

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

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Cotton Mather

THE NEGRO CHRISTIANIZED (1706)

There were Africans 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 trafficking of enslaved persons, importing Africans from the West Indies and sometimes selling native American prisoners overseas.

Cotton Mather's household contained enslaved Negro servants, and his congregation at the Second (or North) Church included both merchants of slavery and persons of African descent. The pamphlet reprinted here appeared in 1706 without his name, but his authorship of it was generally known. It calls on those who held people in slavery to educate their "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 (for him) unusually 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 and also a list of typographical errors corrected.

THE
Negro Christianized.

An E S S A Y
TO
EXCITE and ASSIST
that GOOD WORK,
The INSTRUCTION
OF
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. 1706

THE Negro Christianized.

IT 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 CONVERSION 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 *Negroes* in your Houses; an Opportunity to try, Whether you may not be the Happy *Instruments*, of Converting, the *Blackest* Instances of *Blindness* and *Base-ness*, 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 *Negroes* 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, 1 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 worshipp'd 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 solicit 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 Devilish 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 pittty on us, O our Masters,*

have pity 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 JESUS 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 out-borders, 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 *Foy*; 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 *Tra-vail*. 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 *Joy 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 remembered, 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 *British* insinuation be never Whispered any more. Certainly, their *Discourse*, will abundantly prove, that they have *Reason*. *Reason* shows 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 *Cæsars 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 than 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 *Canon-law* 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.

O 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 Para-
phrase may be brought down unto some of their
Capacities.

[Our Father
which art in the
Heaven.]

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

[Hallowed be thy
Name.]

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

[Thy Kingdom
Come.]

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.

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

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

[Give us this
Day our Daily
Bread.]

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

[And Forgive
us our Debts,
as we Forgive
our Debtors.]

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.

[And lead us not
into Tempta-
tion ; but deliver
us from Evil.]

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

[For thine is
the Kingdom,
and the Power,
& the Glory for
ever. Amen

We will now proceed unto our
C A T E C H I S M S .

A SHORTER CATECHISM ;
For the Negroes of a Smaller Capacity.

Quest. **W**HO 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 Miser-
ies ?

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. **W**HO 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 Eat-
ing 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 Per-
son 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 ?

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. **T**HE 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 before 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 ?*

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. **I**F 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.

Tit. 2. 11, 12.

The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation hath appeared unto all men ; Teaching us, that denying all Ungodliness & Worldly Lusty, we should Live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly, 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. **W**HY 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.

I 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 Signified, 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.

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.

F I N I S.

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.
- 14.4 *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 inoculation 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 Negro 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 Christoffel 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 Iginio 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, fi, fl, fh, fl, ffi, ft, fb, fi, fl, ff, ffi) or the ligatures ct and ct. The italic double-s ligature (ß) has been retained where it was used in the 1706 edition. The blackletter type is Old English Text MT Regular, by the Monotype Corporation. The title-page and book design are adaptations of the first edition.

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).

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

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 July 16, 2007