Gospel? For ^{an} answer to this question I would refer you to the life of that eminently pious man, Rev. John Newton, who even after he became a Christian & one too of no ordinary character for piety, continued to visit the coast of Africa to obtain slaves for the West India market, & he says of himself, "During the time I was engaged in the slave trade I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness. I was upon the whole satisfied with it, as the appointment Providence had marked out for me!" And yet this good man according to his own account was in an employment that

friends who by their daily walk & conversation give evidence that they are born of God. & whose works & zeal & labors of love would put many an abolitionist to the blush. I know many, very many owners of slaves, who I believe will be brilliant gems in the crown of Jesus Christ, for Jesus has prayed for them "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do," & that ~~powerful~~ ^{mighty} prayer will prevail, & not one of them ~~has been heard~~ ^{whom the Father} whom the Father has given to Jesus will be lost. But oh! that they could see that they are doing injustice to their brethren whom they have in bonds, & with whom they are to sit around the table of the Lord to drink the new wine in their Father's Kingdom. Oh! Spirit of free grace, open their eyes to see that the law of love requires that they "break every yoke & let the oppressed go free".

But what is a Christian slave holder to do whose State laws forbid the emancipation of his slaves? I answer, that he ^{who} becomes convinced

that slavery ~~is~~ ^{is} wrong to man & a sin a-
gainst God, will soon find out how to
get rid of it & clear himself of farther guilt
in its participation. Whilst there are free
states in this Union, there will be room
enough for conscientious Christians to find
a home ^{where, with reasonable ways} ~~for themselves & servants,~~ ^{their}
~~servants~~ ^{they} may still labor for their support. But
if this cannot be done, then let them do what
they can where they are towards ameliorat-
ing the condition of their slaves, by paying
them reasonable wages, & allowing them as
much as possible the privileges of free men,
& so leaving it in their wills that their
kins shall rather be the guardians than
the masters of these slaves. Let them too use
all their influence to have the law repealed
that forbids manumission, & all other laws
that allow one man to ^{regard} ~~treat~~ another as a
chattel & a thing. Let no man plead ne-
^{in excuse for slaveholding}
cessity, so long as he has not made every

effort to ~~raise~~ ^{raise} from the dust the poor slave
whose rights he has so long been trampling
beneath his feet. God does not require im-
possibilities, but he does require in full ac-
cording to that which a man hath. ~~But~~ ^{And let}
no man console himself with the hope that
~~instead of doing these Christians are there~~
because the laws of his state sustain oppression
~~seeks joining in the cry against all at~~
he is not
temporarily to individually responsible for the
support of those laws. In this country we
are republicans & not in the condition of
those Christians who ~~were~~ themselves be-
ing subject to the Roman powers, had no
power to ~~control~~ ^{control} the civil institutions of the
Roman Empire. Every ~~free~~ ^{free} citizen ^{here} is a part
of the sovereignty of his state, & his influ-
ence & his vote help to make & to repeal
laws. And let Christians in the Southern
states exert that influence against slavery
which they now use in its favor, & the
days of slavery are numbered. And that
they be brought to use this influence let

Christians here in the free States do what
 in charity to their brethren they ought to
 do, towards convincing the South ~~&~~ that
 slavery ought to be abolished. It is for
 the States themselves to legislate on this sub-
 ject, & ^{when the} South becomes convinced
 that slavery ought to be abolished, they
 have wisdom enough to know how to
 accomplish it with the least disadvantage
 to their ^{private interests & their} political prosperity.

In conclusion let me say to the Anti
 Slavery Society, God speed your efforts. Ad-
 here strictly to the principles of your Consti-
 tution; remember that it is by moral suasion
 & by peaceful measures, & not by resorting
 to physical force, that the rights of the oppres-
 sed ought to be vindicated. The slave is
 bound by the spirit of the Gospel to submit
 patiently to his wrongs; but it is for those
 who ^{can} feel for others' pains, & to remember
 those who are in bonds as bound with them,

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perhaps of twenty more

~~was~~ taken ill & died
before I could

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But finally, my respected audience allow me to say that it is by imbibing the spirit of the Gospel we prepare ourselves for maintaining the principles of truth & for doing justice to mankind - In a state of sin we are ourselves slaves to our ^{wors} ~~our prejudices, our passions, our pride~~ rapious, ~~we are~~ but captive by the devil. & we need the blood of Jesus Christ to set our ^{own} souls at liberty from that hardest of all bondage in which ~~sin~~ ^{Satan} holds us with an iron grasp, before we can fully appreciate the importance of giving to Africa's sons all the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is an awful bondage who are sitting chained under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" - Whilst Then we seek the liberty of man from a temporal yoke, let us not be ourselves the servants of corruption; but rather stand fast in the liberty where with Christ would make us free - "This is freedom such as angels use And kindred to the liberty of God"