

# NON-FELLOWSHIP

WITH

## SLAVEHOLDERS

THE

## DUTY OF CHRISTIANS.

BY JOHN G. FEE,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN KENTUCKY.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE following thoughts on the duty of non-fellowship with slaveholding churches were prepared for the *Examiner*, (Louisville, Ky.,) during the fall of 1849. That paper stopping before the articles were completed, they were continued in the *National Era*. Friends have solicited that they be prepared for publication in a pamphlet or tract form. They have been written just as the writer could seize moments of leisure from pastoral duties ; otherwise they would probably have been more condensed. For some trains of thought, the writer acknowledges his indebtedness to a tract on the same subject by WILLIAM GOODELL. The writer felt free to make use of his thoughts in a gratuitous effort to get truth before the minds of the readers of the *Examiner*, circulating as it did in a slave State. The whole has been revised and enlarged, and is now submitted to the public, with the hope that the feeble efforts put forth in its preparation may result in good.

JOHN G. FEE.

*Cabin Creek P. O., Lewis County, Ky., 1851.*



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### NON-FELLOWSHIP WITH SLAVEHOLDERS THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS.

FROM the above caption, we do not wish to convey the idea that slaveholders are, in all respects, the most abandoned characters. Often they are, in other respects, virtuous, industrious, humane, and amiable persons. But under the all-powerful influence of a false religion, custom, and sanction of law, they have become oppressors and extortioners in the worst form, violating the plainest principles of natural justice.

Under the influence of religion, custom, and law, in the days of Manasseh, persons otherwise amiable and humane would dash their innocent offspring into the flames of burning Moloch. Under the influence of religion, custom, and law, in the days of Pagan Rome, persons in other respects amiable and virtuous were the most unblushing fornicators and adulterers. We might mention hundreds of instances, in which persons, in other respects possessing characters of the highest commendation, yet, under the suasive and blinding influence of a false religion, custom, and law, have lived in the practice of some one great wrong. So with slaveholders now in our land. But whilst we make the above concessions respecting the character of slaveholders, what do they show? They show that, in other respects, excellent spirits may and do become the perpetrators of the most grievous wrongs and ruinous vices, and thereby the necessity of greater fidelity on the part of the church; for, as we shall hereafter show, on questions of morals, the church forms public sentiment, and public sentiment, law. Hence the necessity of the church



being free from the sanction of slaveholding, and all other immoralities.

From the days of Novatian, A. D. 251, down to the present, Protestants have taught the duty of having no fellowship with certain immoralities. Then, more especially than with any other immorality, should Christians have no fellowship with slaveholding.

#### REASONS.

I. God commands Christians so to do.

The apostle, specifying some of the characters to be disciplined, excluded from the fellowship of the church, says: "Now, I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an EXTORTIONER; with such an one, no, not to eat." 1 Cor. v. 11. That slavery is the worst form of extortion practised by men, few will deny. To extort is "to draw from by force—to gain by oppression."—*Webster*.

When the tyrants of Europe and Asia seize, even by form of law, the property of the poor tenant, or serf, and leave him scarce a tithe, as a substance for himself and poor family, we call that extortion.

When, in our own country, a covetous man finds his neighbor and family in want, lends the neighbor money to meet his necessities, demanding, however, as usury, a hundred per cent., which he knows his neighbor will give rather than sacrifice his property, or starve, and when the day of payment comes, some mishap having prevented payment, for the present, of more than the principal, the covetous man seizes by form of oppressive law the homestead of his neighbor, sells it at less than a tenth of its value, bidding it in for his own use, and thus depriving his neighbor of his only home for himself and helpless children, and receiving not only the principal, but more than ten hundred times an equivalent for his usury,—this we call extortion. Yet, as in Asia, or in European countries, the neighbor has what is yet more dear, himself, his wife, and children.

Still stronger. The original word translated "extortioner" admits of a still stronger meaning than we have supposed—that of lawless robbery; as when a band of men meets a poor man by the wayside, and tears from him the money which he has just received for his year's toil, and that with



which to minister to the comforts and wants of a poor family,—this, too, is extortion. Now, there is not a church in the land but would discipline church members for acts like the above. And yet, this is nothing in comparison with slavery, which takes from the poor man, not only the proceeds of his labor for a year, but for a whole life-time—yea, his wife, his child; the most outraged of all God's creatures, he may not own himself. Too often, his body fettered with chains, his mind veiled in ignorance, and his soul left in loathsome vice, he is the child of sorrow in life, and the heir of hell for eternity. Does the sun look upon such a system of extortion? Well did Wesley call it "the sum of all villanies." And is such disciplinable? If we would discipline the lesser degree of extortion, how much more should we discipline the greater! If a church member should, at a game of chance, win and take from his neighbor five dollars, we would soon discipline or exclude that man, on the ground that he took from his neighbor money, the proceeds of his labor for five days, without giving him an equivalent, and plead the act as "going beyond and defrauding his neighbor." But what is five dollars, the proceeds of the man's labor for five days, compared with the proceeds of his labor for a life-time, and the ownership of himself, his wife and children, together with the privilege of worshipping his God as he chooses, and being a freeman? If it be right to discipline, exclude the smaller, how much more, oh! how much more should we exclude the greater wrong!

Again: the New Testament declares that the "law is made for 'menstealers,'" (1 Tim. i. 10,) or, as we shall see, "slaveholders." This crime is placed along with "murderers," and other characters, "the most flagitious of mortals."

The word which is here translated "menstealers," primarily means slaveholders; and the passage condemns slaveholding as well as kidnapping. The original Greek word for menstealers is *ανδραποδιστης* (*andrapodistes*.) This is formed from the verb *ανδραποδιζω*, (see Robinson,) which means to "enslave." This is its true and primary meaning. No man can or will dispute this. *Ανδραποδιστης*, coming from this verb, means "one who makes a slave in any of the senses of *ανδραποδιζω*." — Donnegan. Then *ανδραποδισταίς*, the word which, in the above text, is translated menstealers, means not only those who kidnap or seize men and bring them into bondage, but also, and *primarily*, it means those who enslave



men—*hold* them in bondage. This view is also in accordance with reason and justice. Is not the participant of crime as guilty as the perpetrator of the first act? Is not the smuggler of goods as guilty as he who first stole? And suppose human laws should say the smuggler shall be protected, could these laws alter the *moral* character of the deed? Could they make black, white—evil, good? And should the smuggler take advantage of this law,—force of numbers, would he be any the less guilty in the sight of the moral law, and of God? Every man must say he would not.

The above exposition has been confirmed by some of the highest ecclesiastical authorities in Christendom. In the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, as amended by act of the General Assembly of 1794, and appended to the 142d question of the Larger Catechism, will be found the following note in exposition of 1 Tim. i. 10, the text under consideration: “‘The law is made for *menstealers*.’ This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it, as we have seen, to capital punishment; (see Exod. xxi. 17;) and the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank. The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in retaining them in it. Stealers of men are those who bring off slaves or freemen, and keep, sell, or buy them. ‘To steal a freeman,’ says Grotius, ‘is the highest kind of theft. In other instances we only steal human property; but when we steal or *retain* men in slavery, we seize those who in common with ourselves are constituted, by the original grant, lords of the earth.’ Gen. i. 28.”

Dr. Adam Clark, a Methodist divine, in his comment on the above text, has these words: “*Ἀνδραποδισταίς*, Slave-dealers—whether those who carry on the traffic in human flesh and blood, or those who steal a person in order to sell him into bondage, or those who buy such stolen men or women, no matter of what *color*, or what *country*; or the nations who legalize or connive at such traffic; all these are menstealers, and God classes them with the most flagitious of mortals.”

That slaveholding is as sinful as the first kidnapping (in kindness we say it) must be manifest upon a moment's reflection. In what does the sin of kidnapping consist? Not in simply removing a man from one country to another, pro-



vided it is done with his consent, for in so doing you may greatly improve his condition; and if you leave him a free-man, he will be very thankful for it. Nor does it consist in rescuing him from those who have robbed him of his liberty; as when Abraham rescued Lot from the four kings who had enslaved him. (Gen. xiv. 16.) Abraham found Lot a slave—rescued him from the hand of the oppressor—changed his location. But Abraham did not continue to hold him a slave, but left him a freeman. To Lot, the act was inestimable; and it was one so replete with disinterested benevolence and Christian duty, that Holy Writ will transmit it as a worthy and noble example to Adam's last son. Then the sin of manstealing or of kidnapping must consist in holding the man in *bondage*. Now this is the thing done by the slaveholder. It is clear then that the law in condemning the manstealer equally condemns the slaveholder, for the sin of each is the same—the withholding *freedom* from man.

And since kidnapping is punished by the nation with death, and since the crime of slaveholding is the same as that of kidnapping—that of depriving man of his liberty; and since slavebreeders do the act of pouncing upon the infant, and putting it in bonds, the act called kidnapping; and since the slavebuyer is no better, only continuing the deed; and since the church claims not the prerogative of originating laws to regulate human conduct, but the duty of enforcing such as God has made, why will she not execute the law which condemns slaveholding?

Then, if we do not execute the law just referred to, and do not refuse “to eat,” to fellowship this worst of extortioners, we are guilty of disobeying God. “With such, no, not to eat.” “Put away from among yourselves that wicked man.”

Do you say, the church government with which you are connected is such, that the lay members have no vote or say in the work of discipline? We answer, you did wrong in joining such a church; and your own wrongdoing lessens not the claim of God upon you to do your duty in purifying his church. It is a point in human as well as divine law, that we may not take advantage of our own wrongdoing, to continue in wrong.

2. You should immediately join, or assist in organizing a church on such principles of mutual equality, that you, in common with every other member, should have an equal



opportunity to obey God, in disciplining "the wicked person." At Corinth, the church—the whole church—was called upon to do this work; not a pope, bishop, nor privileged few. God has made the duty of discipline obligatory upon each and every member of his church—"his body." And we are individually accountable for the immoralities we neglect to discipline. See Rev. xviii. 4: "That ye be not partakers of her sins."

Do you again say, The majority is against me; the constitution of the church with which I am connected; or that the controlling influences are against me? We answer:

1. This does not lessen the claim, the command of God upon you. The wrong action of a majority will be no excuse for you in disobeying the command of God in fellowshiping iniquity. It is your duty to obey God, let others do as they may, and let the consequences be what they may.

2. It will then be your duty to come out from such a church, and organize one on true and gospel principles. The object of secession is the same as that of discipline—the purity of the church, saving her from the sanction of wickedness, and from corruption, and each member from being a "partaker of her sins." When a church comes to the fellowship of such iniquity as that of slaveholding, and the controlling influence deliberately refuses discipline, God says to the true Christians, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. xviii. 4. The term Babylon, as used in the context, cannot refer to the literal Babylon, built in the land of Chaldaea. This had been destroyed hundreds of years before the words of the text were written. But, as the real Babylon was prominent in corrupting the true religion of God, and as Egypt and Ephraim were prominent enemies of God's people, and therefore the terms Egypt and Ephraim were used to designate enemies in general, so the term Babylon was used to designate corrupt churches in general,—the Church of Rome, and all other churches introducing great corruptions or vices into the church. And the doctrine taught is, that the people of God should come out from such a church.

Thus, Whitby, in his comment on this text, declaring the duty of good Christians, says: "They are warned with faithfulness, constancy, and zeal to attempt a reformation of them (the sins mentioned in the chapter) at least among themselves, by an open and resolute separation." Scott, in his comment



on this same passage, says : " This summons concerns *all persons in every age* ; they who believe in Christ should *separate* from so corrupt a church, and from all others that copy her example of idolatry, persecution, cruelty, and *tyranny*, and avoid being partakers of her sins, even if they have renounced her communion, or else they may expect to be involved in her plagues." The duty enjoined is that of secession from any church that becomes alike corrupt. And what adds to the force and applicability of the text under consideration is, it was there foretold that mystic Babylon would practise the very sin under discussion—traffic in " slaves and souls of men." (See verse 3.) Do you say, " Our church does not allow buying and selling, or, at least, I do not buy and sell—I only hold what I have bought, or what has been given to me, or to Sally or Mary, my wife " ? We answer : The sin of slavery consists, not in buying and selling, the mere transfer of claims for a few pieces of silver, but in withholding from the innocent man his natural right—*liberty, personal ownership*. For, whatever I may *lawfully* (that is, in the sight of God's law) hold as property, I may lawfully sell. There is no sin in selling a bushel of wheat, or a horse, provided I have obtained the horse by honest means ; but if not, then it would be sinful for me to sell it to another man. As then it is not sinful to sell that which we may lawfully hold as property, and as selling the bodies and souls of men, slaves, is here represented as sinful, *slaveholding* must be sinful in the sight of God ;\* and accordingly he decreed, " He that steal-eth and selleth a man, or if he be *found in his hands*, he shall surely be put to death." *Exod. xxiv. 16.*

The sin of mystic Babylon, then, was slaveholding ; and God commands his people to come out from such a church, " from all who copy her example." Do you say she was more corrupt than this—she practised fornication, sanctioned or tolerated it in her members ? We answer : So do almost all the denominations of Christians in the Southern States of our own country, in their slave members. I know multiplied

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\* It being not sinful to sell that which we may *lawfully* hold as property, our Methodist brethren show that they regard slaveholding as sin, by forbidding in their Discipline the buying and selling of slaves. And if it thus, confessedly, is *sin*, why not treat it as sin, by having no fellowship with it ? The apostle said : " Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth."



instances of such, and there is no more discipline in their cases than if they were so many hogs or cattle !

Here then is the "sum of all villanies," and the climax of pollution. If this may not be excluded, what need be ? If a church may fellowship the "sum"—the highest—"of all villanies," such a church might, of course, fellowship *all* smaller villanies. And then what difference would there be between such a church and the world ? Where would be the utility of such a church ? Would such a church be "the light of the world" ? In God is no darkness at all—that is, no corruption ; and the church members or Christians are to be "perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect." The church of Christ is to be "without *spot*, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

Do you say, as we know some do, "I hold no slaves, and therefore feel no compunctions of conscience about eating with, or fellowshiping slaveholders" ? What ! do you feel no compunction of conscience in disobeying God, when he has positively commanded you "not to eat with extortioners," and to "put away that wicked person" ?

And though you own not a slave, is non-possession the end of duty, when corruption is in the church to which you belong ? Do you act upon the ground of neutrality in the cause of temperance ? True, you are not a dramseller, you make no drunkards ; but is that enough ? Do not God and society call upon you to "come out and be ye separate"—separate from those who are the friends and apologists for dram-drinking ? And is it not equally your duty to come out from those who are enslaving and oppressing your fellow-men, and to give your name and your influence on the side of liberty, and that too when God commands you to do so ? The question is not whether you do or do not own a slave, but whether you will *obey God*, when, as we have seen, he commands you "not to eat with an extortioner," as a brother in the church ; to "put away from you that wicked person ;" to "come out from those trading in the bodies and souls of men." Again, God says : "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." And is not slavery a work of darkness, that is, of wickedness ? Again : "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." 2 Thes. iii. 6. And if the practice of man-stealing—the worst of extortion, "the sum of all villanies"—be



not disorderly walking, then no crime can be. And if slaveholding be disorderly walking, the command to withdraw from such is plain.

Again: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be *ye separate*, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not *partakers* of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." God Almighty as plainly commands non-fellowship with gross immoralities, as he does that we do not lie or murder. And we may just as well knowingly disobey any or all of God's commandments, as this one; for "whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The question then is, not whether you are a non-slaveholder, and opposed to slavery, and talk against it; but the question is, whether *you will obey God* when he so plainly and often commands you to "put away the wicked person," to "have no fellowship with such," to "withdraw," to "come out."

II. Fidelity to souls around us requires that we have no fellowship with slavery in the churches.

The salvation of souls depends much upon the *purity* of the reigning religion of the land. If the religion of the land teaches fundamental errors, (that is, errors opposed to the fundamental principles of God's religion, love to God and love to man, Matt. xxii. 37-40; and slavery, as we have seen, is such,) these errors will be believed, and the soul of the believer ruined for time and eternity. I may believe that baptism should be administered in a certain form; I may believe in the doctrine of arbitrary decrees of God, and in such case may be in error; yet these errors of themselves will not ruin the soul, because the error is not fundamental—does not lead to states of heart and practices which necessarily corrupt the soul and exclude from heaven. But errors fundamental do. Thus Paul, describing heathen nations, says: "They changed the *truth* of God into a *lie*, and served the creature rather than the Creator; and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge," (the character of God was contrary to their interests, practices, or prejudices, as now-a-days; and not liking to know the truth,) "God gave them over to a reprobate mind; and being filled with *unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness*;



they which commit such things are worthy of death." See Rom. i. 25-32. The process was, truth was converted into error; this, believed and practised, resulted in death.

Again, the same apostle, describing the man of sin corrupting truth, and thereby ruining souls, says: "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the *truth*, that they might be *saved*. And for this cause [because they sought not for truth] God shall send them [or as it may be rendered, permit] strong delusion, that they might be *damned* who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." See 2 Thes. ii. 9-12. Again, truth is perverted; souls believe the falsehood and are *damned*. Fundamental error taught and received, as certainly ruins the soul as poison does the body. Now, in violation of the truth, that "God has made man of one blood, is himself no respecter of persons, and requires man to love his neighbor as himself, and do as he would be done by—not to covet any thing that is his neighbor's, nor defraud him in any matter," our proslavery divines, sustained and aided in the work by the churches, teach the people that they may enslave and rob their fellow-beings of their birthrights, practise upon them the vilest extortion the sun ever looked upon, and yet be saints and go to heaven. Thus they give God the lie, and deceive souls; for God says: "Be not deceived; for neither thieves, nor covetous, nor *extortioners* shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Is any man a knowing and deliberate slaveholder without being both a covetous man and an extortioner; yea, a robber of natural rights? And does not slaveholding engender and cultivate covetousness, pride, cruelty, and hardness of heart? Are these Christian virtues? Have old things passed away, and *all things* become new, when these feelings of selfishness still remain? The uprooting of self and the implantation of *love* is the beginning, the essential part of all true religion. See Matt. xxii. 37-40. Are not souls deluded when they are taught that they can be *selfish*, unjust, and oppressive, and yet go to heaven? And are we acting in good faith to our fellow-beings when we are leading them to perdition with a false, a corrupt religion?

Reader, suppose you were associated with Dr. Jayne, or the Graefenberg Company, and, with covenant vows before God and the world to consult the welfare of your fellow-citizens,



to prepare and vend genuine and pure specifics ; and the company, for the sake of gain, should commence vending all over the nation spurious articles—yea, those knowingly impregnated with destructive poisons—and in addition to this, you saw your neighbors and relatives around you wasting away from the noxious effects of the poisons, or writhing in anguish, and dropping into the tomb like leaves of autumn ; and all the while you were presiding in the councils of the company, sharing in the dividends, and with your money and influence supporting the officers and agents of the company in their work of death,—would you feel that you were acting in good faith to your fellow-men ?

And suppose you felt such conduct to be wrong, would it be sufficient to scold and complain against those pouring in the poison, and yet remain a component part of the company ? Would not God and man justly hold you guilty of murder, whilst you held fellowship with, and gave your *name* and means to the support of the company ? Reader, murderous as would be such a policy, what is it compared with teaching and supporting a corrupt religion ? In the former, you injure, you murder the body ; in the latter, you poison, you murder the *soul*, and that for *eternity*. God will hold every man and woman, to the extent of **their means and influence**, responsible for the souls lost by their sanction and spread of a slave-holding religion. “If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned ; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.” **Ezek. xxxiii. 6.**

III. Fidelity to God’s Word requires that Christians have no fellowship with slavery. By the pro-slavery teaching of many of the leading men in the churches, and by the sanction and confirmation given by the teaching and practice of the membership, the Word of God is in danger of being regarded as a “cunningly devised fable,” and “trodden under foot of men.” An intelligent man, who lived in an adjoining county in this State, told the writer that he “was once an infidel, and a regular reader of a paper published by an association of infidels ; and one of the arguments they used against the divine authenticity of the Bible was, that, according to the admission of many of its advocates, it sanctioned human slavery. This was so manifestly contrary to every principle of



justice and propriety implanted in the bosom of man, that they declared such a Bible not from the God of nature." A commission merchant in one of the cities of our own State told the writer that he was "well nigh made an infidel by such teaching—had forsaken the church, perhaps never to return, had he not met with an old Methodist preacher who convinced him that the Bible did not sanction slavery." He returned to attendance upon the preaching of the gospel, and is now an efficient Christian, and an advocate of human freedom. But pro-slavery teaching and practice by the churches were a stumbling-block to him, and came near confirming him in infidelity.

We said this Bible is in danger of being rejected as a fiction—trampled down. In all ages past, when the reigning religion became so corrupt as to sanction injustice, cruelty, licentiousness, and like sins, the people have done one of two things—either despised the religion, or given themselves up to revel in the licensed sins. Thus Dionysius of Halicarnassus, speaking of the people under the religion of Pagan Rome, says: "The people have learned to do one of two things—either to despise the gods, as beings who wallow in the grossest licentiousness, or not to restrain themselves even from what is most abominable and abandoned, when they see that the gods do the same."

So in the days of the French Revolution; the priests and church had corrupted the religion of the Bible—prostituted it to the basest of purposes—purposes inconsistent with the plain principles of justice and propriety. The result was, that the people, the masses, rose up and burned the Bible, rejected such a religion, and trampled the church under foot. Why? Because the Bible did not teach justice and purity? No! These it taught in greater purity than any other book in the world. But, as *construed* by the priests, and a large mass of the church, to the people, it was understood as teaching the opposite. Hence, the people spurned it. And so it is now to some extent, and soon will be to a much greater extent, if the clergy and church continue to hold it up as sanctioning injustice and oppression. It is the pro-slavery teaching of the churches, proclaiming that slavery is sanctioned by the Bible, that has made so much infidelity in the land; not the teachings of the Abolitionists, as some rashly affirm.

Does the reader say, "Our minister and church do not teach that slavery is sanctioned by the Bible; we say it is an



evil in our discipline or confession of faith ; we are as much as ever opposed to the evil of slavery ; we regard it as wrong" ? Then, we ask, why not treat it as wrong—as you do other like wrongs—sins ? for John says : "All unrighteousness is sin."

You never can convince the world that you are honest in your professions, that you believe what you profess, whilst you fellowship the sin. An individual in one of our cities said to his neighbor not long since, "I regard slavery as a great sin." Said the neighbor, "You do not." "I do," said the individual. "You do not," said the neighbor. "I most certainly do," said the individual. "You do not," said the neighbor. "Well," said the individual, "since you know so much, will you tell me why I do not ?" Said the neighbor, "If you regarded slavery as a great sin, you would not *commune* with it." The individual was dumb, for he saw his inconsistency, and it was useless to array professions against practice. It is useless for us to complain against the immorality of slavery, and at the same time fellowship it. Our practice, under such circumstances, neutralizes our words, and the world around us loses confidence in the integrity of Christians and the reality of religion. They feel that the former are inconsistent hypocrites, and the latter a delusive phantasy. Thus Christians, by their position and practice, render the holy Word of God despicable in the eyes of the people.

IV. Again, the prosperity and well-being of the Church of Christ require that she should have no fellowship with slavery.

A distinguished philanthropist, who lives in the South, was, not long since, charged with dereliction of duty in not joining the church, when he could discourse so eloquently about its duty and power. After acknowledging in a meek and a very appropriate manner his imperfections and shortcomings, he replied : "I am not a member of any church, nor can I be, *so long as the churches fellowship slavery !*"

One of the colporteurs travelling over our State, not long since, found an elderly lady who manifestly possessed marked intelligence and piety. She had had a connection with the people of God in her native land—England. On his inquiring to what church she now belonged, she replied : "I belong to no one in this country, nor can I, for they are all slaveholding churches."



He, in common with the writer and others, has found many of our best citizens, who say they "can have no connection with churches fellowshipping slaveholders." They feel that if the robbery of personal ownership, the dearest of all rights, "the sum of all villanies," may be sanctioned by the church, then she might as well throw open the door to all immoralities, and scoff at discipline.

A church that can sanction and fellowship one of the greatest outrages upon humanity, they feel to be worse than no church, a delusion, a den of wolves, where the lambs of the flock are in danger of being devoured. They feel that instead of the church being that lovely Zion, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," she has become "a cage of unclean birds," "a hold of every foul spirit," and impotent because of her injustice and tyranny; an enemy to mankind instead of a friend. No wonder that some men are crying, "Down with the churches;" and Christians, by their fellowship in iniquity, are responsible for this occasion of contempt. We want not the church destroyed, but we want the church purified, established on the principles of justice and purity. O Christians! shall the Bride, the Lamb's wife, have her robes bedewed with the tears of orphans, the briny sweat of mothers, and stained with the blood of innocent men? If so, she will soon cease to be loved and respected by honest men. This leads us to notice,

V. The purity of public morals demands that the Christian Church should have no fellowship with slaveholding.

It is a fact well established, that in every country the morals, the standard of right and propriety, are as the reigning religion of the land. If we go to Corinth in the days of the Cæsars, we find the religion of the land sanctioning adultery and fornication. Hence, licentiousness of every form was found with the people. Scarcely a virtuous man was known, and prostitution was common with thousands of their females. If we look at the religion of the Goths and Vandals, the people conquering the Romans, we find their religion sanctioning war, murder, and suicide. Hence, we find the people bloodthirsty, cruel, and revengeful, deeming these traits as virtues.

If we come to Turkey and look at the Mohammedan religion, sanctioning sensuality, and teaching the doctrines of



fate, we find as a consequence the people indolent, trusting to fate, and wallowing in licentiousness.

C. M. Clay, describing the condition of the people in Mexico, says: "The corruptions of the churches have destroyed the morals of the people." Morals are as the religion.

And when we come to the southern portion of our own country, we find the religion of the land so construed as to sanction slaveholding. Hence, human beings, temples of the Holy Ghost, are converted into property; the husband torn from the wife, the infant from the mother, and sold into returnless bondage; and no more concern in society, apparently, than if a cow or a hog had been sold. Human rights are plundered, and human affections are crushed with unblushing impunity. And why? The church, the reigning religion, is made to sanction the same deeds. I could point to cases abundant, of recent occurrence, where professing Christians—Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians—sell, tear asunder even the infant and mother, of whom in our land, as done by Christians, the words of the poet become painful realities:

"When I seek my bed (of straw) at night,  
There's not a thing that meets my sight,  
But tells me that my soul's delight,  
My child, is gone.

"I sink to sleep, and then I seem  
To hear again his parting scream;  
I start and wake—'tis but a dream—  
My child is gone!

"Gone—till my toils and griefs are o'er,  
And I shall reach that happy shore,  
Where negro mothers cry no more—  
'My child is gone.'"

Also, as the church sanctions, in its slave members, fornication and adultery, we may expect to see the vice common in slaveholding regions, among the people. And as we advance to the south, where slaveholding is more common, and Bible defenders of slavery more numerous, we find these vices more common with the people.

A citizen of one of our inland towns, who is a member of the Presbyterian church, in good and regular standing, told the writer that he did not believe there was a virtuous young man in the town, so general was the vice of licentiousness. Now his language may have been correct, or it may have



been too strong. But it shows how general he believed the vice to be. Now the church is responsible for the existence of these, and the many other vices growing out of slavery. For who does not admit that, if all the churches excluded slavery, treated it as an immorality, it would soon die? For then it would be *regarded* as an immorality, and the better part of the community would not practise it; and these, together with the Christians, could soon vote it down.

Not only is the church responsible for the phase of our public morals, but for many of the unjust laws which we have; for the church forms, on questions of right, public sentiment, and public sentiment, law. Hence, when the Legislature of New-York was solicited to extend to colored people the right of voting, they refused to act, saying: "It is useless for the Legislature to act in the case, so long as the churches keep up their distinctions and partialities." Thus it is that the action of the church regulates and forms the public sentiment and laws of the land. She is designed to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. But if the light that is in her be turned to darkness, how great is that darkness! That is, if the truth she has is corrupted, society becomes corrupted, and souls are deceived by the false light, and are led down to hell!

VI. Consistency requires that we have no fellowship with slavery.

Seventy-five years since, this nation declared liberty and the pursuit of happiness to be the inalienable right of mankind. Fifteen of the States of the Union have acted out the principle, and treated their fellow-beings as men. All over the Southern States the question is being agitated, "Shall man be allowed to enjoy his natural rights?"—"Shall the oppressed go free?" Tens of thousands are rising up and saying, "My vote shall be cast for no man who is not in favor of this reasonable requirement." Yea, many think it such an immorality, an act of such injustice, to deprive an unoffending man of his dearest rights, liberty, personal ownership, that they will not vote for any man who is a slaveholder—a slaveholder by choice and practice. They deem such an act a great moral disqualification, and will not bestow office on such a man. Yet many of these same conscientious Christians will go and sit down around the communion table, over the emblems of that broken body and shed



blood so freely given for all—emblems of that Saviour who taught his disciples that “one is your Master, (Christ,) and all ye are brethren,”—yet here will these persons (commendable indeed in many things) place the very badge of discipleship upon those whom they could not vote for, for the lowest office. Yes, they welcome and fellowship persons who they say are committing crimes, outrages upon their fellow-men, compared with which gambling, and counterfeiting, and sheepstealing are nothing. Thus the world comes to the conclusion that such are more holy in their politics than in their religion; that they are more particular about their temporal kingdom than Christ’s kingdom—about the government of the nation, than the government of God. Such persons will refuse to vote for a slaveholder, not merely to represent them in their county or State, but particularly in Congress—their General Assembly of the nation; but in the General Assembly of the Church, in the kingdom of righteousness, they will commune or hold ecclesiastical connection with such. Such men cannot represent their interests in state affairs, where dollars and cents are concerned; but in the church, where the purity of God’s Word and God’s house is concerned—where the interests of the never-dying soul are at stake—here such men are not only brothers on equal footing, but even “masters of ceremonies.”\* Yes, men whose moral character is such that they would not vote for them as supervisor of a county road, yet with men of the same character they will hold ecclesiastical connection.

Christian brother, does not the world regard this as straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel? Can you expect the confidence of those around you, when you are acting thus?

The writer was once connected with a slaveholding body, and thought it his duty to labor with such, in order to do what he could for the removal of slavery. At first he thought it enough to raise his testimony against slaveholding, and not hold slaves himself. He next saw that, if slaveholding was sin, he ought not to receive slaveholders into the church; that the church is the place for those fleeing from

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\* At the last General Assembly, (N.S.,) a slaveholder was selected to administer to the Assembly the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. And this body is generally regarded as much more anti-slavery than the Old School body, or either of the late divisions of the Methodist Church, “North,” or “South.”



their sins, not those living in them. He next saw he ought not to sit at the communion table with those practising the sin—with such, “no, not to eat.” (This is precisely the condition of thousands now in the large denominations of the land, only, when they come to their General Assemblies or General Conferences, then they plead their ecclesiastical necessity, and, either individually or by representative, sit down and eat—break the emblems of that body of impartial love—with the extortioner, and place upon him the very badge of discipleship.) The writer was arraigned and censured because, in conjunction with his church, he excluded from his communion those holding slaves. When he attempted to defend his position from the Word of God, he was told that he should construe the Word of God according to the Constitution, or standards of the church, and as the body to which he belonged construed it; and that these standards manifestly understood the Word of God as sanctioning slaveholding. He was further told, that *consistency* required that he should not hold his connection with such a body.

The Presbytery, through a committee appointed April, 1848, to correspond with and visit him, further said: “You say you have some time since decided, that after a faithful expression of what you conceive to be truth to your brethren, it is your duty to withdraw and have no connection with a slaveholding body, if they show no disposition to repent, or hear what you believe to be essential truth. You have borne as full and as public testimony (referring to two years’ labor in their midst) against the alleged sin, as you ever can do, unless it is by *withdrawing all connection with us*.”

They felt that if continued longer, his position would be inconsistent, and his words neutralized by his acts of fellowship, and that the strongest testimony he could then bear was to *withdraw*. This he deeply felt, and having been brought to see that *ecclesiastical relation is a closer relation even than that of communion around the Lord’s table*—for we commune with other denominations, as Methodists, Baptists, or Presbyterians, when we will not hold ecclesiastical relation with them—and that a dissolution of ecclesiastical relation is what is really meant by the apostle, in that passage where he commands us “with the extortioner, no, not to eat;” he then withdrew his fellowship from such entirely. Not only come-outers but slaveholders themselves say this only is consistency.



### VII. Your usefulness demands it.

God has placed you here as a light to direct others in the path of truth and safety; as a laborer in his vineyard, to prune it, and to fill it with branches of the true vine; as an ambassador on an important embassy, that of winning souls to Christ. Now, your success in this work, with the blessing of God, depends upon the confidence which other men have in you, your judgment and purity. But when they see you contradicting your belief and your teaching by your practice, they cannot have confidence in your integrity. Whatever may be your inward desires to be careful that you do no wrong, they see not, but feel that you either love "*ism*" (your denomination) more than righteousness, or that you regard your popularity and pleasure more than you do the truth, the cause of Christ; or else you are hypocritical in your professions.

An instance: A short time since, a brother was talking about the sin of slavery, and the recreancy of Christians in regard to it. The neighbor to whom the conversation was directed, himself not a professing Christian, replied, "Mr. —, your talk is good, but your practice is bad." What he meant was, that his neighbor regarded the relation as sinful, and yet fellowshipped it in the church. The brother understood him—felt the point of the rebuke, and replied: "I have for months clearly seen that my God commands me not to eat with extortioners, and I regard slaveholding as the worst form of extortion; and also, my God commands me to come out from a corrupt church, practising this very sin, as mystic Babylon did. I have been trying to rouse the brethren to action, and have gone with a burthened conscience ever since to the communion table. I will bear it no longer. If you are present next Sunday, you shall see my actions consistent with my words." When Sabbath came, he publicly withdrew, bore his testimony against the sin, and any fellowship with it, and supported his new position by appropriate portions of God's Word. Now, all whom we hear speak, not only say they believe the man sincere, but also consistent. The writer, as almost every other man in our country, has heard slaveholders and their apologists say, "Such a course only is consistent in those who regard slavery as sinful."

Also, our usefulness in other countries is impaired by our fellowship of slavery. A missionary under the care of the



Baptist Board, writing from Mergui, October 27, 1846, says :

“MESSRS. EDITORS :—Will you, or some of your valuable correspondents, tell me how to meet the following objection, which I have to meet wherever I go among the wild Karens? ‘If we become disciples, when you get a large number of us, you intend to entice us away and make slaves of us in your own country.’ This objection is often urged with as much seriousness and confidence as though they were actually acquainted with the system of American slavery. Did these ignorant but *slave-hating* heathen but know the slaveholding character of the American churches, would they not say to our faces, ‘*Go back, thou hypocrite, go back, and teach the heathen of your own country, and give them the Bible, before you come here to impose upon us.*’ I am fully persuaded that did they know it, this would in substance be the language of many a wild Karen.”

Will *not* the Karens become acquainted with the history of American slavery? I see not how it can possibly be avoided. Some of their young men are learning our language, becoming acquainted with our books, papers, &c. And when they once begin to get the idea, they will not cease their importunities until they know its history. And when it is once known, it will spread like wild-fire among the people. Some time since, I noticed in a public paper the following remark, as coming from Mr. Kincaid: “If the heathen were aware of the slaveholding character of our churches by whom the missionaries are sent out, the usefulness of the missionaries would be at an end.”

Other missionary boards—our largest boards—are planting in heathen countries slaveholding churches; carrying to the heathen that which is far worse than liquid fire—a gospel so construed as to sanction in the converts “the sum of all villanies.” Yes, Christian brother, by your acts and connection, you are making the gospel of the blessed Lord Jesus a curse to the heathen, a stench in their nostrils, and the missionary an object of ridicule and contempt.

VIII. Again, we should have no fellowship with slavery, because the church is the last and the strong hold of slavery. Every Christian who has ecclesiastical connection with slavery is responsible to the extent of his or her influence for the existence of slavery in the land. In the old world, in Papal,



Mohammedan, and heathen countries, the people are rising up in the spirit of true magnanimity and proclaiming liberty to the captive. In our own country, more than seventy-five years since, the statesmen of our nation, as they unfurled to the world our "political faith," declared liberty to be an inalienable right, and thereby slavery wrong. One half of the States of our confederacy have by law excluded it from their territory. And now, throughout the South, statesmen, politicians, and political economists are declaring slavery an evil, a sore upon the body politic, a deadly Upas, casting its poisonous exhalations upon all that is lovely and excellent. And when driven from every hold, as the criminal of olden time, it finds safety only by flying to the sanctuary, and laying hold upon the horns of the altar. And here, a monster conceived in avarice and brought forth by tyranny, with the plundered rights of mankind for its food, the tears of orphans for its drink, implements of torture for its dress, and the severed affections of husbands and wives for its work, it asks of the priest at the altar to throw over it the mantle of patriarchal usage and Bible sanctity.

The work of infamy has been done by those who will have "flesh to roast for the priests," and "will take it by force." 1 Sam. ii. 15, 16. All the large denominations of the land have them. As specimens—Presbyterians, (Old School.) It is well known that that body, in General Assembly, met in 1845, and resolved that slavery is not sinful, and its practice no bar to communion. (See Report of the Committee.) This has been the settled policy of that body ever since. A D.D., and one of the Moderators of the Assembly, in his pamphlet on the subject of slavery, says: "According to the Bible, a man may stand in the relation of master and hold slaves, and yet be a fair and reputable and consistent professor of the religion of the Bible. That the Hebrews held servants as perpetual property and transmitted them to their children; that Onesimus was a slave, Philemon a slaveholder, and Paul recognized Philemon's right to his slave by sending the slave back to him."—*Dr. Junkin.*

I know the case of another minister in the same Church, and in our State, who, that he might take another man's wife from him, (which woman he claimed as his slave, and said to be so white that she was freckled,) hastened from house to house on Sabbath morning to hire the sons of Presbyterian elders to go forthwith and hunt his slave



woman; and being reprov'd by a Methodist sister for tempting the young men to go and desecrate the Sabbath, he replied, "Madam, it is the preacher's niggers." Thus, not only a slaveholder and a slavebreeder, but a "preacher," delivered to do these things, and to desecrate the Sabbath. And yet, that man was and is a preacher in good and regular standing in that body.

That there are some excellent spirits in that body, who in our State are pleading the cause of freedom, is true; but they have the inconsistency of fellowshipping such iniquities, and are thereby "partakers in the sins."

*New School.*—This body, in their General Assembly, got rid of the responsibility of definite action by referring the subject down to the Presbyteries and Synods. One of the smaller judicatories said: "*Resolved*, That as the Great Head of the Church has recognized the relation of master and slave, we conscientiously believe that slavery is not a sin against God." On the floor of the General Assembly preceding the last, a member boldly declared that he had "*bought a slave woman*, and had paid for her in *preaching*." At the last General Assembly the body appointed a slaveholder to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Slaveholding is no crime in the eyes of that body. And though some Northern members know it not, ministers, elders, and members of this Church, in Kentucky and other Southern States, buy, hold, and sell slaves just as unrestrained as other citizens.

True, most, if not all the individual churches in the free States hold no slaves; but they, by their ecclesiastical connection with such men as above described, and by their co-operation, sustain the effrontery and practice of men who are slaveholders, slavebreeders, and slavetraders.

*The Methodists, South.*—This body, it is well known, seceded from the North, on the ground not only that their laity might hold their slaves, but also that their bishops and travelling ministry might; that there should be nothing in the restriction of their members, that looked like censure for slaveholding; and we can now not only point to instances where the members hold slaves, but boldly traffic in them, severing even the mother and the tender infant.

*The Church North, or Methodist Episcopal Church.*—This body, it is well known, made no efforts to secure the separation, that she might be free from slavery, and has in her territory several slave States, with thousands of slave-



holders in her membership. Will take all she can get—is trying.

Dr. Fisk, a prominent divine in that Church, says: “The relation of master and *slave* may, and does in *many cases*, exist under such circumstances as free the master from the just charge and guilt of immorality.”

Bishop Hedding, one of the bishops in that body, says: “The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule: ‘Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.’”  
—*Pillsbury*.

This is the teaching of men in high places, and this teaching flows down over thousands below them.

“Dr. Durbin writes letters from Philadelphia to the Virginia slaveholders, to convince them that the Church North is in no way connected with abolitionism, and is every way worthy of their confidence and support. And since the division of that Church, not a single Conference, quarterly or annual, to my knowledge, in the whole North, has declared slaveholding a bar to Christian communion, though they have been repeatedly solicited so to do.”—*G. W. Kephart*. (See *American Missionary*, for September, 1850.)

It is well known that the Church North is as really slaveholding as the Church South, though not to the same amount, but will take now all the slaveholders she can get.

Dr. Fuller, a prominent Baptist divine, in his discussion with Dr. Wayland, maintained that slavery is not sinful, but sanctioned by Christ and his apostles; and tells the world how his drove of slaves will fondle about him. Shocking! that a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus should at this age, and in this land, glory in being a tyrant—a despot, holding human beings, yea, his own *brethren and sisters* in the church, as property. All over the land we have our Wallers and Bucks; and with the exception of one, the large mass of Baptists, as far as we know, are defending slavery as sanctioned by the Bible.

*Reformed Baptists*.—In this body James Shannon, President of Bacon College, Ky., stands quite eminent. In his pamphlet styled the “Philosophy of Slavery, as identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness,” he tells us that “humility is essential to happiness, and that slavery promotes happiness by teaching humility to the slave.” (Unfortunately the poor master is left without any provision for his hap-



piness.) Speaking of the ordinance of the Passover, he says: "God engraved his approbation of domestic slavery on that also." And, "Thus did Jehovah stereotype his approbation of domestic slavery, by incorporating it with the Jewish religion." Again, he says: "I hardly know which is most unaccountable—the profound ignorance of the Bible, or the sublimity of cool impudence and infidelity, manifested by those who profess to be Christians, *and yet dare affirm that the book of God gives no sanction to slaveholding!*"\*

These are a few, out of hundreds of examples that might be adduced, showing that the church is the stronghold, the great defense of slavery. And the very ministers who are thus pandering to despotism are among the ministers most popular in the churches. And these men are not only sustained by the churches, but their doctrines are either practically carried out and spread, or tacitly consented to. We say, then, the churches are responsible for the existence of slavery. We have already seen that the churches, the reigning religion, shape the public sentiment of right and wrong, the morals, and even the law of the land. These are in all countries as the religion. The churches, we repeat, are the last and the strong hold. Who doubts but that if the churches of the

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\* In this country there is no element by which the down-trodden and bleeding slave is "held in durance vile," so effective as the ecclesiastical power. Of the extent of this power, the following statement (which I have prepared from statistical tables which were published about two years since) will give the reader some idea:—

Denominations:	No. of Slaves,
Methodists,.....	219,563
Presbyterians, Old and New School,.....	77,000
Baptists,.....	125,000
Disciples, or Reformed Baptists,.....	101,000
Episcopalians,.....	88,000
Allow for all other denominations,.....	50,000

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Total number of slaves owned by ministers of the gospel and members of the different Protestant churches,.....660,563

Now, suppose the average value of all the slaves owned as above, in the Protestant churches, to be \$400, (and this is low enough, taking the whole country together,) and it will give a capital of *Two Hundred and Sixty-four Millions, Two Hundred and Twenty-five Thousand, and Two Hundred Dollars!* invested in the single article of *humanity*—the vitality and intellectuality—the interests, temporal and eternal, of *Six Hundred and Sixty Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty-three beings*, upon whom God has chartered immortality, and stamped it with the signet of His own image.—*G. W. Kephart.* (See *American Missionary*, for Sept., 1850.)



United States were unanimously to condemn slavery as a sin against God and man, and treat it as such, it would not live in our country five years?

Doubtless God is grieved that the church should be the last retreat, and the stronghold of the worst extortion—the most degrading tyranny that exists under the sun—the home of what Wesley styled “the sum of all villanies.” Is it not time that the sanctuary should be cleansed?

IX. Again, we should have no fellowship with slavery, because we thereby become partakers in the guilty practice of slaveholding, and sharers in the future consequences.

This doctrine is recognized by God in one of the texts we have quoted: “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” God holds every man and woman responsible for the wrong-doing of the association of which they are a component part. Reader, if you were a member of a company of pirates—if it were only your business to stay on the land, and keep the dépôt, the prison in which the unhappy victims were incarcerated—did you partake in the deliberation of the company, and were you a sharer in the dividends, giving your support to its officers, and by your means and presence sustaining the company, would you not feel that you were equally guilty with those engaged in the actual seizure of the captives—guilty of all the tears shed, the groans extorted, and the blood spilt in the inhuman enterprise?

Now the church members are the keepers of that prison; since, as we have shown, the church forms the public sentiment, and thereby the laws on the subject, and by their acts not only sustain the infamy, but oppose those who make efforts to destroy it. Yea, more, church members do the work of *actual seizure*—that of kidnapping—seizing human beings and converting them into chattels. Like the dragon described in the Apocalypse, they follow the woman till delivered of her child; then pounce upon it, tear it from the mother, and convert it into their property, despoiled of every right.

And the other members, though not themselves directly doing the deed, give their fellowship and tacit consent to the act of the man who does the deed. They uphold by their fellowship the perpetrator of the deed, and say thereby, the act is consistent with a fair profession of religion. Now who does not see that such persons are partakers in the sin? Yes,



non-slaveholding brother, *God says* in the text, (unless you "come out,") you are partakers of their sins. And the tears of orphans, the groans of toil-worn fathers and mothers, with the darkness that enshrouds their minds, and the vices that chain and pollute their souls, are laid up in God's book of reckoning, and will be poured out as vials of his wrath upon your guilty head, unless you come out from corrupt Babylon. By giving your fellowship to slaveholders, are you acting right towards the poor slave? Are you loving your neighbor as yourself? Would you have him act so towards you if you were in bonds?

Yea, more, are you acting right toward Christ? At the judgment day he will say to you: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not;"—*neither by your person, your vote, nor your influence in church or state.* "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." Now, dear reader, suppose Christ, your Saviour, was a slave in yonder prison, merely because he wanted to be a free man, and go at pleasure to do his Father's will—(I saw a Methodist preacher in prison in our State, with license to preach the gospel of Christ, and his only crime was that of attempting to secure his freedom, fearing that he would be sold into the far South. He was a meek, humble follower of Christ—a mulatto man)—suppose he was then hungry, weary and faint, would you not act? And in addition to this, suppose he was bought and sold as a chattel to men who drove him to unrequited toil, would you not feel that you ought to raise your voice, your name, your influence against such injustice and oppression? If you do not thus act for the poor slave—his representative—he will say to you at that last day, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." Christian brother, you cannot refuse to come out of fellowship from such iniquity without incurring guilt.

Once more: Do you not now doubt at least the propriety of eating in fellowship with extortioners—with slaveholders? Be honest with yourself, for you have no interest in deceiving yourself, searing conscience, nor turning a deaf ear to its teaching. Answer, do you? Then hear what God says:



"He that doubteth is damned [condemned] already." Why? "Because he eateth not of [or with] faith; for whatsoever is *not of faith, is sin.*" Romans xiv. 23. If you are even doubting the propriety of your course, you are committing sin in living so. Would you not eat with a clearer conscience if you were in a church where you would have no connection with the iniquity in any form? If so, do not trifle with conscience. God may permit delusion, that you may believe a lie, that you may be damned. See 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

## OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

*First Obj.*—The objector is ready to say: "Surely not for every error should I leave my church; and perhaps slavery is one of those errors."

We answer: Not for every error in government, ordinances, or even doctrine, *not essential to salvation*, should we leave a church. For instance: A church may administer the ordinance of baptism either by sprinkling or immersion, allowing liberty of conscience as to the mode which the convert may honestly believe the Bible to teach. The objector may believe immersion or sprinkling, as the case may be, the only right mode, and he may therefore regard the church as in error. Yet the error is not such as corrupts or strikes down any fundamental principle of Christianity, prevents not the attainment of holiness, nor does it exclude those practising it from heaven. So in reference to some points of doctrine, which are not essential. But when an error or practice, such as idolatry, adultery, or manstealing, (and we have shown that slaveholding is such,) is practised or fellowshiped by the church—a sin which violates and strikes down a fundamental principle of Christianity, (see Matt. xxii. 37–40, Rom. xiii. 9, 10;) perverts holiness, (1 John iv. 8, 20, 1 Cor. xiii. ;) and excludes from heaven, (1 Cor. vi. 10 ;) with such a sin we should have no fellowship; especially when, in addition to the above clearly defined points, we have express command "not to eat," that is, have no Christian fellowship, "with the covetous and the extortioner," 1 Cor. v. 10, (and all must admit slaveholding to be the worst form of extortion;) and when the apostle tells us the law is for menstealers, (1 Tim. i. 10;) and when, in addition to all this, we reflect that slaveholding was the great sin of mystic Babylon, (see Rev. xviii.



13,) and from which God expressly commands his people to come out, lest they be partakers in their sin, (see verse 4;) surely it is the duty of the people of God to come out, and have no fellowship with such.

Clear as a sunbeam, then, it is the duty of the people of God to have no fellowship with slaveholding. Perhaps the people of God never in any age separated themselves from a sin of a greater degree of moral turpitude.

Nor can the objector plead want of time to consider the matter. The question has been before the churches, not for hours or days, but for years and scores of years.

*Second Obj.*—"If we discipline the slaveholder, we shall sour his feelings, and having cast him beyond the pale of our influence, we can do him no good, and his soul will be lost. We ought therefore to keep him in." We answer:

1. Then God was in error, when he, through his apostle, told the church at Corinth to deliver up the incestuous person to Satan; that is, into the world, Satan's kingdom.

2. Your objection carried out would destroy all discipline. For the same reason we should keep the thief, liar, drunkard, gambler, fornicator, and all other offenders in the church, as the place to reform them. The objector and God Almighty differ in judgment; for,

3. The teaching of the apostle shows that discipline is the most effectual way to bring the offender to repentance, and to do him good. True, that General Assembly (N. S.) to which we last alluded, in opposing the doctrine of disciplining slaveholders, said: "We rather sympathize with and would seek to succor them in their embarrassments." This is the bear's hug, that squeezes to death; a policy that lulls to rest the conscience, and deludes the soul with the idea, "After all, I am still maintaining a Christian character, else why should I be in the church? and have therefore a fair prospect of heaven."

When Paul wanted to do the soul of the transgressor good, he commanded the church to deliver the transgressor unto Satan, that is, cast out of God's kingdom into Satan's kingdom, "for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This was the way to awaken the transgressor to the enormity of his guilt, and to bring him to flee from his exposed condition. And it had the desired effect. See 2 Cor. vii. 9-11.



Nor did the apostle wait for more light to be given ; nor did he palliate the crime, "mitigate the degree of moral turpitude," on account of existing laws and customs. The laws of Corinth, and the general practice of society, sanctioned the act of the incestuous person. But the way to correct these was not for the church to shape her policy to suit corrupt laws and corrupt customs, but by her *practice* show what was right. It is a false love not to discipline the deliberate offender.

In reference to those slaveholders who are not members of any church, and who shall yet be awakened, on application for membership, they should be held only as inquirers or probationers, until they put away the sin of slaveholding. At the threshold of the church, while the heart is now tender, and conscience awake, is the most favored time to correct the evil ; for when the slaveholder is received into the church, in good and regular standing, with full membership, it is useless for the church then to harass him about wrongs which the church knew he was living in at the time of his reception. By his full reception he has now the credentials of his Christian character—as it were, his passport to heaven ; and after all the inconsistent and half-hearted teasing, or grumbling, that some members would make, he would feel that in reality they do not feel that the wrong is a sin which will exclude from the kingdom of heaven ; else why bring him into the kingdom on earth ? The way to lull his conscience on the subject is, to bring him into the church in the practice of his sin. I know repeated instances of persons whose consciences and hearts, at the time of their awakening, seemed to be tender on the subject of slaveholding. But after they had been fully received, and a few comfortable meetings passed over, they became wholly indifferent ; and after hearing or reading one or two pro-slavery sermons, declaring slavery to be a Bible institution, they were almost ready to seize the torch, and apply the fires of persecution to the individual who would disturb their Zion. The place to induce the slaveholder to give up his sin is at the time, or before, he enters the door of the church ; before he has been pronounced as being in a salvable state ; for "all that a man hath will he give for his life." Here is the place to tear out the roots of selfishness. Until this is done, "old things have not passed away, and all things have not become new."

*Third Obj.*—Does the objector again say, "So the slave-



holder is a true believer—so he gives evidence of piety, of being a Christian—we ought to receive him into full membership”? This is a *very common* objection, and its universality demands special attention. In reply, we must notice what is the faith or belief required—the evidences of it—and whether the Bible requires no specific works as conditions of membership.

1. The faith required by the Bible is a “faith that works by *love*.” Gal. v. 6. “Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;” neither professions, nor orthodoxy, nor emotional experience, (else Pharisees and Jesuits might claim salvation;) but “faith that *works by love*.”

2. The evidence of its existence is works, and works of love; for “faith without works is dead”—exists not. Hence John says: “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but **IN DEED** and in truth.”

Again: To be a Christian, every soul must be born of the Spirit, (John iii. 5,) and be “led by the Spirit,” (Rom. viii. 14.) They, having the spirit of God, will exhibit its fruits, which are, “Love, gentleness, goodness,” &c. Gal. v. 22. But is slaveholding (“the most atrocious of all evils,” “the sum of all villanies”) the evidence of faith, and the legitimate fruits of the Spirit, love? If not, then, even according to the objector’s own grounds, the slaveholder has no right to come in, lacking as he does *credible evidence of piety*.

Does the objector say the slaveholder is willing to confess Christ, and take up his cross in bearing opposition and persecution? So with Ananias and Sapphira. They doubtless “believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God,” and confessed him before men, and endured persecution in doing so; yet the point of *selfishness* had not been reached—broken up. And when the apostle laid his hand upon their *property*, they showed that “old things had not yet passed away, and that all things had not yet become new;” they were selfish still, as shown by specific tests. This leads us to notice—

3. The apostles were not satisfied with *professions of belief*, but *required specific acts, or abstinence from evil practices*. Read Acts xxi. 25, where the apostles and elders, in general conference assembled, decided that from the Gentile converts they require, not the rites of the Mosaic economy, but “as touching the Gentiles which BELIEVE, we have written, and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from



blood, and from strangled, and from *fornication*." Now, fornication was sanctioned by the law of the land in which these Gentiles lived. But the apostles did not shape their religion, and lower the demands of their "Disciplines" and "Confessions of Faith," to suit the laws of the land, the corrupt customs of society, even of those in its highest ranks, nor even to suit the reigning religion of the land; for the reigning religion sanctioned these forbidden acts. But the apostles required not only "*belief*," but also *abstinence from specified acts*. And Paul has told us specifically "not to eat with the extortioner," and that "the law is made for menstealers," slaveholders.

*Fourth Obj.*—Does one say, we must take the slaveholder in, and allow him *time* to have his mind enlightened on the subject? We reply:

1. We have shown that the place to enlighten is, before he enters the church. After this, he will stop his ears, and pull over his eyes the hood of carnal security.

2. Paul did not wait for the incestuous person to be enlightened—1 Cor. v. 3-5. Though fornication and adultery in Corinth were common in society, sanctioned by the laws and religion of the land, yet the apostle denied him the privileges of the church until he repented of and put away his sin.

3. The policy of bringing the slaveholder into the church for the purpose of enlightening him, has been tried for half a century; and the Christians of our country, in mass, are, as a matter of fact, less willing now to admit slaveholding to be sinful than they were in the days of David Rice, Baily, Barrow, and others. Whatever may be the facts concerning isolated cases, who have been thrown occasionally with minds of a different policy, the masses are further from truth now than they were fifty years ago. And if the public mind is now beginning to wake up, the awakening results not so much from the policy of those who take the slaveholder into the church, and thereby sanction the practice as consistent with piety, as from the policy of those who pile up facts showing slaveholding to be sinful, and by their acts of discipline treating it as such.

For more than seventy-five years, the truth has been unfurled by this nation to the eyes of the world, that "all men are created free and equal." And ever since the slaveholder



could read the Bible, he could read the declaration, that "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth," that he is no respecter of persons, and that we are required to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to do unto men as we would they should do unto us. And if it even be true that the young convert does not at first see slaveholding to be sinful, as adultery or highway robbery, the *fault lies in the practice of the church*, in not calling the attention of the convert to the sin; in not constantly declaring it such, and requiring repentance of this, as of the above sins. And every day she neglects the duty, the sin of ignorance lies at her door.

Ministers and churches should repent of it immediately. If the ministers were instant in season and out of season, publicly *declaring* slaveholding to be sinful, and the churches treating it as such, then would young converts be enlightened, and would repent at once of slaveholding, as of other sins. If the church shall defer this work another half century, the *beginning* will then have to be made, as now, only with this difference—the power of habit increased, and the force of numbers multiplied on the enemy's side.

Had the ministers and churches, in the days of David Rice and Father Barrow, *treated as sinful* that which they admitted to be sinful, (slaveholding,) we would not hear their successors saying, "Young converts do not at first see slaveholding to be sinful." Shall we not profit by their error, and refuse the fellowship of the church as a sanction of the iniquity?

Does the objector say, in connection with the above :

"Christ is a Saviour of his people from their sins, [true, but not *in* their sins,] and therefore I tell men to come to Christ with all their sins—slaveholding among the rest"?

That is, the objector means by "coming to Christ with all their sins—slaveholding among the rest," to come into the church with all their sins—"The church is the world's reformer."\*

The above objection is not a supposed one; *we know it to be real*, and common even among ministers and churches; and some of these ministers will *admit slavery to be sinful*;

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\* How shall the church reform the world, when she is lowering her standard to suit the world? And those who pursue this course, however honest their intentions, are the real enemies of the church—tearing down the distinction between the church and the world.



yet they say, "Come into the church with all your sins—slaveholding among the rest."\*

Now, with the same propriety they may say to the idolater, adulterer, pirate, and highway robber, "Come into the church with all your vile practices; we do not expect you to see these things wrong at first; after you hear us preach principles awhile, then you will see these things wrong. Come, Christ can save his people from their sins. That is, we do not mean by this passage that which is its obvious import, that you are to separate *from your sins*; Christ can save you living in them."

Now, John said: "Repent, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance,"—that is, actions separating from your vile practices. And Isaiah, even in his dark and corrupt age, said: "Let the wicked *forsake his ways*, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." Then, "Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." So Christ taught, and so his apostles taught; and, as we have seen, required the putting away of specific immoralities, even when these specific immoralities were sanctioned by the reigning religion and laws of the land, and when the public mind and the mind of the young convert were enlightened only by the example of their small and scattering churches. This was the way to bring the convert to see the practice sinful, not by taking it into the church, and thereby saying, "The act is consistent with piety."

With this point clearly made out, we are now prepared to answer the objection of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, (N. S.,) 1846:

"We regard the system of slavery, as it exists in these United States, as *intrinsically* unrighteous, opposed to the law and the gospel, and the best interests of humanity; . . . yet we would not undertake to determine the degree of moral turpitude on the part of individuals involved in it." . . . "We have no right to institute and prescribe tests not recognized in the Scriptures."

We reply:

1. If we should use Pillsbury's parody, and change the word slaveholders into sheepstealers, we suppose the Assembly

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\* The writer has in his possession a private letter from one of the most respectable ministers in Kentucky, (Presbyterian,) in which he defends the practice of admitting slaveholders to the church, and takes the above position.



could soon determine "the degree of moral turpitude." And, as Christ pertinently asked, "Is not a man better than a sheep?" is not the crime of stealing such greater? What stretch of intellect does it require, to perceive a high degree of moral turpitude in coolly, deliberately, and systematically depriving a poor, innocent man of his dearest right—personal ownership? When Southern men pronounce it "the most atrocious of all evils," and when fathers, emerging from the gloom of former centuries, styled it "the sum of all villanies," what should we expect of those living in the broad light of the middle of the nineteenth century, and free from the biasing effects of education and interest? Posterity will be surprised at the tardiness with which we come up to the point, that there is in all deliberate slaveholding a *high* "degree of moral turpitude." But we ask not the Assembly, nor any one, to determine the exact degree of moral turpitude. It is sufficient to know, as the Assembly has conceded, that slaveholding is "*intrinsically unrighteous, opposed to the law and the gospel.*" If so, treat it as such. Let the decree go forth.

2. We ask not the Assembly, nor any church, to "*institute tests.*" God has instituted the tests, and the identical one we are insisting on. In 1 Cor. v. 11, as we have seen, God commands that if any man that is called a *brother*, who is an *extortioner*, with such not to eat; that is, have no ecclesiastical connection—Christian fellowship. "Put away that wicked person." Again, in 1 Tim. i. 10, the apostle, enumerating specific sins, says, the law is also "for any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine according to the gospel of the blessed God." Now, the Assembly (as the reader doubtless will) has admitted that slavery is "opposed to the prescriptions of the laws of God, to the spirit and precepts of the gospel." Now, if the law is made for such, let the law be executed.

Again, in the same verse, the apostle tells us specifically, that the law is not only for liars and whoremongers, but also for MENSTEALERS, (*ανδραποδιστης*.) This, as we have shown, means slaveholders. And the essential sin of slaveholding is the same as that of kidnapping—withholding liberty from an innocent man.

If the law is made for such, why not enforce it? Is it inexpedient to do what God has appointed to be done?

Moreover, the Confession of Faith of this Assembly once contained an article giving the same exposition of the fore-



going text which we have just given. What was true then is true now. And though Assemblies, from various motives, may blot out or suppress truth, God does not. His law and gospel do not vary to suit the ever-varying phases of a corrupt world.

*Fifth Obj.*—Again, the objector says :

“I believe slavery is sinful, and that the church ought to purify herself from it; but we anti-slavery men ought to stay in the church, and work to purify it—to get the rest of the members right.”

We answer :

1. Then God did wrong when he said to his people, “Come out from corrupt Babylon, that ye be not partakers in her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

2. The history of the church shows that God’s policy of coming out from a church which, after deliberate and official action, determines to fellowship any manifest sin, is the correct policy to secure a pure church. Hence God called Abraham out from the idolatrous connection in which he was. He did not stay to purify it. Christ and his followers lived in a corrupt age, and, like the prophets, they offered sacrifice at Jerusalem, *because their religion was then a national one, and there was but ONE place where men could offer sacrifice*—at Jerusalem. The *necessity of CEREMONIAL OBSERVANCES made responsibilities different from the present.\** But Christ told the Samaritan woman, the time was coming when men should offer sacrifice, not on that mount, but every where. And when this fulness of time came—the tie of *ceremonial observances broken*—we find Christ taking the

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\* “The difference in the two dispensations, the Mosaic and Christian, furnishes a good reason why Christ and his apostles should remain in the church when it was wofully corrupt in morals, and why we should not. The church, under the Mosaic dispensation, was typical, exhibiting by types and shadows and ceremonies what was really to be possessed in the Christian dispensation. So long, therefore, as her typical institutions were kept pure, the end of her institution was attained, no matter what might be the moral character of her ministers and members in other respects. But, under the Christian dispensation, we must have in *truth* what was represented in the former dispensation under *shadow*. We must have Christ as our High Priest—Christ as our sacrifice; and for a proper participation of the ordinance of the Supper, we must have those who have been washed from sin in Christ’s blood, and cleansed by the washing of regeneration.”—D. Gilmore.



Passover with his disciples *alone*. And from that time onward, they were, in all respects, separate from the Jewish church. Under the gospel, God commands, as we have seen, this policy; and in this way only has a pure church been maintained. When in the process of time the Christian church became corrupt, a pure church was attained by a line of secessions, reaching from the Novatians, A. D. 251, to the Donatists; from the Donatists to the Paulicians; from these to the Albigenses and Waldenses; from these to the great Protestant secession in the days of Luther and Zuinglius. Who disputes the *duty of the PROTESTANT secession*, in obedience to the command, "Come out from her, my people?" If the reader does, then he is bound to go back to "the mother church"—the Roman Catholic Church, as that church yet claims. Many branches of the Protestants became corrupt. Wesley attempted reformation in the church, but his followers saw that duty and correct policy required them to come out, and they did so. So did the Independents and the Puritans, who planted religion in our own country. And the churches now, in our land, as we have seen, having become corrupt—practising the sins of mystic Babylon—it is now a duty equally imperative upon the people of God to come out.

The opposite policy has been a failure. For sixteen hundred years, such men as Erasmus, Fenelon, Massillon, and others, have been staying in the church to purify it. Did they do it? Never! They died where they began, amidst corruption. Like the sun-fish in stagnant waters, amidst death-struggles, they reflected some beautiful rays, only to be covered by tides of coming corruption. How different the history of Novatian, Donatus, Wickliffe, Luther, Zuinglius, Melancthon, and others, who came out with them. They and their churches were beacon-stars, warning of danger on the one hand, and directing to the port of safety on the other. These churches came out, chiefly, on account of immoral practices in the old churches; and hence they were called, even in the days of the Novations, *cathari*—puritans.

Notwithstanding the foregoing truths, many, as an argument for staying in the church, say, pervertingly, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." They mean to assert that those who are pure, and have truth on their side, should stay in the church, to pour truth upon error, and thereby purify the church. We reply:



1. Then God was in error, when he said to his people, "Come out."

2. The word leaven, when used in the Scriptures to designate truth and purity, is not used to designate the *influence of a few true Christians upon a corrupt church*, but to designate the influence of a *pure church upon a corrupt world*. Paraphrased, as used by our Saviour, it reads thus: The kingdom of heaven, that is the church, when pure, as planted by Christ, is like leaven, leavening or purifying the corrupt world around it, as leaven leavens meal around it, and will continue to do so until the whole lump, the whole world, shall be given to God for his inheritance—until the kingdoms of this earth shall become the kingdoms of his Son. But "if the salt," which designates the pure church, "have lost its saltiness," (that is, when the controlling influence has become corrupt,) "wherewith shall it be salted?" that is, how shall it be purified? The controlling influence is against you; that of course will vote you down, bear your name and influence along with its current, and you cannot reach the matter of complaint, for it is now admitted by the controlling influence to be consistent with piety. You cannot therefore reach the corrupt members; and they see that your words are contradicted by your practice, for your fellowship with what you say is wicked; they regard you as having beams in your own eyes, and as not seeing very straight; or else, that you are not honest—do not really believe what you say. In either case, you cannot reach the erring members.

The word leaven is also used in the Scriptures to designate the tendency of *immoral practices*; as in the fifth chapter of first Corinthians, where the apostle rebukes the church at Corinth for their fellowship of an immoral practice, and warns the *whole church* of their danger by saying, "Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?"

For,

1. "It is *wicked* in all to fellowship *wickedness*;" it is *rebellion against God*, when he has commanded you not to eat with, or fellowship "fornicators and extortioners." And,

2. Many are in danger of practising the same immorality. For so soon as any practice, or system, is admitted into the church, it is then baptized as not sinful—sealed as consistent with piety—and others may therefore practise the same.

3. With those who are not willing to do the deed—practise the iniquity themselves—their hearts become callous by



familiarity with the sin, their consciences seared by resisting the command of God, "Put away the wicked person,"—"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;" and for fear they should speak their own condemnation in fellowshipping that which they admit to be wicked—wrong—they, too, become silent, or apologists for the iniquity, to make consistent their own position or connection. Thus it is, "A little leaven of corruption leavens the whole lump."

*Facts in the history of the Church.*—Let us appeal to facts, as developed in the history of the churches of our own day, and illustrative of the truth of God's holy Word. The Presbyterian Church, as we have already shown, once had an article in her Confession of Faith which declared slaveholding to be manstealing, and classed it along with the most heinous sins. The leaven of slavery worked, being in the church, until it expunged that article.

In 1818 the spirit of truth and liberty made another struggle, but more faint than the former, to extricate herself from the tyrant grasp of slavery. In that year the General Assembly declared slavery to be "a violation of the most precious rights of human nature, *utterly inconsistent* with the law of God, and *totally irreconcilable* with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." But words and resolutions were neutralized by practice—the inconsistency of fellowshipping such a sin; and the result was, that their testimony was but little regarded. The monster ate and slept quietly in her bosom, daily sucking from her her strength, her life's blood, and pouring into her veins the poison of oppression, and chilling her heart by the coldness of its touch.

In the process of time the Church divided, and one Old School minister came home to the South, rejoicing that "we have got clear of the Abolitionists." There was then much anti-slavery feeling in the New School branch, and but little slavery. This little was not at once expelled, and Christians entered upon another fruitless attempt of trying to wear out the spirit of slavery by retaining it in the church and pouring upon it gospel principles. Out of the church it falls before the power of the gospel; but once in the church, it has then a shield of sanction that foils the point of every dart, while it strengthens with the advance of time. In answer to its covetous demands, slave territory after slave territory was added, with slaveholding members, preachers and laymen, until its power became such that it could either



overawe the enfeebled spirit of liberty then struggling in the bosom of the Assembly, or stamp into the ground all petitions and remonstrances sent up from different portions of the land, praying for separation from human oppression. The writer knows that many of the ministers, elders and members of this body hold and traffic in slaves, just as other citizens of the South do. And the front of slavery is now so brazen, that, as we have said, at the Assembly previous to the last, a preacher and member boasted, on the floor of the Assembly, that he "had bought a slave woman, and paid for her in preaching."

And at the last General Assembly a slaveholder was selected to administer the emblems of impartial love, Christ's broken body and shed blood. Was not Christ pained when he saw that Assembly place the highest honor on one who daily robs the Lord's poor of their dearest rights? "Is Christ the minister of sin?" Gal. ii. 17. How should that body feel and act, if Jesus of Nazareth were quartered in one of the plantation huts of that minister, and driven day by day to unrequited toil, subject to the soul-driver, and to be sold like beasts of the field? Yet what that minister does, and what that Assembly does to or for Christ's poor, they do for him. So says Christ; see Matt. xxv. 45. "How has the fine gold become dim!" the once quickened conscience, how seared! The leaven of unrighteousness is at work.

The Old School body has more slaveholders in it, and more apologists for slavery among them, and has done more officially to tolerate it, than the New School body, and is still less hopeful.

"In 1845, the Synod of Cincinnati (O. S.) received, as a member in good and regular standing, a slaveholder, who, at the time of his reception, declared that he owned slaves, and expected to sell them; and the Synod was about to inflict censure upon one of its members for promptly opposing the act."—*D. Gilmore*.

The same year the General Assembly (O. S.) passed a resolution as follows:—

"*Resolved*, That our church was originally organized, and has continued the bond of union, on the conceded principle, that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of our country, is no bar to Christian communion."

What is the consequence of not coming out from such a



body, which thus deliberately determines to fellowship what one of its Southern members (R. J. Breckenridge) styles "the most atrocious of all evils;" "a violation of the natural rights of mankind;" "thus committing clear robbery"? Read as follows:—

On the 11th of September, 1839, Chilicothe Presbytery (O. S.)

"*Resolved*, That this Presbytery cannot hold fellowship with any Presbytery, Synod or other ecclesiastical body, while it tolerates under its jurisdiction either the *sin of slaveholding* or the justification of the sin of slaveholding, and especially the justification of it by appeals to the Scriptures, which, in the judgment of this Presbytery, is blasphemy of Almighty God, and a shocking prostitution of his Word."

And they afterward declared, that "the title which the Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures, gives to a body which would deliberately assume such a position, and act accordingly, is a *habitation of devils*." Yet these memorialists, disobeying God in not coming out from a body so corrupt, and trying the policy of staying in to purify it, became, by the leavening influence of corruption, and that blindness which God permits to those who "receive not the truth in the love of it," so corrupt in ten years as not only to stay in such a "habitation," but to apologize for such. See their words in 1849, in reply to a petition to withdraw from all connection with slaveholding bodies:—

"The Presbytery consider the churches in the South as in circumstances unfavorable for looking at this subject candidly. Their preconceived opinions, their cherished habits, their supposed interests go to blind their eyes; and, alas! too many of their religious teachers have contributed to this moral darkness, by pressing the Bible into their service, and by drawing in the mild and benevolent system of Jewish servitude as authority for the cruel system of slavery. They have *painted their windows*, lest the painful glare should flash in upon them. This is weak and unmanly enough, [*not wicked, we suppose,*] but men have done so in every age, and Christians have too often meanly turned away from the light. If the slaveholding churches had their minds informed on this subject, and would still continue to vindicate and practise as they now do, this Presbytery would not hesitate to pronounce them synagogues of Satan. Then, indeed, they would feel it a duty, and claim it a privilege, to come out



from among them. But this is not the fact. No; they are hood-winked and bewildered on this subject, as good men have often been, and as we ourselves have been on this and other subjects. . . . Christ is preached in the South, and believed on in the South, by those whose eyes are yet jaundiced on the subject of slavery; the doctrine of justification by faith is taught as clearly, and preached perhaps more ardently by many of them than by some of ourselves.

*“Resolved, That Presbytery, as much as ever opposed to slavery, will continue to use their influence to rid the church of that great evil; but they are unanimously and decidedly opposed to withdrawal from the Presbyterian Church, and nearly unanimous in their opposition to withdrawal from the General Assembly, because they are unwilling to close the door against their efforts, and to leave slavery undisturbed in the church.”*

“Thus, after having declared most solemnly, that the title which the Holy Spirit gave to that church which would teach that God allowed such an iniquity as slavery in his church, was a ‘habitation of devils,’ and having declared that they would not hold fellowship with bodies that tolerated this sin in their communion, they tell us, after a lapse of ten years, that they are unanimously of opinion that they ought not to withdraw from bodies which deliberately have done these things. They tell us, that after having painted their windows to keep the light out, and having pressed the Bible into their service to prove slaveholding to be right, that they are hood-winked and bewildered on this subject, and because the doctrine of justification by faith is preached and received among them, we must treat them as constituting a Christian church; notwithstanding they steal their neighbors’ wives, and sell their neighbors’ children, and blaspheme Almighty God, and shockingly prostitute his Word,—so much so, that the Holy Spirit calls such a body a ‘habitation of devils.’ ‘How have the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished.’”—*D. Gilmore.*

The leaven of unrighteousness leavened the whole lump.

The effect of the leaven of unrighteousness in lowering the standard of the church to suit the demands and quietude of slavery, from time to time, is, if possible, still more manifest in the history of the Methodist Church. That their rules have been altered from time to time to suit the South is admitted by their own authorities.



“Rules have been made from time to time, regulating the sale, and purchase, and holding of slaves, with reference to the different laws of the States where slavery is tolerated, [that is, Christians do, on subjects of religious duty, what Nebuchadnezzar says,] which, upon the experience of the great difficulty of administering them, and the unhappy consequences to masters and servants, have been as often *changed or repealed*.” Extract from the Address of the Bishops before the Conference of 1840.

“The history of the church shows this point indisputably, that the highest ground that has ever been held upon the subject [slavery] was taken at the very organization of the church, and that *concessions* have been made by the church continually, from that time to this, in view of the necessities of the South.” Extract from Dr. Durbin’s speech on Bishop Andrews’ case.

*Facts illustrative of the above point, as developed in the history of the Church.*—Our facts are gathered from Enory’s History of the Discipline, and Matlack’s History of American Slavery and Methodism. Wesleyan Methodism was introduced into this country in 1766. The first Conference held was in 1773. There is no intimation of the existence of slavery in the societies up to the time of the American Revolution. In 1774, Mr. Wesley published his “Thoughts upon Slavery,” in which he said, “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*.” “Who can believe, that whilst John Wesley was thus denouncing slavery in England, he was at the same time allowing and approving of it in America? To say one thing and allow another was no part of his character.” Unfortunately the societies had no rule excluding slavery.\* And during the Revolution, whilst Asbury was shut up in Delaware, and John Wesley and all the rest of the English ministers, save Asbury, were absent in England, slavery crept into the societies. Hence

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\* “The article in the present Discipline, on this subject, was never in Mr. Wesley’s General Rules, for he had no need of such a rule to keep slavery out of his societies in England.”—*Daniel De Vinne*. Also Mr. Lee’s History of Methodism. The article in the General Rules, on this subject, *as first written*, is supposed to have been introduced by Coke and Asbury, as expressive of Wesley’s views. It was, as originally introduced, worded like Asbury’s and Coke’s notes on this Discipline.



the following question at the Conference of 1780: "Question 17: Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that we would others should not do unto us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on *all* our friends who KEEP slaves, and advise their freedom?" "Answer: Yes." In those days Methodists spoke freely on the subject of "African liberty in their love-feasts." See Asbury's Journal. And the ministers spoke boldly against the sin. "At our quarterly meetings, where hundreds of slaveholders were present with their slaves, I have repeatedly heard some of our preachers condemn the practice of slavery as a *vile sin* against God, *morally, socially and politically* wrong." Letter of Samuel Davis to Dr. Fisk, published in Zion's Watchman, April 8, 1838. On SUNDAY, 9th of April, 1785, Dr. Coke "took occasion to introduce the subject of slavery, and expatiated on its injustice in terms that were not calculated to flatter his auditors." He was about to be mobbed by some, whom the apostle calls "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort," but they were prevented by a magistrate who was present and interposed. This magistrate, upon further reflection on what was said in the Sunday sermon, "emancipated fifteen slaves"—all he had. We should speak out truth; we know not what blessed results may follow.

Dr. Coke and other ministers of that day spoke openly on the Sabbath, although their preaching caused "disturbance." Better to make disturbance now, by preaching faithfully against sin, than have the souls of our neighbors disturbed in the burnings of hell for ever. Their preachers did not then apply that Scripture, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," as a cloak to screen them from responsibility and danger. They knew that requirement was, like every other to human authorities, "in the Lord;" that is, obey them so far as they are consistent with duty to God and man, as revealed in God's Word. Beyond this they would use the words of the apostles, "Whether we should obey God or man, judge ye."

Their opposition was not only religious, but also political. Hence "Mr. Marshall, afterwards Chief Justice, avowed [in the Convention for forming the Federal Constitution] that if the Government countenanced slavery, it would lose the support of the Methodists and Quakers."



But these early Methodists were not content with preaching, talking, and passing resolutions against slavery; they incorporated into their "*first Book of Discipline*" rules as follows, requiring slavery to be driven from their church, and refusing communion or fellowship with any holding slaves. See the following extract from the acts of the Conference of 1784. Question 42: "*What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?*" "Answer: We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion [God had already made the right terms. See 1 Cor. v. 11-13; Rev. xviii. 4; 2 Thes. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 10. They had overlooked these for some time, until the leaven of corruption had crept in] for a religious society already established, except on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets, and the inalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest abasement . . . so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

"We therefore think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose we add the following to the rules of our society, viz.:

"1. Every member of our society who has slaves in his possession, shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant, legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession." Infants born in slavery were to be emancipated immediately. Those under twenty, at twenty-five. Those between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, immediately, or at least when they arrived at the age of thirty; and so on with every slave, until all were set free by a deed of emancipation, recorded.

The second rule required every assistant to keep a book in which should be recorded all the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the members of the circuit, and the time of each record of emancipation.

The third rule permitted those who refused to do so, to withdraw: "*otherwise the assistant shall exclude him from the society.*"

4th Rule. "No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the Lord's Supper with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions."



5th Rule. "No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into society, or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery."

These rules were to take effect in States where the laws would allow emancipation. The friends in Virginia were allowed two years to consider the expediency of compliance or non-compliance with these rules. These loop-holes were occasioned by the leaven of unrighteousness already in the church.

Question 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away? Answer: They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them.

But the leaven, as we have said, was already *in the church*, and immediately began to exert itself for room to work—to lower the standard of the church; for by a reference to Asbury's Journal, we find that the slaveholding interests in Virginia and Maryland began to make disturbance, to oppose these rules. Accordingly, next year, "in the Annual Minutes," it was recommended, "that we suspend the minute upon slavery until the deliberations of a future Conference."

At the General Conference in 1796 the Conference materially lowered the standard. They required, first, that great care be exercised as to persons holding *official* stations, (just as though it was not as wrong for a private member to hold slaves as an official member,) and that "security be taken that such official members emancipate their slaves immediately, or gradually, as the laws of the States respectively and the *circumstances* of the case will admit." If the circumstances, &c., did not admit, then the preachers might and did hold slaves. "That no slaveholder be received into society till the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit has *spoken to him* freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery." Here is a stepping down from a rule positively requiring emancipation, to mere talk to the slaveholder.

The third rule made at this Conference required "that every member who sells a slave shall be excluded immediately." Just as though it was not right to sell what we may *lawfully hold*. If it be not right to sell, it is not right to voluntarily hold.

Also, any member purchasing a slave, the ensuing quarterly meeting was to determine how long that slave must work to pay for the money advanced for his purchase. And if the master failed to secure emancipation at the time fixed, the master was to be expelled from the society. The chil



dren of female slaves were required to go free at twenty-one for female, and twenty-five for male children. Also, the Annual Conferences were to prepare addresses to the several Legislatures, and the elders, deacons, and travelling preachers were to procure as many signatures as possible to these addresses! "LET THIS BE CONTINUED FROM YEAR TO YEAR, TILL THE DESIRED END BE ACCOMPLISHED."

Did they thus continue? Let us see. The next year "all that relates to action against slavery, by petition or otherwise, was struck out!" and substituted in the place of this fifth rule were the words, "Let our preachers, from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters!"

Seven years after this the selling of slaves was allowed, if the circumstances in the case were in the judgment of a committee justifiable! and full license was granted to all the members of the church within the limits of five States of the Union without let or hindrance. And in 1808 all that related to slaveholding among private members was stricken out of the Discipline.\*

\* The reader will not be able to understand the General Rule, as now found in the Discipline, unless he clearly distinguish between the powers and acts of the primary General Conferences which met before 1808 and the one that met at that time, and the delegated ones which met after that period. The primary General Conferences had full power to change any part of the Discipline. All parts were placed on the same basis, and the last act modified or suspended all previous ones. Hence the general rule which forbade the buying or selling of men, women or children, was so far superseded by the rule of 1798 as to admit of buying to continue in slavery for a limited time; and by that of 1804, so as to sell into perpetual slavery in certain cases, in any of the slave States; and both to buy and sell with impunity in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. So that there was no rule in the Discipline at the meeting of the Conference of 1808 which prohibited the buying and selling slaves in four Southern States in any sense, or to any extent, or wholly forbade it in any of the States. In the other slave States the rule allowed members to buy slaves to free them, when the purchased slaves had served the time fixed by the quarterly meeting conference to remunerate their purchasers for the price of their purchase, which would, in many cases, be longer than the slaves lived, and to sell, when in the judgment of a committee it was an act of "mercy and humanity," and the slave desired to be sold.

This was the rule of the church at that time, the discipline of that period. All these provisions were adopted after the change in the



In 1808 the General Conference provided that "the Annual Conferences should form their own regulations relative to buying and *selling* slaves." Yet "this left power in the body of the preachers to act efficiently *against* slavery, even should the General Conference choose wholly to refrain. But in 1820 this power was withheld." In 1824 the last touch was given to the Discipline on this question, as found in the present Discipline, in answer to the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?"

The first answer requires that "*no slaveholder* shall be eligible to any *official* station in our church." This has long since been disregarded; many preachers in the North and South churches are slaveholders.

The second requires that "a travelling preacher who shall become the owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, shall forfeit his ministerial character in the church, unless he execute, *if it be practicable*, a legal emancipation of such slaves."

The third requires that "all our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the Word of God, and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God, on our regular days of divine service." Is not this a dead letter? Where is the preacher, church, or conference that insists, practically, upon the duty?

The fourth provides that "our colored preachers and official members shall have all the privileges which are usual to others in the quarterly conferences, where the *usages of the country*, do not forbid it." That is, a conference of Christians may be governed by fashion or custom—not by the principles of right, and of an impartial Christianity. Oh, what a cringing and crouching to the world! But the leaven of unrighteousness is at work. And now what is there in all this section, in its present form, that answers the question, "*What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?*" Once the church had decisive and pretty efficient rules, requiring every member in most of the States to emancipate every slave in their possession. Now every member may hold for life as many slaves as he chooses, except a formal prohibition to official members and travelling preachers,

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rule in 1792; and as they were passed by primary General Conferences, they set aside to all intents and purposes the General Rule, so far as they conflicted with it.—*Rev. E. Smith.*



where emancipation is *practicable*; just as though they could not emancipate any where. The Quakers in South Carolina could do it, even though the laws required the emancipated slave to be sold again. But when there were Christians manifesting this much conscience, public sentiment would not and did not enforce the law to any extent.

As yet we have said nothing about the clause on the subject of slavery in the General Rules. This too has been modified and changed.

In the General Rules, as adopted in 1784, specifying sins from which all persons were to abstain, as conditions of becoming members of the society, was the following: "The buying OR selling of the bodies and souls of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them." The language is similar to that used in the marginal reading of Rev. xviii. 13, where mystic Babylon is represented as making merchandise of "slaves"—"bodies and souls of men." In 1792 this clause was altered, and made to read as follows: "The buying OR selling of men, women or children, with an intention to enslave them." Here is a failure to express a horrible fact, to wit, that the sale of human beings is a traffic in *souls* as well as bodies—selling the temples of the Holy Ghost.

In 1808 this rule was altered to its present form: "The buying AND selling of men, women and children, with an intention to enslave them." This clause as thus altered was for a time so construed that a private member or local preacher might buy as many slaves as he chose, provided he did not sell them.

And now, south of Mason and Dixon's line, the leaven has leavened so near a parallel with the world, that members and preachers in the Church North, or Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as in the Methodist Episcopal Church South, *buy, too*, with an intention to hold as slaves for life, give away to their children, and also directly and openly sell others. The writer is prepared to give cases, if needs be. Also, the writer knows that members of the Church North as well as South defend slaveholding as an institution tolerated by the Bible. And yet no member or church enforces discipline. Now, who does not see that Methodism has sadly departed from what it once was, and that a little leaven of corruption leavens the whole lump? It has so far leavened that it has shorn the church of power or disposition to put forth decisive measures excluding slavery or slaveholding.



Some of the membership suppose their Discipline is anti-slavery now. What! anti-slavery, when it allows every member to hold slaves, save official members or travelling preachers, and even these may, where the wicked laws of any State encumber emancipation—"where it is not practicable"—that is, easy and convenient!

And suppose the letter or spirit of the Discipline were against slavery, and the church were so far below the Discipline as to be a slaveholding, slavebreeding, and slavetrading church; how can any one claim innocency, when he gives fellowship and aid to the church, fellowshiping, tolerating, and aiding those doing these things? If we do not act in obedience to God's command, "Come out of her, my people," shall we not expect to be "partakers of her sins, and receive of her plagues?" The churches in the northern portion of our nation are guilty in this matter, as well as those in the Southern States; for the Methodist Episcopal churches here in the South are to a very great extent dependent upon the churches in the Northern or free States for ministers and means to build up their slaveholding churches; for the writer knows that these churches have slaveholders in them, as we have said above.

Similar facts might be gathered from the history of the Baptist Church, did space allow. There were Baptist churches once in Kentucky, and one in the native county of the writer, (Bracken,) as he is informed by fathers yet living, which had no fellowship with slaveholders, and formed themselves into an Association having correspondence only with free Associations. Deceived by the false policy, that it is best to let the slaveholder come into the church, so soon as convicted, and let him have time to have his mind enlightened, hoping that he then will see it duty to free his slaves, slaveholders were permitted to enter these churches. Ministers like Father Barrow, Baily, and Thompson still thundered away openly and publicly against slavery. But, alas! it was too well sheltered from every dart; the mantle of Christianity and church fellowship had been thrown over it. It was nurtured and grew in strength and size, until there is now, so far as the writer knows, but one (if even one) minister of that denomination, who dares to open his lips from the sacred desk against it, whilst the land is full of Wallers and Bucks, ready to defend the institution as sanctioned by the Word of God. A little leaven leavens the



whole lump. The only way of safety is to have a positive rule, excluding this, with every other known sin, and never allow it to enter. Many are now seeing this course as not only Heaven's policy, but also the best and only safe policy ; and whole Presbyteries and Synods are coming out from the Presbyterian churches, both Old and New School. Several Congregational Associations have now no connection with slaveholding bodies.

The same work of secession is now going on in the Methodist Church. Many are now seeing that discipline is impossible, and that the controlling influence is pro-slavery, and are obeying God by coming out, some as Independent Methodists, others as True Wesleyans, &c. The work is also going on in the Baptist Church. Among the Free Will Baptists, six hundred and sixteen ministers, with their still more numerous churches, have declared "that they will *sustain no relation* and perform no act that will countenance the system, or *imply indifference* to its multiplied enormities." They say further, that "slavery is a direct violation of the law of God ; and that by refusing to support slavery, its principles, or its advocates, and by *withholding Christian and church fellowship from all guilty of the sin of slavery*, and by remembering those in bonds as bound with them, we wish to wash our hands of the guilt of this iniquity."

These open separations from slaveholding bodies are doing immense good. They are not only digging out and holding up truth on the subject of secession, and thereby forming public sentiment, and waking public conscience, but they are encouraging and inducing many others to follow their example ; so that already the old bodies are beginning to look about for their members. Self-preservation begins to look them earnestly in the face. And if these bodies are ever reformed, it will be a hundred-fold more by the enlightening, drawing, and driving influence of those who have and shall come out, than by the stultified preaching of those who stay in.

And, reader, how stands your own case ? You have, perhaps, had an awakened conscience on this matter, and for many years have been talking and laboring. How many converts have you made ? Any ? And are you reforming your church any ? Is it becoming more and more free from pro-slavery influence through *your instrumentality* ? Some members may have been roused by the secession and con-



sistent action of other members in other churches. But what reformation have *you* accomplished in reference to this particular question? Perhaps, in reality, you are growing less active; and if not, perhaps the church is increasing its slave area, and in reality, whilst it makes to you and others many soft concessions, as conscience-plasters to lull you until you shall fall into your grave or it gets beyond your reach, the church is all the while becoming more and more pro-slavery. Or, you may have but recently been awakened on the subject—your zeal strong, and yet in your first love. So far, this is well. But mark—led by the force of truth, you will go forward to the goal of consistency, or else yet go back to the dungeon of slavery. In religion you can take no neutral ground. And from this hour you will go on until you shall soon have no fellowship with slavery, or else you will go back, and fold your arms in the cause of freedom, and that whilst the voice of imploring millions is falling upon your ears. You are ready to say, “Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?” Nevertheless, the process will be this: 1. You will feel condemnation for your rebellion against God and your inconsistent position. 2. You will come to hate that subject which gives you pain or unpleasantness. 3. You will then banish it as much as possible from your mind, and particularly from your conversation and action. Yea, soon you will not, unless for mere show, go where the subject is named.

We know the case of many who started in the cause of freedom with much zeal, but who, on finding that consistency demanded of them to come out from slaveholding churches, and not liking to do this, began to apologize for their position, others for slavery itself, and many are now silent on the subject.

Reader, in the language of Almighty God to Lot, we say to you, “Escape for thy life; tarry not thou in all the plain.” “A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” Oh, how appropriate our Saviour’s prayer, “Lead us not into temptation!”

*Sixth Obj.*—There are other portions of Scripture supposed by many to favor the policy of staying in the church to purify it; such as Matt. xiii. 30: “Let the wheat and the tares grow together.” We reply:

1. If this text means that true Christians ought to stay in a corrupt church, an Antichristian church, where the control-



ling influences sanction immoralities, then Scripture clashes with Scripture ; for it will not be disputed for a moment, that in Rev. xviii. 4, and other like passages, God commands his people to come out from a corrupt church.

2. The text, as used by the objector, would destroy all discipline whatever. Such a construction would open the flood-gates of vice, pour in upon the church every immorality, and make it the receptacle of drunkards, thieves, liars, adulterers, and murderers. Yet many, and even ministers of the gospel, give the text such a construction.

3. The error of such persons is in using the *field* as the *church*, whereas Christ uses the field to designate the *world*. See verse 38: "The field is the world." God had made the world good and pure. By the temptations of Satan, man fell ; and at that time, under Satan's influence, many were annoying Christ and his followers. Some of these felt as James and John did—like calling down fire from heaven to consume the enemy. Christ said, "Let the tares and the wheat grow together ;" let the wicked continue to live in the world, as well as the righteous, and by the example of a pure church, a consistent walk on your part, and the saving efficacy of my Spirit, many of these wicked persons may be converted. If not, at the judgment day I will gather all together, and "those that do iniquity will I cast into a furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the stars in the kingdom of their Father." Verses 41-43.

*Seventh Obj.*—Again, it is said Christ communed, continued fellowship with Judas ; and we may with equal propriety commune with slaveholders.

1. We ask, Would the apostles have continued fellowship with Judas after the *overt act*, had he survived it ? Would you, reader ? Would a single denomination now existing be willing to retain him in their fellowship, still in heart and *practice* a "devil," as the Scriptures declare, and as the objector supposes him to be ? Is the church the place for known "devils," having already *committed* the act of betrayal and *murder* ?

2. As we cannot see into the hearts of men, Christ gave us as a rule, that we should *judge a tree by its fruits*—judge men by their *overt acts* ; and gave no rule for excluding any man called brother, unless he is actually guilty of teaching



some corrupt doctrine, or living in some immoral practice. Now, Judas was not doing *either* of these when Christ communed with him. He was not yet an offender; and as such neither the civil nor the divine law would discipline him. Hence Christ did not. The case is then no justification to those who are eating with—fellowshipping—the *actual and deliberate extortioner*. With such, we are positively commanded “not to eat.”

*Eighth Obj.*—Perverting Scripture again, the objector says: “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.” 1 Cor. xi. 28. The objector uses this passage to teach that every man is to judge of his own fitness to commune or have fellowship in the church; and that if he eats condemnation to his own soul, it is none of our business. The passage is very often so used in our country, and as a reason, particularly, why we should make no distinction between those who are slaveholders and those who are not. We reply:

1. Such a construction would destroy all discipline for *any* offense whatever.

2. There is not a church, nor perhaps a church member, that understands the text as teaching the doctrine assumed by the objector. No one will allow a brother who has become a gambler, counterfeiter, adulterer, or acknowledged murderer, to have fellowship with them. They will not let such be their own judges. They do discipline such.

3. The apostle never intended the words of the text to be so construed. He wrote them for a wholly different purpose, as any man can see by reading the connection in which they are used. The church at Corinth, in imitation of pagan rites and ceremonies, out of which they had just emerged, and with which they were yet daily surrounded, had converted the Eucharist into a Bacchanalian feast—a feast of gluttony and drunkenness. See verses 20–23. They were not partaking of this feast in a spiritual manner, and for spiritual purposes; not using the emblems simply as a remembrance of what Christ had done and was still doing for them; but they were partaking of it in a vain, sensual, and most irreverent manner; “not eating the Lord’s supper,” (verse 20;) “not discerning the Lord’s body,” (verse 29.) Now, to correct this sensual and irreverent *manner* of celebrating the Lord’s supper, in which “one was drunken and another hungry,” (see verse 21,) the apostle penned the text under con-



sideration, and not for the purpose of saying that each man should be his own judge whether he should come to the Lord's table or not. Not for this, but to correct an error in this *manner* of celebrating the Eucharist or Lord's supper: as though he had said, "See to it, that when you come to celebrate the Lord's supper, you celebrate it not in this profane, irreverent, and sensual manner." Let a man examine both his motives and his acts in coming to or partaking of this ordinance. To construe the words of the text as the objector does, would make the apostle contradict himself; for in a preceding chapter he expressly says, "With drunkards, liars, fornicators, covetous persons, and extortioners, no, not to eat."

*Ninth Obj.*—Does the objector again say, "If this be true, then we must leave the State and the world; go where no slaveholders or extortioners are"? We reply: The apostle has answered this objection, and if the objector was a careful reader, he would have seen it. By the phrase "not to eat," as used in 1 Cor. v. 11, the apostle means that we should not have Christian fellowship—ecclesiastical connection; see verse 13: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." In verse 10, he says he means not that we should not have common intercourse with the men of this world, "then we must needs go out of the world." But if a man *that is called a brother* be a fornicator, or an extortioner, with *such an one* have no Christian fellowship. You may exhort him, labor to convince him of his error; and though you *feel kindly* to him, and desire him to be reclaimed from his error, yet you must obey God, and respect his church and his religion too much to consent that they shall be so lowered and corrupted as to sanction the immorality. For thereby you will destroy the *standard of right*, and take away *the very power to purify society*; and really do the *extortioner an injury*, by deceiving him with the idea that slaveholding is consistent with piety and ultimate salvation.

*Tenth Obj.*—Again the objector says: "The Scriptures teach us to mark them that cause divisions; divisions are therefore wrong; union is desirable." But notice! you do not quote all the text. The apostle says: "Mark them that cause divisions *contrary* to the doctrine ye have learned." Romans xvi. 17.

1. If this text means what the objector desires to teach, it



forbids any and all separation, even from mystic Babylon, and clashes with that text which says, "Come out of her, my people." It forbids even that the Protestants should have come out from the Roman Catholic Church. But the objector must see better by this time—that his position proves too much.

2. The apostle had a very different object in view from that of condemning those who were coming out from gross immoralities, to form a pure church. He wished to condemn those Judaizing teachers of his age, who were making parties *for the sake of gain*; "who counted gain godliness;" who "served their own bellies;" see verse 18. The apostle had himself come out from the Jewish church, and was establishing a new one, and in other places had commanded that, even under the new dispensation, we are to "withdraw from those that walk disorderly."

3. The apostle having taught Christians to mark them that cause divisions *contrary* to the doctrine they have learned, and himself having taught that it was wrong to eat with the "extortioner" and "manstealer," those who fellowship the manstealer and the extortioner are the persons composing and *keeping up* the divisions, "*contrary to the doctrine he has taught.*" Such persons are the schismatics\* and on them rests the responsibility. The tables are turned.

We are in favor of union, much more than now exists. We would be in favor of requiring a profession only of those doctrines *essential* to salvation, making the articles of belief as few as possible, and administer the rite of baptism either by immersion or by sprinkling, as the convert or applicant honestly believes the Word of God requires. We would not trammel a brother's conscience in non-essentials, in order that he should comply with our view, when, as all admit, there is ground for honest difference of opinion, and that *mode is not essential*.

We are not schismatics, but in favor of the most liberal basis which the Bible allows; and every denomination embracing the essential doctrines of Christianity could unite with us. And it would be better that they should let go many of their distinctive non-essentials, unite on those points essential to Christian faith and Christian practice, and present a strong and broad front for truth and righteousness. But to lower the conditions of membership so as to take in the covetous, the idolater, the extortioner, the manstealer, is not charity, but reckless rebellion against God's commands;



corrupts the *fundamental principles* of Christianity; opens the floodgates of vice, and tears down the distinction between the church and the world. They are the enemies of the church, the schismatics, who do this.

*Eleventh Obj.*—Others, again, perverting the design of Scripture, say: “We must be subject to the powers that be.” What they mean by this mangled quotation from Rom. xiii. 1 is, that the laws of the land have sanctioned slavery, and we Christians must not oppose these laws, but let the relation of master and slave alone until legislators shall choose to repeal the existing laws. This objection is often raised in our land. We reply:

1. The laws require no man to buy slaves; nor do they prevent him from emancipating those he now owns; nor do they forbid liberty of speech or of the press to non-slaveholders and others in opposing slavery; but guarantee to all liberty of speech and the press in the most explicit terms. See present Constitution of Kentucky, article x. section 7.

2. The text, correctly quoted, was never designed to teach that we should refrain from religious duty, because human governments may oppose. On the other hand, the Scriptures plainly teach that we are not to obey human governments when they conflict with conscience—when they require acts either *impious* or *immoral*. Thus the three Hebrew children refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image, though commanded to do so by the laws of the land. The Hebrew midwives refused to put to death the male children, though the king had commanded it. And when the Sanhedrim—“the powers that be”—commanded Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, they replied, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” Acts iv. 19. The text, then, construed so as to harmonize with other Scriptures, means only that we are to be obedient to human governments when they coincide with Divine government—do not interfere with religious or moral duties. To this the context agrees, when it declares that rulers are to be a terror to *evil* doers, and that they are to be the “ministers of good to those who do right.” See verses 3 and 4.

The question to be settled by the apostle was not whether we should in *all* cases obey rulers, even when they stood opposed to religious duty. This point had been settled. But



Judaizing teachers having taught that Christians, being in allegiance to God, ought not to obey heathen or idolatrous governments in *any* thing, this error the apostle corrected, by enjoining the general principle of obedience, declaring that *government* is of Divine appointment; and, ruling in their appropriate sphere, rulers are to be obeyed. But this obedience to government is not, from what we have seen, to be so construed as to hinder us from doing duty to God or to man.

3. These objectors do not suppose that their obedience to "the powers that be" is to be so construed as to prevent them from acting in the temperance cause, and other questions of reform. Though dramselling is licensed by the laws of the land, yet they feel that neither individual Christians nor churches should sanction the practice; that they are at liberty to speak against it, and refuse to give it fellowship. We should be careful that in our eagerness to find excuses to free us from action and responsibility, we do not "steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in."

*Twelfth Obj.*—Others say, "Slavery is a political matter, and as such Christians have nothing to do with it." We ask:

1. Have not Christians political rights and political duties as well as other people? And if so, is it not right to talk, write and read about these rights and duties, so that we may act intelligently and right?

2. Slavery is one of those subjects which involve both a political and moral or *religious* question. It is political, because it involves a fundamental principle in human government—personal liberty, and because governments have legislated upon it. It also involves a moral or religious question, because it takes away from man his dearest right—his right to personal ownership; it violates a fundamental principle of God's religion, "Love to our neighbor as ourselves;" and it involves a positive duty on our part, "Remember those in bonds as bound with them." Heb. xiii. 3. "Do unto others as you would they should do to you;" and at the judgment day Christ will say to those who neglect his representatives or his creatures: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my creatures, [that is, as the context shows, acts of mercy,] ye did it not to me. Depart, ye curse!, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his



angels." It is at the peril of our souls' salvation to neglect to plead and labor for the oppressed. It is a religious duty to plead and to act. "Pure and undefiled religion," says James, "is to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world." Every man knows that it is as much our duty to visit the motherless in their affliction, as the fatherless. But the design in the text is, to take specific cases, the fatherless and the widow, as illustrations of a general principle—mercy or love—and thereby show that religion consists in two things: acts of *mercy* to *man*, and purity before God; answering to what is taught in other places, that religion consists in love to God and love to man. To plead for the oppressed is then a *religious duty*.

3. Christians do not excuse themselves from duty or responsibility on other questions, merely because they may have also a political character or aspect. The observance of the Sabbath, dramselling, adultery, theft, and murder, all these are political questions; the Legislatures have passed laws concerning them. But do Christians and churches plead that they have nothing to do with these questions, because they are political questions? Will the preachers be silent, and will the churches refuse discipline on these questions, because the Legislatures have passed laws concerning them? No! And they would not refuse to speak and act on this question of slavery, were it not for interest, fear of public sentiment, or, with some, false notions of religious duty.

We have frequently noticed that some of these preachers, lay members, and whole churches, do not refuse action when they have a chance to please public sentiment—promote the interest of the master, and rivet tighter the chains of the slave. We awfully fear that some of these Christians are not dealing faithfully with their own souls, as well as neglecting God's poor.

The religion of Christ, as illustrated by himself, makes it not our duty to pass by on the other side, as the priest and Levite did, but to go to the suffering man, pour into his wounds the oil and the wine of comfort, place him upon our own beast, take him to the inn, a place where his wants can be supplied, thrust our hands into our pockets and defray expenses, until the robbed and bruised man is healed. This is the religion of Christ. Hence Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Hence John said, "Whoso hath this world's



goods, [money, food, privilege of voting and changing laws in church or state, freedom of speech, &c.,] and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" How can he be a Christian? Wherefore: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; *but in DEED and in truth.*"

*Thirteenth Obj.*—"Well," says another, "I believe slavery is a great sin, and that the church ought not to fellowship it; but these divisions and discussions cause so much fuss and opposition, that I think they do more harm than good: peace is best."

True, peace is best; but to be lasting, and acceptable to God, it must be on *right principles*. James says, "The wisdom which is from above is *first PURE*, then *peaceable*—full of *mercy and good fruits*, without *partiality*, and without hypocrisy." James iii. 17. But to sustain churches practising or sanctioning "the most atrocious of all evils," "the sum of all villanies"—manstealing, extortion, adultery, and fornication—is this "*PURITY*"? is this the wisdom sent down from above, and recorded in 1 Cor. v. 10, 11, 13, and 1 Tim. i. 10? Brother, good as are your intentions, and much as you think it religion, it is the prompting of selfish *ease*, the policy that cries, "A little more folding of the hands to sleep"—of the sloth that sleeps well fed from the mangled carcasses of others.

Yes, reader, at the present time, in our own State, and in all the States of the South, the slave-coffles may be seen marching in sad procession along our highways. The groans of innocent men and women, sold by members of our churches, may be heard in our prisons, and the clanking of their chains in our streets. And you need but read the journals of the day, or open your eyes and look around you, to be convinced of the fact. And all this without a single word of rebuke or admonition from the churches. Yes, brother, your case is bought by the smothered groans of fathers, the wailing of mothers, and the shrieks of innocent children—the crushed rights of three millions of slaves, and the damnation of masters, mistresses, sons, and daughters, tormenting each other with death-groans. Will you ask for peace upon such conditions?

And do you expect to expel such an enemy without a



struggle? Can you extract a tooth of many fangs without pain, or dig up the sturdy oak of the forest without blows? And when an institution like American slavery has shot its roots deep, entwined around the interests and prejudices of men, pervading every department of society, intrenched behind law, feignedly sanctioned by religion, and hallowed by time, are we to expect such an institution to be removed without commotion? Those who do, declare at once their own faint hearts, or a want of reflection. Let not our ecclesiastical bodies any longer boast of the ease with which they disposed of the claims of three millions of slaves; of the lullabys they sung, and the harmony they enjoyed in rejecting the piteous cry of the poor bondman.

There were those in olden time who cried, "Peace, peace, when there was no peace." And shall a Christian now ask for peace when the stone out of the wall and the beam out of the timber is ready to cry out; when the public mind is surging like a troubled ocean, and the crash of falling churches, daubed with untempered mortar, is like the sound of a coming earthquake? He is a faint-hearted physician that cannot probe the wound to the bottom, and bring out the festering cause.

Also, the Saviour has told us that he "came not to send peace, but a sword." Matt. x. 34. That is, although the gospel itself is pure and gentle in its tendencies, yet those practising iniquitous systems, or wrongs of any kind, will oppose it, even to the sundering of father and son, mother and daughter. See verse 37: "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." But mark: "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me."

And let us consider the example of Christ, who left the peace and glory which he had with the Father, came down to earth, and in his labors of *doing* good, suffered privation, hardship, persecution, and shame. Yes, "the *chastisement* of our peace was upon him." And shall not we, who have freely received, freely give?

So long as we wear the name of Christ, of Christian, let us blush for shame, if we ever again ask for peace whilst a single slave piteously groans beneath the galling yoke or the clanking chain.

*Fourteenth Obj.*—Again the objector says: "I do not



agree with my church and my preacher in their pro-slavery views and practice ; but then I must not give up all else in my church for the sake of getting clear of this one evil."

1. Then God was wrong in requiring his people to come out of mystical Babylon. The members of that church could have used the same objection which the objector uses, and with the same propriety.

2. What is there in your church peculiarly excellent and *essential* to salvation, which you cannot find in churches not slaveholding ? Perhaps the distinctive feature or excellence is the doctrine of election and reprobation, or the opposite doctrines ; or the rite of baptism in some particular form—as by immersion or sprinkling ; a talented preacher, or wealthy and large churches ; or something of the kind. *Are any of these essential to salvation ?* And will you suffer a gross immorality to be practised by your church and to be taught by your preacher—a *fundamental principle of Christianity to be violated ?* Will you see souls around you deceived with a corrupt religion, and sent down to hell ?—for God says no extortioner shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Will you see the church crippled in her energies, the cause of God languishing ? Will you, by your influence, uphold the wrong, and withhold it from those who you admit are struggling for essential truth ? Will you see and sanction by your fellowship the bondage of Christ in the least of his creatures, and the sale of the temple of the Holy Ghost for a price, rather than give up your little non-essentials ?

And suppose your preacher, or your church, or both, should teach that idolatry is right, and quote the example of Rachel and Leah, with their father's household gods,—suppose they should teach that drunkenness is right, and quote the example of pious Noah,—suppose they should teach that adultery and fornication are right, and quote the example of David, Lot and his daughters,—they could do this, and bring you, just as they do for slaveholding, perverted "Bible arguments." What would you do, brother—sister ? Would you not exclaim, "Awful ! preposterous ! a plain violation of God's Word ! Can a man love God with all the heart, and his neighbor as himself, and do these things ? An essential principle of God's religion is struck down ! I must not sanction such a thing for a moment ! How can I meet my God in peace, if I do ? My little matters of taste I must give up, to save a fundamental principle." Ah ! and is not slaveholding as



plainly a violation of the fundamental principle of God's religion—love—as idolatry or adultery? Is it not a contempt for God, a want of love, when we load his innocent image with chains, and barter the temple of the Holy Ghost for a price? And is it not a violation of love to our neighbor, when we plunder from him his dearest rights—right to himself, his wife, his child? Yea, even to sanction it by our *fellowship*, though we do not the deed directly; yet we help others to do it by our sanction and presence. Reader, you hold, whilst the master beats and robs. Go read Matthew xxii. 37–40; Luke x. 25–37; Isaiah i. 27; ii. 1, 9–16; 1 Cor. xiii.; 1 John iii. 17, 18. The deed, the *action*, is necessary, as *evidence of love*. And will you suffer an essential principle of God's religion to be struck down, rather than give up your little matters of taste or prejudice—these non-essentials? Did all men do as you do, *reform would never be accomplished*. The talents would be hid in a napkin, and the enemy would continue to make encroachments after encroachments, until true religion would be driven from earth. Blessed will it be for you, dear reader, if you can say as Elijah to his God: “I am jealous for thy word.”

And are you doing duty to the slave? Suppose you were in bonds, held by that church, or by that minister; or your mother, your husband, your wife or your child were in bonds, held by that church; would you feel that you must give your name and means to uphold that church, or that minister, in doing the work—robbing the poor enslaved mother, and perverting the religion of your God? Yea, if the church members were silent in view of the outrages done in the name of religion, would you uphold them? No, you would not. Then do as you would be done by.

*Fifteenth Obj.*—Says another: “Say what you will, I am not going to leave my church.” These were the words of a beloved brother, who has been for many years mourning over the condition of the slave, and has long been regarded as an anti-slavery man. His expression is the sentiment of many others; and when put in plain English, runs thus: “I know there are other churches free from the sin of slaveholding, and churches holding in other respects the same fundamental doctrines that my own does, and churches in whose connection I should not have to alter my religious belief, nor my practice, an iota; yet I have had such happy seasons in my



church, or it is so orthodox, or so efficient and large, that though I have to fellowship slaveholding, one of the worst of sins—as Wesley said, ‘the sum of all villanies’—and though the foot of my example is upon the neck of the poor slave, and though I have to fellowship those who bind my Saviour in the person of his poor, yet I cannot give up my church.” The difficulty with such is, that they love “ism”—their denomination—more than righteousness, and they are taking happy seasons, or supposed orthodoxy, as evidences of religion, instead of *true love and obedience*.

This love of “ism,” together with prejudice and fear of public sentiment, keeps thousands from obeying God in coming out from fellowship of the iniquity.

*Sixteenth Obj.*—Another says: “I desire to be connected with a non-slaveholding church, but there is none convenient, and I want a place for myself and my family to go to on Sabbath; and the church I am connected with is a very orderly, Sabbath-observing church, [so were the Jews; but their “*hands were full of blood*,” and though they had their solemn assemblies, God would not hear their prayers, until they turned to the work of relieving the oppressed, Isaiah i. 13–17,] and the preacher preaches sound doctrine in other respects, and says many good things.” Yes; and the same might be said of many Pagan or Mohammedan churches. They might be orderly in many things, their assemblies solemn, and their priests might say many excellent things, and in the next breath strike a fatal blow at a fundamental point, or, by example, propagate a most dangerous and God-dishonoring doctrine. Would you feel that, by your presence and membership, you ought to sustain such, *even if there were no Christian churches within a thousand miles of you?* Would you feel that such churches were safe nurseries for your families, with minds not yet fully instructed in the true principles of religion? “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” False doctrines may taint the youthful mind. And, father, brother, if you shall train your family in a slaveholding and slave-despising church, and your children shall imbibe a contempt for labor and for God’s poor, spurning meekness and love, the essentials of Christianity, blame no one but your own folly. You *may* possibly escape as Lot, but your heart will be wrung with anguish as you behold your sons and sons-in-law laugh at your exhortations “as one that



mocked ;” and, though you may drag from the flames two daughters, it may be with hearts corrupted and habits ruined. “Escape for thy life.” Better that you should make your church-connection in New-York or New-Orleans, if you can find a pure church there, and make pilgrimages once a year, and give your name and influence for truth and righteousness, and thus let your light shine, rather than uphold that which corrupts God’s Word, enfeebles the church, curses your country, and endangers the spiritual safety of your family. Let your example be *wholly* for truth and righteousness whilst you do live, even if you have to bear heavy crosses in doing it. Your crown at last will be bright, if you are *faithful* until death ; and, should you be a martyr for truth, it will be enough—oh ! it will be enough at last to wear the white robes of righteousness, and wave the palms of victory.

*Seventeenth Obj.*—Does the objector again say : “I am daily praying for a pure church, and will join one so soon as God in his providence shall raise one up, convenient to me—in our neighborhood” ?

Well, brother, it is right that you should pray. We doubt not the efficacy of prayer. And Cromwell doubted not the efficacy of prayer ; and yet he saw the duty of using means. On the night before the memorable battle of Dunbar, the rain was descending in frequent showers ; the enemy had hedged him in on all sides, and were more than double his number, and had the advantage in many respects. He had decided that on the morrow the decisive battle must be fought. Himself a praying man, he said to his soldiers, many of whom were seen in groups praying : “Pray—and *withal keep the powder dry.*” That is, pray for God’s blessing, and use *necessary means*. And with the blessing of God, and dry powder, he whipped the enemy and took near half of them as prisoners. Now, reader, if you will *also use the means*, if you will *come out*, and induce one or more to come with you, and band yourselves together, determining to stand for truth and righteousness, you will have a minister. God in his providence will send you one. Do the deed, and spread your hands abroad ; let your *wants be known*, and there will be ministers to feed you. Yes, there are now ministers whose hearts are aching for the chance to travel muddy roads, to buffet the storm, and use plain fare, that they may meet such



spirits. Yes, if little bands will rise up here and there, circuit-riding will become still more common.

Many ministers will object, "If I come out, my sphere of influence will be small, confined to little handfuls here and there, with perhaps not more than twenty to a hundred hearers. Now, I have a large church, with active members, [the Pharisees were active, and made proselytes, and "devoured widows' houses,"] and I am connected with a large and influential denomination; surely I can do more in my present connection, though I am connected with slaveholding churches; otherwise my influence would be very limited." Yes, we are often infatuated with a *show of numbers*, and our self-righteous hearts pleased, and consciences relieved, by a big sacrifice, as an atonement for our rebellion. Thus Saul thought to atone for his *rebellion* by offering a big sacrifice. But Samuel replied: "To *obey* is better than *sacrifice*, and to hearken, than the *fat* of rams." Rich sacrifices compensate not for neglected duty. Better to build on a small scale, and even not build at all, than build up error—a bulwark against truth. And what is your influence now, brother, however extended, but to build up a church either practising or sanctioning iniquity? And all the talents you may have, and all the piety and extended organization which you may gather around you, will only render your influence the greater *for error*, and the stronger *against* those who may be laboring for the truth. The world will say to such, "Sure all your zeal for the purity of God's Word and church, and all your sympathy for the slave, must be wrong. See that talented and pious preacher, with his large and flourishing church; he does not teach and act as you do; you must be in error."

Thus, dear brother, your talents and extended influence are on the side of evil. You may feel that to leave the fine church edifice that you occupy, and the large audiences that you have, and to preach about in private dwellings, school-houses, or some out-house, propped up on all sides, as the old chapel at Wittenberg, where Luther began, and to get your support just as you can catch it—this, you may feel, is a small and hazardous business. True, it is the day of small things, but it should not be despised. And why should not you bear a part in the struggle? Did all men act as you, reform would never be accomplished. We know ministers whose burdened souls for truth and the slave caused them to leap from the old organizations; but, finding their "spheres



of influence too limited," as they said, have gone back. Ah! many, like Erasmus, have conscience enough to feel the evil, but not courage enough to brave the storm.

And the same persons have said, "I must have bread for my family; the new organizations are too small to yield me a support." Yes, many yet must walk by sight, and not by faith. Do you suppose, dear reader, that if you entered into the work with your whole soul, determining to do your part, showing, by your economy and industry, your zeal for the truth, and your willingness to bear hardship as a good soldier, that God would not raise up friends to help you? More surely than that God feeds the ravens of the valley, will he feed you. It cannot be otherwise. God will raise up friends who will *love to help* such ministers; and God will water the souls of those who honor him by trusting.