Of Slavery. March 24th 1840.

Propositions on the subject of Slavery. S.S.S.

Prop. 1.) We believe that God has of one blood created all nations to dwell on the face of the earth, has endowed them all with the powers of moral agents & invested them all with certain inalienable rights and obligations. E.G. life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and the discharge of what they believe to be their religious duties.

Prop. 2) No man or set of men have a right to acquire or exercise such a controll over others, as is detrimental to the inalienable rights and obligations of the individual.

Prop. 3.) Each association whether a civil government or a literary society, or a domestic institution can rightfully exercise a controll over its subjects, only under this limitation, only so far as it is not detrimental to the inalienable rights &obligations of individuals.

Prop. 4.) Every instance or institution which violates the inalienable rights & obligations of indivuals, is in its own nature an evil, and all who voluntarially and knowingly establish it, or who finding it prievously existing, fail sincerely to desire, and faithfully to labour for its extin= =ction are guilty of sin.

Prop. 5.) Such evils exist in some of the political governments of Europe, which restrict the freedom of religious worship or violate any other inalien- able right or obligation.

Prop. 6. Slavery as it is legally authorized in the United States untill recen= -tly, was authorized in the British West Indies, is the very worst form of such evil, because by converting the moral agent of God, into a mere chattel, the person into a mere thing, the immortal being into a mere article of property, it in theory strips him of all his personal rights, and places it in the power of his master, in practice to deny him the enjoyment of all the inalienable rights ~~of~~ which God bestowed on him, and to prevent his performance of those inalienable duties which God has imposed.

Prop. 7.) Experience proves that whilst there are thousands of humane and Christian masters who treat their slaves with kindness, and work them them moderately, yet even in their hands the system itself unavoidably leads to the intellectual and moral degredation of the slave, whilst in the hands of a majority of masters the practice is merely and often fully as bad as the theory will allow.

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Prop. 8.) Slavery either essentially embraces or naturally or unavoidably leads to the following evils. a.) It virtually destroys the matrimonial relation, which God has instituted and commanded, because it acknowledges no such relation in law, affords no legal protection to it, but puts it in the pow-
-er of the master, at any time & for any reason and even without any to sep=
=erate those whom God, by the mutual covenant of the parties hath joined together. b) It tends to promote promiscuous concubinage by destroying the inviolability of the conjugal relation, and by frequent seperations teaching the slave to regard it as less sacred, by denying any thing like legal protection to female chastity, it places the whole race of females at the mercy of the licentious master, and other licentious men.
c.) It violates the parental relation by taking children from the controll of their parents, thus making it impossible for their parents to direct their destination in life, or to bring them up in the nurture and ad-
-monition of the Lord. d) It is habitual injustice to the slave, and violation of the inspired precept that the laborer is worthy of his hire.
e. It destroys the motives to industry and honesty by extorting labour without wages. f) It in a great measure shuts out the written word of God from the slave, by making it penal to teach him to read, and thus it renders it impossible for him to discharge the duty enjoined on all to search the scriptures.

Prop. 9.) That a system compounded of elements so immoral and so clearly opposed to the character of God, finds any sanction in his word, can be asserted only from want of careful and adequate examination, or from ignorance or prejudice, or insincerity. The facts in the case are these; the word slave occurs but twice in our English Bible, in the 1st passage Jeremiah 2:14, there is no Hebrew word at all corresponding to it, and the Elipsis to be supplied was servent. In the other case Rev. 18:13, the Greek word is δωματων, bodies, & should have been so ren-
-dered. The terms actually used in scripture, ע?? [Hebrew characters]. δουλος, are generic terms actually used and equivalent to servent, they are also applied to the ancient prophets and Kings. 1Kings12:6.7, 2dChron 12:7.8.9.13. They are also applied to Christians who are termed servents & to Christ himself, Is.42.1, as to the thing itself, slavery in the American sense of the term had no existence under the Old Test. dispensation. There was indeed a species of servitude, but that servitude was very different

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from American slavery. a) It was in all cases temporary, the Hebrew could not be kept longer than six years Ex.21:2, Dut 15:12-13-14, except when sold for debts, when he might be kept untill the year of jubilee Levi 25:40. & some Jewish writers assert that this could be done only when the jubilee occurred with the ensuing 6 years. The foreign servent that was purchased could be contracted for till the year of jubilee & no longer Levi 25:10. The term forever which is sometimes applied to these foreign servents appears to indicate only an indefinite time, & does not mean beyond the jubilee in which all servents were commanded to be set at liberty. (without exception) But if any servent was ill treated, or for any reason was dissatisfied with situation, he could run off & dwell in any place where it liked him best, & the Israelite was commanded not to deliver him to his master Dut.23:16. John 8:35 Jesus says the servent abideth not forever, but the son does. B) This servitude was generally voluntary, it could not well be otherwise, as not only the manstealer was punished with death, but also evry person in whose possession any one thus stolen was found Exod. 21:15. Manstealing is forcibly taking and selling another, or reducing him to bondage: now if it could not be done forcibly, it must be done voluntarially if at all, excepting cases where the law provided for the sale of persons involuntarially for debt, which case it is however not certain that it did occur Levit. 25:27. & all servents could terminate their servitude by absconding. The Hebrew sold himself Levit 25:47. & all servents could terminate their servitude by absconding. Levit 25:39, seems to imply the legality of involuntary sale for debt. Though Gesenius renders this passage ????[Hebrew characters] sold himself, like in verse 47, where even our own common version renders the the same word sell himself. The Egyptians sold themselves to Pharaoh for bread Gen 47.19. C) The conjugal relation was acknowledged & not severed, when the servents time had expired he took his wife with him, if he had been married before his indenture or servent-ship, and if he married afterward in his masters family, his master was compelled to keep him if he desired to remain, even after his time had expired Exod..21:3.20. D.) The religious privileges of servents were equal to those of their masters. Gen 17:13-17, Ex 20:10, Dut 5:14. E) They were on equality with their masters in many aspects

thus they were entrusted with arms Gen 14:14, 32:6, 33:1. F.) They sometimes married into their masters family. 1st Chron.2: 32-34-35. G) They partook of the feasts with their Masters Dut 12:17-18, 16:11. H) Paul says that "the heir whilst a child or minion, differeth not from a servent i.e. he asserts that their sit= =uation was in general similar, a thing which no one could with propriety assert of the condition of American Slaves Gal 4:1.

Prop 10. Whilst the New Test. does not denounce slavery by name any more that it does gambling, or pyracy, or polygamy, or the Olympic games, or the Eleucinian mysteries, or the despotism of Siberius or Nero: it does in numerous passages condemn each of the ingrediants of which slavery is composed, urging the slave to accept of his liberty if he can obtain it 1 Cor 7:21. Urging masters to give their slaves what is just & equal Col. 4:1. Not to Keep back the wages of the hireling James 5:4. Not to seperate husband & wife – to remember that they also have a master in heaven - & to treat the servent no longer as a slave (Ουκετι ιυς δουλου) Phil 6:16, but above a slave as a brother beloved.

Prop 11. Involuntary slave holding is not sinful so long as it is strictly of this character. This embraces first) A) persons convinced of the evils of slavery, but on whom slaves have been entailed by inheritance or marriage. By inheritance persons may become slave-holders, in their sleep, as they may become owners of property or money made by gambling or other illegal traffic. The innocence of this slave-holding can continue only untill there has been time for the Master to execute deeds of manumission; or if the laws do not allow emancipation on the soil; untill they can be transported to a place of safety, or free state, or country. B) In the former times of ignorance on this subject, persons who had but little knowledge of human institutions themselves & had never been admonished on this subject, and who treated their slaves as they ought (viz) gave them religious instruction, gov- -erned them by moral motives; held slaves in comparative, tho not absolute innocence; just as good men formerly drank ardent spirits moderately.

C) Those who before the sinfulness of slavery had been discussed, did actually acknowledge the inviolable rights & obligations of man in their slaves, & they made slavery far different in practice from what the theory of the law makes it, may have held slaves in com--parative innocence.

Prop 12. All voluntary slave-holding is sinful. This embraces almost the entire extent of actual slavery at the present day of light & discussion.

Prop 13th) The degree of guilt in the case of each individual slaveholder, in addition to the guilt of holding human beings in slavery at all; is proportionate to the degree, in which he in fact violates the unalienable rights of man in his slaves, & in which he impedes their performance of their inviolable obligations as husbands, & wives, as children & parents, as free subjects of God's moral government.

*1) Opposite page – 1)

22. What is the doctrine of the New Test. on the union between chur--ch & state?

A. It is that the church & state be kept entirely distinct.

23. How do you prove such union to be contrary to the New Test.?

A. a) Christ explicitly declares his "kingdom is not of this world," i.e. that it is not a temporal political kingdom. B) He nowhere assigns to ministers of the gospel any political duties: as such, & therefore they have more such to perform. C) Christ no-where enjoins on political rulers as such, any share in the management of his church. D) It is absurd to suppose, that the king, or any other civil ruler, who as such has received no ecclesiastical ordination or power, should be the fountain of all spiritual author-ity. &c.[etc}

24. What is the general structure of our civil government?

A. It is in perfect or strict accordance with the principles just laid down.

25. Into how many branches are the powers of our general government divided?

A. Into its Legislative, Executive, & judicial branches.

*1) Sect. 14th It is the duty of every individual himself immediately to abstain from all violation of the inalienable rights & obligations of his fellow man in practice, and in order that neither he nor others after him may be able to practice these violations hereafter, it is his duty by immediate emancipation to relinquish that legal right, & temptation to its practice, which the law gives to the master over his slave.

Prop. 15. It is the duty of evry Christian & friend of civil and religious liberty, to exert his influence in evry beneficial way, to vindicate the rights of all God's rational creatures, and by peacible means, and Christian appeals to their consciences, patriotism, & humanity, to influence those who are violating those rights. Levit 19:17. Prov. 31:8-9, Jer 22:13, Math 5:43, 7:1 2Pe.

Transcribed by Jim Guldner, 15 Sep 2012