University of Nebraska - Lincoln Digital Commons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Electronic Texts in American Studies

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

1-1-1706

The Negro Christianized. An Essay to Excite and Assist that Good Work, the Instruction of Negro-Servants in Christianity (1706)

Cotton Mather Second (North) Church, Boston

Paul Royster, editor University of Nebraska-Lincoln, proyster@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas



Part of the American Studies Commons

Mather, Cotton and Royster, Paul, editor, "The Negro Christianized. An Essay to Excite and Assist that Good Work, the Instruction of Negro-Servants in Christianity (1706)" (1706). Electronic Texts in American Studies. Paper 28. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/28

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska -Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Texts in American Studies by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Cotton Mather The Negro Christianized (1706)

There were Negro slaves in New England before there were Puritans there, and by 1700 they numbered about 1,000 out of a total population of 90,000. Roughly half of them lived in Massachusetts, and were concentrated in Boston and the coastal towns. Puritans actively participated in the colonial slave trade, importing them from the West Indies and sometimes selling Indian prisoners into overseas slavery.

Cotton Mather was a slave-owner, and his congregation at the Second (or North) Church included both slave merchants and Negroes. The pamphlet reprinted here appeared in 1706 without his name, but his authorship of it was generally known. It calls on slave owners to educate their Negro servants in the Christian religion, to treat them justly and kindly, and to accept them as spiritual brethren. It includes two catechisms and other instructional materials. It advances both spiritual and pragmatic arguments: the Christian has a moral responsibility for the souls of those in danger, and the Christianized servant is more profitable to his master.

Mather's style in this work is unusually (for him) plain-spoken and direct. He quotes only one church father (Chrysostom), one classical philosopher (Cato), and one modern historian (Acosta). Moreover, his language seems particularly fresh, almost contemporary: "Man, Thy Negro is thy Neighbour. ... Yea, if thou dost grant, That God hath made of one Blood, all Nations of men, he is thy Brother too."—and, at another point, "... say of it, as it is."

The electronic text presented here was transcribed from the first edition, printed at Boston in 1706. A very few notes have been included, as has also a list of typographical errors corrected.

THE

Regro Christianized.

An ESSAY

TO

EXCITE and ASSIST that GOOD WORK,

The INSTRUCTION

O F

Negro-Servants

IN

Christianity.

Josh 24 15.

As for me, and my House, we will Serve the Lord.

Pfal. 68 31.

Ethiopia shall soon Stretch out her Hands unto God.

Boston, Printed by B. Green. 1

T H E Negro Christianized.

T is a Golden Sentence, that has been sometimes quoted from Chrysostom; That for a man to know the Art of Alms, is more than for a man to be Crowned with the Diadem of Kings: But to Convert one Soul unto God, is more than to pour out Ten Thousand Talents into the Baskets of the Poor. Truly, to Raise a Soul, from a dark State of Ignorance and Wickedness, to the Knowledge of GOD, and the Belief of CHRIST, and the practice of our Holy and Lovely RELIGION; 'Tis the noblest Work, that ever was undertaken among the Children of men. An Opportunity to Endeavour the CONVER-SION of a Soul, from a Life of Sin, which is indeed a woful Death, to Fear God, and Love CHRIST, and by a Religious Life to Escape the Paths of the Destroyer; it cannot but be Acceptable to all that have themselves had in themselves Experience of such a Conversion. And such an Opportunity there is in your Hands, O all you that have any Regroes in your Houses; an Opportunity to try, Whether you may not be the Happy Instruments, of Converting, the Blackest Instances of Blindness and Baseness, into admirable Candidates of Eternal Blessedness. Let not this Opportunity be Lost; if you have any concern for Souls, your Own or Others; but, make a Trial,

Whether by your Means, the most *Bruitish* of Creatures upon Earth may not come to be disposed, in some Degree, like the Angels of Heaven; and the Vassals of Satan, become the Children of God. Suppose these Wretched Negroes, to be the Offspring of Cham (which yet is not so very certain,) yet let us make a Trial, Whether the CHRIST who dwelt in the Tents of Shem, have not some of His Chosen among them; Let us make a Trial, Whether they that have been Scorched and Blacken'd by the Sun of Africa, may not come to have their Minds Healed by the more Benign Beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

It is come to pass by the Providence of God, without which there comes nothing to pass, that Poor Regroes are cast under your Government and Protection. You take them into your Families; you look on them as part of your Possessions; and you Expect from their Service, a Support, and perhaps an Increase, of your other Possessions. How agreeable would it be, if a Religious Master or Mistress thus attended, would now think with themselves! Who can tell but that this Poor Creature may belong to the Election of God! Who can tell, but that God may have sent this Poor Creature into my Hands, that so One of the Elect may by my means be Called; & by my Instruction be made Wise unto Salvation! The glorious God will put an unspeakable Glory upon me, if it may be so! The Considerations that would move you, To Teach your Negroes the Truths of the Glorious Gospel, as far as you can, and bring them, if it may be, to Live according to those Truths, a Sober, and a Righteous, and a Godly Life; They are Innumerable; And, if you would after a *Reasonable* manner consider, the Pleas which we have to make on the behalf of God, and of the

Souls which He has made, one would wonder that they should not be Irresistible. Show your selves Men, and let Rational Arguments have their Force upon you, to make you treat, not as Bruits but as Men, those Rational Creatures whom God has made your Servants.

For,

First; The Great GOD Commands it, and Requires it of you; to do what you can that Your Servants, may also be His. It was an Admonition once given; Eph. 5.9. Masters, Know that your Master is in Heaven. You will confess, That the God of Heaven is your Master. If your Negroes do not comply with your Commands, into what Anger, what Language, Perhaps into a misbecoming Fury, are you transported? But you are now to attend unto the Commands of your more Absolute Master; and they are His Commands concerning your Negroes too. What can be more Expressive, than those words of the Christian Law? Col. 4.1. Masters, give unto your Servants, that which is Just & Equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven. Of what *Servants* is this Injunction to be understood? Verily, of Slaves. For Servants were generally such, at the time of Writing the New Testament. Wherefore, Masters, As it is Just & Equal, that your Servants be not Over-wrought, and that while they Work for you, you should Feed them, and *Cloath* them, and afford convenient *Rest* unto them, and make their Lives comfortable; So it is Just and Equal, that you should Acquaint them, as far as you can, with the way to Salvation by JESUS CHRIST. You deny your Master in Heaven, if you do nothing to bring your Servants unto the Knowledge and Service of that glorious Master. One Table of the Ten Commandments, has this

for the Sum of it; Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy self. Man, Thy Negro is thy Neighbour. T'were an Ignorance, unworthy of a Man, to imagine otherwise. Yea, if thou dost grant, That God hath made of one Blood, all Nations of men, he is thy Brother too. Now canst thou Love thy Negro, and be willing to see him ly under the Rage of Sin, and the Wrath of God? Canst thou Love him, and yet refuse to do any thing, that his miserable Soul may be rescued from Eternal miseries? Oh! Let thy Love to that Poor Soul, appear in thy concern, to make it, if thou canst, as happy as thy own! We are Commanded, Gal. 6. 10. As we have opportunity let us Do Good unto all men, especially unto them, who are of the Houshold of Faith. Certainly, we have Opportunity, to Do Good unto our Servants, who are of our own Houshold; certainly, we may do something to make them Good, and bring them to be of the Houshold of Faith. In a word, All the Commandments in the Bible, which bespeak our *Charity* to the *Souls* of others, and our *Endeavour* that the *Souls* of others may be delivered from the Snares of Death; every one of these do oblige us, to do what we can, for the Souls of our Negroes. They are more nearly Related unto us, than many others are; we are more fully capable to do for them, than for many others.

To deal yet more plainly with you; Secondly; With what Face can you call your selves *Christians*, if you do nothing that your *Servants* also may become *Christians*? A *Face* that has been *Baptized* into the Name of the One GOD, in Three Persons, may Blush to continue unconcerned, Whether the Name of that God, be ever Known or no, in the very *Families* that be-

long unto them. Are they Worthy to be counted Christians, who are content tho' a part of their Families remain Heathen, who do not know God, nor call upon his Name? We read, I Tim. 5. 8. If any provide not for his own, and especially those of his own house, he has denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. And what is he, who does Provide nothing for the Souls of those whom God has made his own; that their Souls may be fed with the Bread of Life, and cloath'd with the Garments of Righteousness, and Heal'd of the Deadly Wounds which their Fall from God has brought upon them! What is he, who is willing that those of his own House remain Strangers to the Faith, and Wretched Infidels? Housholder, Call thy self any thing but a Christian? As for that Worthy Name, ---- Nomen Depone, Do not pretend unto it; Thou art not Worthy of it. If thou wilt Name the Name of CHRIST, in denominating thy self a Christian, then Depart from this *Iniquity*, of leaving thy Servants, to continue the *Servants* of Iniquity. It will be found a Maxim that Fails not; That no man can Really and Heartily be of any Religion, without some Desire to have that Religion Propagated. For a man to Profess a Religion, and care not a Straw, Whether any body besides himself be of it; certainly, That mans Profession is not worth a Straw; it can be no Sincere Profession. It is Natural for men, to promote their own religion. Shall Christians fall short of Mahometans, or of Idolaters? The Pagan Japonians were too much in the right on't, when they concluded a certain Worldly Generation of Europæans, to be no Christians; Because they declined the doing of any thing for the Propagation of Christianity. The Christians who have no concern upon their Minds to have

Christianity Propagated, never can justify themselves. They say they are Christians, but they are not; What they are, we know not. All along the Pagans themselves, have made it the main Stroke in the Definition of, A Good Man; He is One who does all the Good that he can. The greatest Good that we can do for any, is to bring them unto the fullest Acquaintance with *Christianity*. Will *Christianity* allow him then to be, A Good Man, or, which is the same thing, A Christian, who refuses to do this Good, for the Servants that are under his influence? All genuine Christians are to be look'd on as the Children of the Faithful Abraham, who is therefore called, The Father of the Faithful. Now of this our Father, did Heaven take it for granted; Gen. 18.19. I know him, that he will Command his Children, and his Houshold, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. He had some Hundreds of Servants belonging to his Houshold: He obtained, that the Slaves of his Houshold should Know the Way of the Lord; He then Commanded, that they should Keep that Way. Now, Christianity is, The Way of the Lord. Housholder, There are Servants pertaining to thy Houshold. It is a mighty Power which thou hast over them; A Despotick Power which gives thee numberless Advantages, to call them, and lead them into the Way of the Lord. Art thou Regardless of bringing them into Christianity? Then thou dost not Walk in the Steps of our Father Abraham; and art not like to call him thy Father, and otherwise than the Rich Man in the place of Torment. We are very sure, That where the Spirit of Christianity has had its true operation, it has from the Beginning Shone forth in most Lively Essayes, to diffuse the Light of the Glorious Gospel, unto such as have been Perishing for the Lack

of that Vision. All Ecclesiastical History, down from the Book of, The Acts of the Apostles, to this Time, are fill'd with admirable Examples, of a Zeal flaming in the Hearts of Christians, to Christianize the rest of the World. Christianity, Whither art thou fled! Return, Return, O Beautiful Daughter of Heaven, Return, Return, that we may look upon thee. What shall we then see, but a vast company of Christian Housholders, filled with zealous contrivance and agony, to see their Houses become Christian Temples, and a glorious CHRIST worshipped and obeyed by all their Housholds! Yea, we read concerning some of the Primitive Christians, that with a Prodigie of Charity, they have bound themselves in the Quality of Servants, to Pagan Families, meerly that they might be in a way to Christianize the Families; And their successes were Wonderful. But what shall we say of it, When Masters that would be thought Christians already shall even refuse to have the Servants in their Families duely Christianized? Pray, deal faithfully; Don't mince the matter; say of it, as it is; It is a *Prodigy* of *Wickedness*; It is a prodigious Inconsistency, with true Christianity! Housholder, art thou a Christian? Then the Glory of a precious CHRIST is of such Account with thee, that it afflicts thee to think, that any one Person in the World should be without the Sight of it. And how can it be, that thou shouldest be negligent about bringing to a sight of the Glory of God, in the Face of JESUS CHRIST, the Folks of thy own House, upon whom thou art able to do a great deal more than upon the rest of the World? Art thou a Christian? Then thou dost Pray for thy Servants, that they may become the Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Children of God, and not

fall short of entering into Rest. What! Pray for this; and yet never do any thing for it! It is impossible, or, such Praying, is but Mocking of God? Art thou a Christian? Then thou art apprehensive of a dreadful Danger, attending the Souls of them who know not God and obey not His Gospel: Tis thy perswasion, That if our Gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost; and the Ungospelized Souls are in danger of an Eternal Banishment from the Favour and the City of God. Can a Christian see his own Servants in this condition, and be not sollicitous to have them saved out of it? No; When such Christians appear before the Glorious LORD, it will be in vain for them to plead, that they call'd him LORD, and own'd Him for their LORD. If they did it why did they not bring their Servants under the Government of the LORD? Verily, He will say to such Christians, I know you not? Suppose that Language were heard from the mouth of a Master concerning a Servant; If I can have the Labour of the Slave, that's all I care for: Let his Soul go and be damn'd for all time! would not every Christian say, This were Language for the Mouth of a Devil, rather than for the Mouth of a Christian! Would not every Christian cry out, Let him not be call'd a Master, but a Monster that shall speak so! Consider, Syrs, whether Deeds have not a Language in them, as well as Words; a plainer Language than Words.

But we were saying; the *Condition* of the *Servants*! This invites us to say, Thirdly: The *condition* of your *Servants* does loudly sollicit your pains to *Christianize* them; and you cannot but hear the cry of it, if you have not put off all *Christian Compassion*, all Bowels of *Humanity*. When You see how laboriously, how obsequiously your

Negros apply themselves, to serve you, to content you, to enrich you, What? have you abandoned all principles of Gratitude, or of Generosity? A Generous Mind cannot but entertain such sentiments as these: Well, what shall I do, to make this poor creature happy? What shall I do, that this poor creature may have cause, to bless God forever, for falling into my Hands! The very First Thought which will arise in a Mind thus disposed, will form a Resolution, to get these poor Negroes well instructed in the things of their Everlasting Peace; It cannot be otherwise! The State of your Negroes in this World, must be low, and mean, and abject; a State of Servitude. No Great Things in this World, can be done for them. Something then, let there be done, towards their welfare in the World to Come. Even a Papist calls upon us; ['tis Acosta:] Barbaris pro libertate erepta fidem Jesu Christi, et vitam hominibus dignam reddamus. In the mean time, tis a most horrid and cursed Condition, wherein your Servants are languishing, until Christianity has made saving impressions upon them. A roaring Lion who goes about seeking whom he may devour, hath made a siezure of them: Very many of them do with Devillish Rites actually worship *Devils*, or maintain a magical conversation with *Devils*: And all of them are more Slaves to Satan than they are to You, until a Faith in the Son of God has made them Free indeed. Will you do nothing to pluck them out of the Jaws of Satan the Devourer? Especially since you may justly imagine them crying to you, in terms like those of the Child whom a Lion was running away withal; Help! Help! I am yet alive! O Souls deaf to the cry of Souls, Pitty, Pitty the Souls of your Negroes, which cry unto you, Have pitty on us, O our Masters,

have pitty on us, whom the holy God, has justly delivered over into a woful Slavery to the Powers of Darkneß: And, Oh! do something, that the light of Salvation by the glorious Lord JE-SUS CHRIST may arrive unto us. A SOUL, Ignorant of God and His Christ, and vicious in all the affections of it, and that neither knows nor likes the Things that are Holy and Just and Good, and that has no illuminations from Heaven ever visiting of it but is in Great Folly wandering down to the Congregation of the Dead; Such a Soul is a terrible sight! It can be no other than such a Soul, who does not count it so. Neighbours, you have such a sight, in all your Negroes, as long as they are left a People of no understanding. The uninstructed Negroes about your houses, appear like so many Ghosts and Spectres. You may, without being Fanciful, imagine that like so many Murdered Ghosts, they look very Ghastly upon you, and summon you to answer before the Tribunal of God, for suffering them to perish in their miserable Circumstances. Most certainly, Syrs:; The *Blood* of the *Souls* of your poor Negroes, lies upon you, and the guilt of their Barbarous Impieties, and superstitions, and their neglect of God and their Souls: If you are willing to have nothing done towards the Salvation of their Souls. We read of, People destroy'd for lack of knowledge. If you withhold Knowledge from your Black People, they will be Destroy'd. But their Destruction must very much ly at Your doors; You must answer for it. It was a Black charge of old brought in against the Jewish Nation; Jer. 2. 34. In thy skirts is found the Blood of Souls. It were to be wish'd, that in the Skirts, the outborders, the Colonies and Plantations of the English Nation, there might be no room for such a charge. But

surely, Things look very Black upon us. You have your selves renounced Christianity, if you do not receive that Faithful saying of it, and most Awful one: Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. But then Remember, that one Article of your Account will be this: You had poor Negroes under you, and you expected and exacted Revenues of profit from them. Did you do any thing to save them from their Blindness and Baseneß, and that the Great GOD might have Revenues of glory from them. Alas, if you have not thought and car'd and Watch'd for the Souls of your Negroes, as they that must give an Account, You will give up your Account with Grief, and not with Joy; very Grievous will be the consequences. A Prophet of God, might without putting any Disguise upon the matter, thus represent it, God has brought a Servant unto thee, and said, Keep that Soul, Teach it, and Help it, that it may not be lost; if thou use no means to save that Soul, thy soul shall certainly smart for it. Vain Dreamer; canst thou suppose that the Negroes are made for nothing but only to serve thy Pleasures, or that they owe no Homage to their Maker? Do thy part, that they may become a People of so much Understanding, as to Understand who is their Maker and their Saviour, and what Homage they owe unto Him: Else, He that made them will not have mercy on them. Yea, but Thy claim to His Mercy will be less than Theirs. More Stripes will belong unto thee.

On the other side, Fourthly: Oh! That our Neighbours would consider the incomparable *Benefits* that would follow upon your *Endeavours* to *Christianize* your *Negroes*, and bring them to a share with your selves in the *Benefits* of the Heavenly *Inheritance*. If your care and cost

about the cultivation of your Negroes, be laid out upon such a Stony and Barren Soil, that you can see no Fruit of it, yet it is not all thrown away. The blessed God will approve and reward what you have done; Think, Tho' my Negroes will not prove a part of the Israel of God, and will not be gathered unto the Lord, yet my work is with my God, and what I do is glorious in the Eyes of the Lord. But it is very probable, You may see some good Success of your Travail. And then! Oh! the Consolations that will belong unto you! Christianity does Marvellously befriend and enrich and advance Mankind. The greatest Kindness that can be done to any Man is to make a Christian of him. Your Negroes are immediately Raised unto an astonishing Felicity, when you have *Christianized* them. They are become amiable spectacles, & such as the Angels of God would gladly repair unto the Windows of Heaven to look upon. Tho' they remain your Servants, yet they are become the Children of God. Tho' they are to enjoy no Earthly Goods, but the small Allowance that your Justice and Bounty shall see proper for them, yet they are become Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. Tho' they are your Vassals, and must with a profound subjection wait upon you, yet the Angels of God now take them under their Guardianship, and vouchsafe to tend upon them. Oh! what have you done for them! Happy Masters, who are Instrumental to raise their Servants thus from the *Dust*, and make them objects for the *Nobles* of Heaven to take Notice of! But it will not be long before you and they come at length to be together in the Heavenly City. Lazarus there lies down at the same Feast, with his Master Abraham. There was Foy in Heaven, when your

Servants first came to taste that the Lord is Gracious: and it cannot but be a vast Accession unto your Joy in Heaven, to meet your Servants there, and hear them forever blessing the gracious God, for the Day when He first made them your Servants. If these Consolations of God be small unto a Man, truly, he has very Bad Symptoms upon him.

Yea, the pious Masters, that have instituted their Servants in Christian Piety, will even in this Life have a sensible Recompence. The more Serviceable, and Obedient and obliging Behaviour of their Servants unto them, will be a sensible & a notable Recompence. Be assured, Syrs; Your Servants will be the Better Servants, for being made Christian Servants. To Christianize them aright, will be to fill them with all Goodness. Christianity is nothing but a very Mass of Universal Goodness. Were your Servants well tinged with the Spirit of Christianity, it would render them exceeding Dutiful unto their Masters, exceeding Patient under their Masters, exceeding faithful in their Business, and afraid of speaking or doing any thing that may justly displease you. It has been observed, that those Masters who have used their Negroes with most of *Humanity*, in allowing them all the Comforts of Life, that are necessary and Convenient for them, (Who have remembred, that by the Law of God, even an Ass was to be relieved, When Sinking under his Burden; and an Ox might not be Muzzled when Treading out the Corn; and that if a Just man will regard the Life of his Beast, he will much more allow the comforts of life to and not hide himself from his own Flesh:) have been better Serv'd, had more work done for them, and better done, than those Inhumane Masters, who have used their Ne-

groes worse than their Horses. And those Masters doubtless, who use their Negroes with most of Christianity, and use most pains to inform them in, and conform them to, Christianity, will find themselves no losers by it. Onesimus was doubtless a Slave: but this poor Slave, on whose behalf a great Apostle of God was more than a little concerned; yea, one Book in our Bible was Written on his behalf! When he was Christianized, it was presently said unto his Master, Philem. 11. In time past he was unprofitable to thee, but now he will be profitable. But many Masters whose Negroes have greatly vexed them, with miscarriages, may do well to examine, Whether Heaven be not chastising of them, for their failing in their Duty about their Negroes. Had they done more, to make their Negroes the knowing and willing Servants of God, it may be, God would have made their Negroes better Servants to them. Syrs, you may Read your Sin in the Punishment.

And now, what *Objection* can any Man Living have, to retund the force of these *Considerations?* Produce *thy cause*, O Impiety, *Bring forth thy strong reasons*, and let all men see what Idle and silly cavils, are thy best *Reasons* against this Work of God.

It has been cavilled, by some, that it is questionable Whether the Negroes have Rational Souls, or no. But let that Bruitish insinuation be never Whispered any more. Certainly, their Discourse, will abundantly prove, that they have Reason. Reason showes it self in the Design which they daily act upon. The vast improvement that Education has made upon some of them, argues that there is a Reasonable Soul in all of them. An old Roman, and Pagan, would call upon the Owner of such Servants, Ho-

mines tamen esse memento. They are Men, and not Beasts that you have bought, and they must be used accordingly. 'Tis true; They are Barbarous. But so were our own Ancestors. The Britons were in many things as Barbarous, but a little before our Saviours Nativity, as the Negroes are at this day if there be any Credit in Casars Commentaries. Christianity will be the best cure for this Barbarity. Their Complexion sometimes is made an Argument, why nothing should be done for them. A Gay sort of argument! As if the great God went by the Complexion of Men, in His Favours to them! As if none but Whites might hope to be Favoured and Accepted with God! Whereas it is well known, That the Whites, are the least part of Mankind. The biggest part of Mankind, perhaps, are Copper-Coloured; a sort of Tawnies. And our English that inhabit some Climates, so seem growing apace to be not so much unlike unto them. As if, because a people, from the long force of the African Sun & Soyl upon them, (improved perhaps, to further Degrees by maternal imaginations, and other accidents,) are come at length to have the small Fibres of their Veins, and the Blood in them, a little more Interspersed thro' their Skin than other People, this must render them less valuable to Heaven then the rest of Mankind? Away with such Trifles! The God who looks on the Heart, is not moved by the colour of the Skin; is not more propitious to one Colour than another. Say rather, with the Apostle; Acts 10.34, 35. Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons; but in every Nation, he that feareth Him and worketh Righteousneß, is accepted with Him. Indeed their Stupidity is a Discouragement. It may seem, unto as little purpose, to Teach, as

to wash an Æthopian. But the greater their Stupidity, the greater must be our Application. If we can't learn them so much as we Would, let us learn them as much as we Can. A little divine Light and Grace infused into them, will be of great account. And the more Difficult it is, to fetch such forlorn things up out of the perdition whereinto they are fallen, the more Laudable is the undertaking: There will be the more of a Triumph, if we prosper in the undertaking. Let us encourage our selves from that word; Mat. 3. 9. God is able of these Stones, to raise up Children unto Abraham.

Well; But if the Negroes are Christianized, they will be Baptised; and their Baptism will presently entitle them to their Freedom; so our Money is thrown away.

Man, If this were true; that a Slave bought with thy Money, were by thy means brought unto the Things that accompany Salvation, and thou shouldest from this time have no more Service from him, yet thy Money were not thrown away. That Mans Money will perish with him, who had rather the Souls in his Family should Perish, than that he should lose a little Money. And suppose it were so, that Baptism gave a legal Title to Freedom. Is there no guarding against this Inconvenience? You may by sufficient Indentures, keep off the things, which you reckon so Inconvenient. But it is all a Mistake. There is no such thing. What Law is it, that Sets the Baptised Slave at Liberty? Not the Law of Christianity: that allows of Slavery; Only it wonderfully Dulcifies, and Mollifies, and Moderates the Circumstances of it. Christianity directs a Slave, upon his embracing the Law of the Redeemer,

to satisfy himself, That he is the Lords Free-man, tho' he continues a Slave. It supposes, (Col 3. 11.) That there are Bond as well as Free, among those that have been Renewed in the Knowledge and Image of Jesus Christ. Will the Canonlaw do it? No; The Canons of Numberless Councils, mention, the Slaves of Christians, without any contradiction. Will the Civil Law do it? No: Tell, if you can, any part of Christendom, wherein Slaves are not frequently to be met withal. But is not Freedom to be claim'd for a Baptised Slave, by the English Constitution? The English Laws, about Villians, or, Slaves, will not say so; for by those Laws, they may be granted for Life, like a Lease, and passed over with a Mannor, like other Goods or Chattels. And by those Laws, the Lords may sieze the Bodies of their Slaves even while a Writt, De libertate probanda, is depending. These English Laws were made when the Lords & the Slaves, were both of them Christians; and they stand still unrepealed. If there are not now such Slaves in England as formerly, it is from the Lords, more than from the Laws. The Baptised then are not thereby entitled unto their *Liberty*. Howbeit, if they have arrived unto such a measure of Christianity, that none can forbid Water for the Baptising of them, it is fit, that they should enjoy those comfortable circumstances with us, which are due to them, not only as the Children of Adam, but also as our Brethren, on the same level with us in the expectations of a blessed Immortality, thro' the Second Adam. Whatever Slaughter the Assertion may make among the pretensions which are made unto Christianity, yet while the sixteenth Chapter of Matthew is in the Bible, it must

be asserted; the *Christian*, who cannot so far *Deny himself*, can be no *Disciple* of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. But, O Christian, thy *Slave* will not Serve thee one jot the worse for that *Self-denial*.

The way is now cleared, for the work that is proposed: that excellent WORK, The Instruction of the Negroes in the Christian Religion.

A CATECHISM shall be got ready for them; first a *Shorter*, then a *Larger*; Suited unto their poor Capacities.

They who cannot themselves *Personally* so well attend the *Instruction* of the *Negroes*, may employ and reward those that shall do it for them. In many *Families*, the *Children* may help the *Negroes*, to Learn the *Catechism*, or their well-instructed and well-disposed *English Servants* may do it: And they should be *Rewarded* by the *Masters*, when they do it.

In a Plantation of many *Negroes*, why should not a *Teacher* be hired on purpose, to instil into them the principles of the *Catechism?*

Or, if the *Overseers* are once *Catechised* themselves, they may soon do the Office of *Catechisers* unto those that are under them.

However, Tis fit for the *Master* also *Personally* to enquire into the progress which his *Negroes* make in *Christianity*, and not leave it *Entierly* to the management of others.

There must be *Time* allow'd for the *Work*. And why not The Lords-Day? The precept of God concerning the Sabbath is very positive; Remember the SABBATH-DAY, to keep it Holy. Thou shalt not then do any work, thou

nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant. By virtue of this precept, we do even demand, The Lords-Day, for the Negroes: that they may be permitted the Freedom of The Lords-Day, and not be then unnecessarily diverted from attending on such means of Instruction, as may be afforded unto them.

To quicken them unto the learning of the Catechism, it would be very well to propose unto the Negroes, Agreeable Recompences, & Priviledges, to be receiv'd and enjoy'd by them, when they shall have made a good progress in it. Syrs, A Mahometan will do as much as this comes to, for any one that will embrace his Alcoran. Oh, Christians, will not you do more for your Generation, than the Children of this World for theirs. And it is to be desired, that the Negroes may not learn to say their Catechism only by rote, like Parrots; but that their Instructors, may put unto them such other Questions relating to the points of the Catechism, that by their Answers, (at least of YES, or, NO,) it may be perceived, that they Know what they Say.

But it will be also needful and useful, to uphold a more particular *Conference* often with the *Negroes*; and in conferring with them, to inculcate on them such *Admonitions of Piety*; as may have a special tendency to *Form* & *Mould* their Souls for the Kingdom of God.

Having told them, Who Made them, and Why He made them, and that they have Souls, which will be Wretched or Happy forever, according as they mind Religion; then tell them;

That by their sin against God, they are fallen into a dreadful condition. Show them, That the Almighty God is Angry with them, and that, if they Dy under the Anger of God, they will after Death, be cast among Devils; and that all the Stripes, and all the Wants, and all the sad things they ever suffered in this World, are nothing, to the many Sorrows, which they shall suffer among the Damned, in the Dungeon of Hell.

Tell them; That JESUS CHRIST is a Saviour for them as well as others, and as willing to save them out of their dreadful condition, as any others.

Show them, That JESUS CHRIST, who is both God and Man in One Person, came, and Kept the Law of God, and then Offer'd up His Life to God, on the Cross, to make amends for our Sin; and that JESUS CHRIST invites Them as well as others, to Look to Him, and Hope in Him, for Everlasting Life; and that if they come to JESUS CHRIST, they shall be as Welcome to Him, as any People; Tho' He be the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, yet He will cast a Kind Look upon Sorry Slaves and Blacks that Believe on Him, and will prepare a Mansion in Heaven for them.

Tell them; That if they Serve God patiently and cheerfully in the Condition which he orders for them, their condition will very quickly be infinitely mended, in Eternal Happiness.

Show them, That it is GOD who has caused them to be Servants; and that they Serve JESUS CHRIST, while they are at Work for their Masters, if they are Faithful and Honest Servants, and if they do cheerfully what they do, because the Lord JESUS CHRIST has bid them to do it; and that, if they give themselves up

to JESUS CHRIST, and keep always afraid of Sinning against Him, it won't be Long before they shall be in a most Glorious Condition; It can't be Long before they Dy, and then! they shall Rest from all their Labours, and all their Troubles, and they shall be Companions of Angels in the Glories of a Paradise.

Discourse with them, on these things, till their *Hearts burn within them*. In Discourse with them, at length put it unto them;

Well; Do you desire to Know the Only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent?

Is it your Desire, that JESUS CHRIST may Save you from the Guilt of Sin, and the Curse of God?

Are you willing to put your self into the Gracious Hands of JESUS CHRIST, and be Ruled by all His Holy Laws?

Do you wish that the Blessed Spirit of the Lord, may Enter your Hearts, and make you Know and Love and Chuse the things that please Him?

Who can tell, but that while you are propounding such things to the poor *Negroes*, their conquered *Souls* may Consent unto them, and by that *Consent* open a *Well* that shall Spring up, & Spread out, unto *Everlasting Life*?

But in a Special manner Teach them to Pray. Teach them and Charge them every Day to fall down on their Knees before the Lord; with Supplications of this Importance.

Heavenly Father; Give me thy CHRIST. Give me thy SPIRIT; Pardon my Sins; Make me thy Servant; Bring me to Heaven. Amen.

Or, As they get further on, they may Pray after this Manner.

Great GOD; Thos hast made me, and all the World.

Make me truly Sorry for my Sinning against my
Maker.

Let thy Glorious CHRIST Save me: and help me to Know, and to Take His Great Salvation.

Teach me to Serve Thee, O Lord. And make me a Blessing unto those that have me for their Servant.

Bring me to a part in Heaven among thy Children for ever more. Amen.

Perhaps, the LORDS-PRAYER, by this Paraphrase may be brought down unto some of their Capacities.

[Our Father which art in the Heaven.]

22

[Hallowed be thy Name.]

[Thy Kingdom Come.]

Havenly Father. Thou art my Maker; Help me to own thee as my Father: Pitty me, Relieve me, as one of thy Children.

Let me and all men Glorify thy Name; & let thy CHRIST be Glorious & Precious to me, and to all the World.

Teach me thy Laws; & cause me, & all men, to Love and keep those Lovely Laws.

Give me to Do heartily all that thou Commandest me to Do; Give me to Bear Patiently all that thou orderest me to bear. And let me begin the Work of Heaven while I am on Earth.

Thou knowest what is Best for me; Lord, let me want nothing that shall be good for me.

I have Sinned against thee; O Pardon all my Sin, for the Sake of my Saviour.

Do Good to them that have done Evil to me, and do not Leave me so much as to wish Evil to them.

When I am Tempted to Sin, Oh, Let not the Temptation be too hard for me; and Let not the Devil be my Master.

O Lord, Every thing is at thy Dispose; Thou canst do every thing. Be merciful to me, and all the Glory of the Mercy shall be thine for ever more. Amen.

[Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.]

[Give us this Day our Daily Bread.]
[And Forgive us our Debts, as we Forgive our Debters.]

[And lead us not into Tempta-tion; but deliver us from Evil.]
[For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, & the Glory for ever. Amen

We will now proceed unto our CATECHISMS.

A SHORTER CATECHISM;

For the Negroes of a Smaller Capacity.

Quest. WHO made you and all the World?

Answ. The Great GOD made me, to Serve Him.

- Q. Who Saves the Children of Men from all their Miseries?
- A. JESUS CHRIST, who is both God and Man, Saves them that Look unto Him.
 - Q. What will become of you, when you Dy?
- A. If I Obey JESUS CHRIST, my Soul will go to the Heavenly Paradise. If I continue Wicked, my Soul will be cast among the Devils.

A LARGER CATECHISM,

for the Negroes of a bigger Capacity.

- Q. WHO is that Great GOD, whom you and all Men are to Serve?
- A. The Great GOD, is the Eternal Spirit, who Made every thing, and is every where: And there is no God but He.
 - Q. How many Persons are there in the ONE GOD?
- A. In the One GOD, there are Three Persons; The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Q. Where is the Rule, which God has given us to Serve Him?
- A. The Rule to Serve God is in the Bible, and I must Labour to Know and Do, what is in the Bible.

- Q. What was our Condition, when God Made the first Man, at the Beginning of the World?
- A. God made One Man, and One Woman, Adam and Eve, in His own Image, Holy and Righteous.
 - Q. Into what Condition are we now fallen?
- A. Our first Parents did Sin against God, by Eating Forbidden Fruit, and made themselves, and all their Children Miserable.
 - Q. What is the Misery of our present Condition?
- A. My Heart is full of Sin; My Life is full of Sin; I am under the wrath of God for Sin; I am a Slave to Sin and Satan.
 - Q. Who is there to Save us from our Misery?
- A. JESUS CHRIST is my Great Saviour; and there is none but He to Save me.
 - Q. Who is JESUS CHRIST, Our Saviour?
- A. JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God, who took the Man JESUS, the Son of the Virgin Mary, into One Person with Himself.
- Q. What has JESUS CHRIST our Saviour done for us?
- A. JESUS CHRIST kept the Law of God, which we have not kept; He then Dyed for us on the Cross; & Rose from the Dead, & went up to Heaven.
- Q. What will JESUS CHRIST our Saviour do for us, if we come to Him?
- A. God will be my Friend, and will fit me for Heaven, and take me to Heaven, if I Believe on JESUS CHRIST.
- Q. How may we See that God is become our Friend, through JESUS CHRIST?

26

- A. I shall be Sorry for my Sin, and I shall be afraid of Sinning any more, if God receive me to His Mercy by JESUS CHRIST.
 - Q. Whom do you now chuse to Serve?
- A. My Saviour shall be my Master; He is a Good Master; He has Bought me to Serve Him; and He will make me a Child of God.
 - Q. If you Serve JESUS CHRIST, what must you do?
- A. I must Love God, and Pray to Him, and Keep the Lords-Day.
- I Must Love all Men, and never Quarrel, nor be Drunk, nor be Unchast, nor Steal, nor tell a Ly, nor be Discontent with my Condition.
- Q. If you desire to Obey JESUS CHRIST in this World, What will be your Portion in another World?
- A. If I am a true Servant of JESUS CHRIST, my Soul will go into a Blessed Paradise when I dy. My Body will be Raised from the Dead, at the Day of Judgment. I shall then be Happy, with Angels, in the City of God for ever.
- Q. What will become of them, who do not Obey the Lord JESUS CHRIST?
- A. The Souls of the Wicked are thrown among Devils; and at the Day of Judgment, JESUS CHRIST will Judge them to be cast into Everlasting Fire.
- Q. What must you do, that you may Do Good, and come to Good?
- A. I can of my self do nothing that is Good; But I will cry unto the Good Spirit of God to help me.

ADDITIONALS.

I. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, are a very Material Part of the Instruction to be bestow'd upon the Negroes. As soon as may be, they should be told, That the Great GOD Spoke from Heaven, Ten Commandments. And that all Believers on JESUS CHRIST, must Labour to Keep those Commandments, and be Troubled and Asham'd, and beg Pardon for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST, if they break them.

Quest. WHAT is the First Commandment?

A. Thou shalt have no other Gods be-

fore Me.

Q. What is the meaning of this?

- A. I must Worship the only True God, and Him only.
- Q. What is the Second Commandment?
- A. Thou shalt not make to thy self any Graven Image.
 - Q. What is the meaning of this?
- A. I must Worship God only in such Wayes, as He Himself has appointed.
 - Q. What is the Third Commandment?
- A. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in Vain.
 - Q. What is the meaning of this?
- A. I must make a Right Use of all those things, whereby God makes Himself known unto us: and I must not Swear profanely.
 - Q. What is the Fourth Commandment?

28

- A. Remember the Sabbath-Day to Keep it Holy.
- Q. What is the meaning of this?
- A. I Must not Work nor Play on the LORDS-DAY, but Spend it in Works of Religion.
 - Q. What is the Fifth Commandment?
 - A. Honour thy Father and Mother.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must show all due Respect unto Every One; and if I have a Master or Mistress, I must be very dutiful unto them.
 - Q. What is the Sixth Commandment?
 - A. Thou shalt not kill.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must not hate nor hurt any One; I must use all Good Means to Preserve my own Life, and the Lives of others.
 - Q. What is the Seventh Commandment?
 - A. Thou shalt not Commit Adultery.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must Shun all the Filthy Lusts of the Flesh; and if I be Married I must be true to my Companion.
 - Q. What is the Eighth Commandment?
 - A. Thou shalt not Steal.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must not take any thing without Leave of the Right owner; And I must use honesty both in getting what I may, and in spending what I have gotten.
 - Q. What is the Ninth Commandment?

- A. Thou shalt not bear False Witness against thy Neighbour.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must never tell a Ly; And I must be tender of the Good Name of Every One.
 - Q. What is the Tenth Commandment?
 - A. Thou shalt not Covet.
 - Q. What is the meaning of it?
- A. I must be Patient and Content with such a Condition as God has ordered for me.

II. If the Negroes might Learn to Read the Sacred Scriptures, which make Wise unto Salvation, Vast would be the Advantage thereof unto them. Until that might be accomplished, would it not be Advantageous unto them, to make them Learn by heart, certain Particular Verses of the Scriptures?

These among the rest.

Psal. 86. 9.

All Nations whom thou hast made shall come and Worship before thee, O Lord; and shall Glorify thy Name.

Joh. 3. 16.

God so Loved the World, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not Perish, but have Everlasting Life.

Rom. 14. 10.

We shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.

30

Tit. 2. 11, 12.

The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation hath appeared unto all men; Teaching us, that denying all Ungodliness & Worldly Lusts, we should Live Soberly, Righteously, and Godlily, in this present World.

Eph. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Servants, Be Obedient unto them that are your Masters—as the Servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the Heart; with Good Will, doing Service as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that whatsoever Good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

III. WHY should not the Negroes be taught, The Creed? In that which goes under the Name of, The Apostles Creed, there are several Articles, which were Successively introduced in Later Ages. The Articles more unquestionably derived from the Apostles, made a Shorter Collection. Here you have it for them.

Believe in God the Father, the Almighty.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

I Believe in the Holy Spirit;

The Resurrection of the Body:

And Life Everlasting. Amen.

IV. S Ometimes Negro-Children, are cast into our Families. If a Christian Master or Mistress, will with all due Solemnity, Engage to bring up those Children in

Christianity, and to do their best that they shall be the Servants of JESUS CHRIST, We will say, Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be Baptised, who have been Devoted unto the Service of the Glorious Lord, by those who have the Disposal of them? Consider, Gen. 17. 13.

However; tis to be hoped, that the *Elder Servants* as *Black* as they are, will shortly be the *Candidates* of *Baptism*. And, As the *Negroes* grow ripe for *Baptism*, tis fit the Doctrine and the Design of *Baptism*, should be thoroughly Explained unto them. A brief Institution, shall here be tendred.

Q. Do you chuse the Great GOD for your God?

A. Yes. I chuse God the Father for my Father; I chuse God the Son, for my Saviour; I chuse God the Spirit for my Leader. And I Look for the Blessedness, which He has Promised for His People in a better World.

Q. Do you rely upon JESUS CHRIST alone, to bring you to Blessedness?

A. I Repair to JESUS CHRIST, Hoping in Him, to be made *Righteous*, and *Holy*, and *Happy*.

Q. Do you heartily devote your selves to the Service of the Glorious Lord?

A. I Desire that I may Know the Lord, and Serve Him with a Perfect Heart, and a Willing Mind.

Q. Is there any thing that you desire, as a Token of this?

A. I Desire to be Baptised.

Q. What is to be Signifyed, by the Baptism which you desire?

A. I would give my self up to the glorious LORD, whose Name is in *Baptism* to be put upon me.

The Negro Christianized

32

I would hope to have my Soul *Washed* from my Sin, by the *Blood* and the *Grace* of the Lord.

I would Resolve to Serve the *Flesh*, and the *World*, and the *Devil* no more : and no more Dirty my self with *Sin*, after I have been *Washed* for the Lord.

And I would Expect, that the *Body* thus *Baptised*, shall be *Raised* from the *Dead* unto Everlasting *Life*.

James 5. 20.

He which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death.

FINIS.

Notes

- 1.4 *Chrysostom*] St. John Chrysostom (349-c.407); the passage is probably quoted from Jeremy Taylor, *Holy Living* (1650), p.262.
- 5.15 Nomen Depone,] "Put aside the name."
- 9.15 Acosta] José de Acosta (1539-1600), Spanish missionary and historian of Latin America.
- onesimus onesimus was a runaway slave converted by Paul, who sent him back to his master, Philemon (who had also been converted by Paul), as described in the New Testament epistle. He was later freed by Philemon, became bishop of Ephesus, and was martyred during Roman persecutions, c. 90 A.D. "Onesimus" was also the name given by Mather to an African slave given to him by members of his congregation in 1706. In 1716, Mather allowed him to purchase his freedom. It was from Onesimus that Mather learned of the African practice of innoculation against the smallpox. Mather owned at least two other slaves.

14.19 to retund] "to refute" (obs.)

14.30-15.1 Roman ... memento.] Cato, Moral Distichs, vi.

Note on the Text

This online electronic edition presents the text of *The Ne-gro Christianized* as printed at Boston in 1706 by Bartholomew Green (1666-1732). The text was transcribed from digital page images of the copy held in the British Library, accessed in the Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) series. The spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and use of italics and blackletter type in the first edition are preserved. Variant or inconsistent spellings and eighteenth-century typographic practices have been allowed to stand. Some obvious typographical errors have been corrected, and these are listed below.

The text is set in IM Fell English, a typeface originally cut in the late sixteenth century, probably by Christ-offel van Dijck (roman and small caps) and Robert Granjon (italic). The electronic version used here was digitized and furnished through the courtesy and generosity of Igino Marini (http://www.iginomarini.com/fell.html). Some accommodations have been made for the sake of modern readers and for more accurate searching of the text: the long s (f/f) has not been used, nor have its ligatures (ft, ft, f

Following is a list of typographical errors corrected, cited by page and line number in the present edition (the line count does not include page numbers; [/] indicates a line break in the original).

| Page.line | 1706 text | emended to |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1.17 | Accptable | Acceptable |
| 5.28 | on t, | on't, |
| 8.19 | all [/]me! | all time! |
| 10.7 | illumi-[/]tions | illuminations |
| II.I | us You | us. You |
| 13.22 | Humani-[/]nity | Humanity |
| 27.28 | Q_What | Q. What |
| 28.4 | Religion | Religion. |

Paul Royster *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*July 16, 2007