

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL AND JAMES HARTZELL INTERPRET THE BIBLE ON SLAVERY

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One of the most important social controversies that occurred in the history of the United States was over slavery. Not only did it disrupt the political unity of the nation, but it divided the churches over a social and moral issue in a way unknown before that time. The division caused by this issue in the Baptist and Methodist churches is well known. In both groups, the issue centered around the question of whether the Bible opposed slavery or favored it, or was at least neutral on the matter. The Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) faced the same issue. Generally its historians have held that the denomination did not divide over slavery. Closer examination, however, shows that there were serious divisions, both theologically and institutionally over the issue. The emphasis here is not on divisions, *per se*, but rather the theological views which led to them.

The "watchword" of the Disciple Movement, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent," which became a sort of creed for this otherwise creedless church. It is important to recognize that this allows for individual interpretation of where and how the Scripture speaks. It was possible within the framework of this statement (which was thought would avoid divisions and aid in healing those existing) that strong differences over Biblical teaching about slavery could develop.

The best known and most important of the leaders of the Disciple Movement before the Civil War was Alexander Campbell. Campbell was personally anti-slavery, but his views on the issue, as it related to religion, placed him in a position of opposing those who were attempting to free the slaves through appeal to Christian moral principles. While Campbell opposed slavery on political and economic grounds, he did not feel that American slavery could be considered a sin on Scriptural grounds. For this reason, he was averse to discussion of the issue within the church and opposed making one's view on slavery a test for church membership. Campbell was an abolitionist in his own way. He freed his own slaves and is reported to have purchased others for the purpose of freeing them.¹ He sought election as a representative to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30 so that he

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¹D. Roy Lindley, *Apostle of Freedom* (St. Louis: Bethawn Press, 1957) p. 100-102.

might aid in eliminating slavery from the state through constitutional provision. This approach was abandoned for fear that should it not pass, the pro-slavery forces would get slavery established by the constitution, thereby making it more difficult to eliminate.² In 1849 he appealed to the people of Kentucky to eliminate slavery in the state through constitutional enactment.³ Thus Campbell was actually not pro-slavery, but his interpretation of the Biblical material related to the subject was the same as that of Richard Fuller, the pro-slavery Baptist of South Carolina.⁴ It is his application of the Scripture to the problem that we are interested in here.

Although he was lesser known figure, Jonas Hartzell was also an important leader in the denomination at this time. He held churches on the Western Reserve of Ohio, where abolition sentiment was strong. Oberlin College was on the Reserve and after the removal of the Lane Rebels to Oberlin, the area became a hot-bed of abolition activity. One of the earliest formal statements of Disciple Abolitionists was *An Address to the Disciples on the Sin of Slavery by the Churches in Trumbull County, Ohio and Vicinity*⁵ to which Hartzell's name is signed. In the early 1850's Hartzell moved to Davenport, Iowa, where he did his most important writing against slavery and led in the fight to eliminate it from among the Disciples. Most of his writings on the subject appeared in *The North Western Christian Magazine* and *The Christian Luminary*.

There were other important abolitionists among the Disciples who were actively engaged in removing slavery from among the members of the denomination. John Boggs, editor of *The North Western Christian Magazine* and *The Christian Luminary* offered in his publications a sounding board for the abolitionists' cause. Pardee Butler, missionary in Kansas, offered the abolitionists a martyr for the cause. All three of these men held to the "watchword". but found that the Bible said that slavery was sin. It was Hartzell, however, who presented the best arguments we have of their position.

In discussing the differences in interpretation and application of the Biblical material on this issue, one must keep in mind differences in point of view held by Campbell and Hartzell. Campbell patterned

²Alexander Campbell, "The Crisis," *The Millennial Harbinger* (February, 1832), p. 86; Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, Embracing A View of the Origin, Progress and Principles of the Religious Reformation Which He Advocated* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Press, 1956), II, p. 305.

³Alexander Campbell, "A Tract for the People of Kentucky," *The Millennial Harbinger* (May, 1848), pp. 241-252.

⁴Alexander Campbell, "Our Position to American Slavery," *The Millennial Harbinger* (February, 1845), p. 49.

⁵*An Address to the Disciples on the Sin of Slavery by the Churches in Trumbull County, Ohio, and Vicinity* (Cincinnati: W. L. Mendenhall, 1841).

his discussion after that taken by Frances Wayland (President of Brown University) and Richard Fuller (a minister in South Carolina), both Baptist, who published the discussion they had engaged in. The basis for their discussion had been the Bible alone. Their arguments did not appeal to any other source. Campbell maintained that the Disciple discussion of the subject must also be limited to what the Bible had to say. Outside sources were off limits so far as he was concerned.⁶ Campbell made a distinction between what a person could say in the political area, and what he could say in the religious. Thus, from Campbell's interpretation of the Biblical material concerning slavery, one could oppose the institution on political grounds, but not on Biblical grounds.⁷ Hartzell agreed with Campbell that slavery could be opposed politically but also held that it could be opposed Biblically.

The action that Christians could take — or were required to take — in regard to slavery was based on the interpretation of a few passages from the New Testament and one or two from the Old. The interpretation of these passages provided the key to the impact the church could or should have on this issue.

The passage that Campbell and the other anti-abolition forces in the church used as the basis for their position was I Timothy 6:1-5 (R.S.V.):

Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be defamed. Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are bretheren; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved. Teach and urge these duties. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching which accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit, he knows nothing; he has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, and wrangling among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

In the discussion of slavery from the Christian point of view, Campbell held that what the Bible taught on the matter should be of primary importance. From this passage and from other indications in the Old and New Testaments, he concluded that there were masters

⁶Campbell, "Our Position to American Slavery," *Loc. Cit.*

⁷*Ibid.* (March, 1845), p. 108.

and slaves from the beginning. Slavery was an accepted relationship in the Bible, and was nowhere condemned. This led him to say:

AS CHRISTIANS WE CAN LAWFULLY, UNDER CHRIST, GO NO FURTHER TO EXACT FROM CHRISTIAN MASTERS AND CHRISTIAN SERVANTS ALL THAT IS COMPREHENDED IN THOSE PRECEPTS. We have no authority, *as Christians*, to go farther. We have not warrant to annihilate the relation; but we warrant, and are under obligation to enforce the precepts, and to see that the relative duties of both parties are faithfully performed.⁸

At the same time, Campbell recognized that slavery was bad for the country socially and economically. This position led him to have two sets of moral values, one which would allow him as a citizen to oppose slavery, and another which would forbid him as a Christian from condemning it.⁹

From the institutional side, he was fearful that a controversy within the Disciple Movement over the issue would lead to division. Since the Bible did not specifically say slavery was a sin, he did not believe that it should be made a test of fellowship. The church was limited to the role of seeing that the requirements laid down in the Bible concerning master-slave relationships were enforced.

Campbell found in the Bible, regulations for every aspect of this relationship. Failure to follow these regulations would lead to punishment of the one who failed to abide by them. The church could dis-fellowship from its membership any master or slave who failed to follow the command of the Bible.¹⁰

Christians were obligated to work for modification of those civil statutes which interfered with the slave performing his religious duties, such as church attendance, and which prevented a Christian master from performing those things required of him by the Bible.¹¹

Some of the obligations which regulated slavery were found in the passage quoted above from I Timothy. Slaves were to honor their masters, be respectful to them, and to do better service if the master was a Christian. Masters' duties were found in Colossians 4:1 (R.S.V.):

Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.* (May, 1845), p. 193.

¹¹*Ibid.*

Campbell did not indicate what was contained in being just and fair. He made no suggestions as to the details of what the master was required to do.

Campbell was, throughout his career, in a dilemma over slavery. The editor of the *Anti-Slavery Bugle* put it clearly when he said:

So far as we understand Mr. Campbell's argument, it is that slavery is an evil, moral, political and social; and he would be very glad that slavery could be abolished, but believes also that the justice of slavery is established by the Bible. . .¹²

In 1849 preparation was going on in Kentucky to revise the state constitution. Campbell published in the May issue of the *Millennial Harbinger* "A Tract for the People of Kentucky". In this he presented arguments contending that Kentucky should at this time eliminate slavery from the state. He placed some emphasis on the economic aspect of slavery as deterrent to development, but he placed his major emphasis on the moral aspect of slavery. It was here the Christians were most involved. Although he did not change his views that the Bible did not condemn slavery, he now emphasized that Paul in Corinthians 7:21, suggested that slaves should be freed when the opportunity presented itself. By this time laws had been passed which prevented the master from giving the slave that which was "*just and equal*".¹³ Those forbidding education of slaves, Campbell strongly opposed. But his emphasis was not on the condition of the slaves and the depraved moral state in which they were found, but rather on the moral degradation which the institution of slavery placed on the master's family. Campbell argued that slaves were inferior morally; and since children imitate those who influence them while they are young, and the slaveholders' children were being influenced by slaves whose morals were unacceptable. Thus, the elimination of slavery was necessary to save the masters' families.¹⁴

Campbell now urged that Christians in Kentucky rise to the occasion and eliminate slavery from the state. He did not, however, try to organize the church as a social force to effect this end.

In the 1850's Campbell was faced with new problems because of his interpretation of what the Bible said about slavery. From the outside, the Fugitive Slave Bill was causing reaction among the Disciples who were abolitionists. They were supporting the nullification of the law through non-enforcement. From the inside, for the first time, the

¹²"Alexander Campbell," *Anti-Slavery Bugle* (November 19, 1847).

¹³Alexander Campbell, "A Tract for the People of Kentucky," *The Millennial Harbinger* (May, 1849), p. 248.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 250.

Disciple abolitionists began to present their views to the brotherhood through the press.

In dealing with the runaway slave, Campbell saw in the Bible a requirement for the return of a runaway, with or without the Fugitive Slave Law. Paul set the Christian example in his return of Onesimus.¹⁵ Campbell found in Exodus 20:17 (R.S.V.):

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant, or his maid servant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor’s”,

and Deuteronomy 5:21 (R.S.V.);

‘Neither shall you covet your neighbor’s wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor’s house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor’s.’

These commands supported the new law.

It was not until the discussion of the Fugitive Slave Law that Campbell thought it important to present a detailed defense of his position to the Disciple brotherhood. He pointed out that the Old Testament had two words referring to servants. One (sacheer) referred only to hired servants, while the other (gehved) referred only to bondservants. With this distinction between servants, Campbell proceeded to develop his argument that the Old Testament did not condemn slavery, but approved and regulated it. Quoting Leviticus 25:39 (R.S.V.):

“And if your brother becomes poor beside you, and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave:”

He pointed out that both kinds of servants were found among the Hebrews. The Hebrew who was sold for debt was not to be treated as a bondservant (gehved) but as a hired servant (sacheer). Such a servant could not be sold as a bondservant. Also, only heathen could be bought or sold as servants.¹⁶ Deuteronomy 24:14 warns against oppression of a hired servant (sacheer).

Campbell noted that when Moses referred to the captivity in Egypt, he used the word for bondservant (gehved) in Deuteronomy 15:15 (R.S.V.), “. . . remember that you were a slave (gehved) in the land of Egypt, . . .”

This, Campbell thought, showed beyond all doubt that the “tenth

¹⁵Alexander Campbell, “Fugitive Slave Law,” *The Millennial Harbinger* (January, 1851), p. 29.

¹⁶Alexander Campbell, “Slavery and The Fugitive Slave Law,” *The Millennial Harbinger* (April, 1851), p. 203.

precept of *the law of ten commandments* — the standard of moral perfection, universally so acknowledged — recognized the idea of servitude, absolute and unlimited in duration, by not using the word *sacheer*, but the word *gehved*.¹⁷ Hopefully he thought this would settle the argument. It, of course, did not.

Exodus 20:17 commanded that a Hebrew bondservant was to be freed after serving six years. He was to take only that which he brought with him when he was made a bondservant. If he had a wife and children, they were freed with him if they came with him originally. However, if his master had given him a wife, she remained, with any children, with the master. The bondservant also had the right to refuse freedom and could become a servant for life. Campbell says that since this is the law of God, it should not be questioned, only followed. The emotional attachment a man may have for his family or the family relationship itself, is secondary to the property right of the master, according to Campbell's interpretation of this passage.¹⁸

In responding to the position presented by Campbell, Hartzell attempted in 1857 to indicate that the pro-slavery position based on the passage in I Timothy was in error. He agreed that the controversy going on in Ephesus was over slavery and that these words were to prepare Timothy so that he would be able to meet the problem. Hartzell thought that some doctrine other than that of Jesus and the Disciples on slavery was being presented in the Church there. The doctrine of Jesus and the Disciples on slavery was in his mind abolitionist. Thus, abolitionist views came from antiquity.

In discussing each verse in I Timothy 6:1-5 individually, Hartzell attempted to counter the pro-slavery views. The view that Paul desired the masters to be honored because they were masters, would, he thought, require the removal of the words "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed (defamed)"¹⁹ since the doctrine of godliness required "the practice of love, mercy, justice, righteousness toward all men; these, with all other godlike qualities."²⁰ The requirement to honor the master was not, according to Hartzell, because the master *per se* was powerful and had a right to honor, but rather so that the unbelieving master could be led to salvation. The key to the whole issue, in his view, was "love thy neighbor as thyself," and every passage would have to be interpreted in light of this command. Thus, to honor the master must, he thought, have a relationship to the command to

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 206.

¹⁹Jonas Hartzell, "Bible Vindicated," *The North-Western Christian Magazine* (January, 1857), p. 221.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 212.

love the neighbor. If the teachers were pro-slavery, as he saw the issue, then the apostles were anti-slavery, or if the teachers were anti-slavery, then Jesus and the apostles were pro-slavery. His position was that the first case was true.

The abolitionists made an appeal to what was known as the “higher law”. Campbell opposed this view on Biblical grounds. He cited Paul from Romans 13:1-4a (R.S.V.):

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rules are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God’s servant for your good.

He reasoned that from Paul’s words, those who were opposing the law of the state were doing that which was opposed to the law of God also. If the law was faulty, he thought the Supreme Court would declare it to be so, otherwise God would lead to its change.²¹

One of the passages most often used by the abolitionists in opposing the Fugitive Slave Law was Deuteronomy 23:15-16 (R.S.V.).

You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you; he shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place which he shall choose within one of your towns, where it pleases him best; you shall not oppress him.

Campbell considered this a special law – a passage not to be applied universally. This, he thought, was indicated by Paul’s return of Onesimus, which would have violated this law were it universal. From the context he received the impression that it was concerned with the servants of the enemies who came over to the Hebrew cause and sought membership in the whole Hebrew congregation (nation).²² Thus, this passage, to Campbell’s mind, had no bearing on the slavery situation in the United States.

The “higher law” advocates pointed to Acts 5:29 as the foundation for their views. “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’” (Acts 5:29 (R.S.V.)) The acts of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in refusing to worship the idol of Nebuchadnezzar; and Daniel’s refusal to follow Darius’s order not to call upon

²¹Campbell, “The Fugitive Slave Law”, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-35.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

Yahweh are considered as examples of this maxim in the Old Testament. Campbell, although agreeing that these Old Testament persons were right in their acts, since the civil law required the denial of God, held that the Fugitive Slave Law was not of this class, the reason being that the Bible did not condemn slavery.²³

One question which the Abolitionists raised and to which Campbell could not present an effective answer from the Bible, was the matter of dividing husband and wife when slaves were sold. Matthew 19:6 says (husband and wives) are of one flesh. "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." In attempting to answer the question when put to him, Campbell answered that under no circumstances could this be allowed to happen. He asserted that he knew of no Christian masters who did not attempt to keep families together. Also, he thought that should a Christian fail to do this, he should be excommunicated.²⁴

One other problem which the abolitionists raised was the matter of punishment of masters who injured or killed a slave when correcting him. Citing Exodus 21:21 (R.S.V.), "But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be punished; for the slave is his money." Campbell concluded that there was no other punishment to be given the master. The loss of the slave's value was enough. What civil law required could be something more, but this was all the Bible required.²⁵

We have already seen that the anti-slavery leader of the Disciples, Jonas Hartzell, used many of the same passages that Campbell used, but came up with different conclusions from them. We have already noted that in dealing with I Timothy 6:1-5, he took exactly the opposite position that Campbell had held. His key passage here was "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud knowing nothing." He agreed with Campbell that the problem that Timothy was to face was that of slavery. They differed on which "doctrine" of slavery was the one which Timothy was to avoid. We have already indicated Campbell's view. Hartzell's was the opposite.

Hartzell's position was not based on a literal word-for-word analysis of what the Bible said specifically about slavery, but rather on a general "spirit of the Biblical ethic". He raised the question of whether "Roman slavery was in harmony with the 'wholesome words

²³Campbell, "Slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law", *op. cit.* (August 1851), pp. 425-530.

²⁴Alexander Campbell, "Queries on Master's Duties," *The Millennial Harbinger* (September, 1851), p. 529.

²⁵Campbell, "The Fugitive Slave Law," *op. cit.* (May, 1851), p. 252.

of our Lord Jesus Christ’ ”,²⁶ and whether American slavery was so like Roman slavery that it could qualify because Roman slavery did. The test of what the doctrine was that Timothy was to support came, then, in asking the question, Is slavery in harmony with the “wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ”?²⁷

The first verse of this passage, which has already been quoted, required the servant to honor the master. For Hartzell, this command was not because the master deserved any honor, but rather as a method of saving the master’s soul. He applied the command, “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” saying that if the Christian slave prizes salvation for himself, he must prize it even for his master. In addition, Hartzell pointed out that one is commanded to “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, . . . that ye may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven.” (Matt. 5:44-45) These passages he felt, supported his position.

Hartzell’s main punch came, however, when he discussed the meaning of “the wholesome word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness.” For him the “word” of our Lord refers to the commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” His argument proceeded to show that if the slave could be sold as a brute, then this must be the “wholesome word”. He then raised the question, “Did ever one man enslave another because he loved him as he loved himself?”²⁸ Campbell had asserted that the “Golden Rule” applied only to the treatment within the relationship of master and slave.²⁹ Hartzell held that it must apply to the relationship itself, or as he put it, “it must be applied to the time when the master laid his hand upon his slave. . .”³⁰ The doctrine of godliness, Hartzell thought, must include the godlike qualities. These he took to be the practice of love, mercy, justice, and righteousness toward every man. . .³¹

He also thought that Luke 10:7, “For the laborer is worthy of his hire,” indicated that Jesus favored free labor. In none of the gospels, said Hartzell, can one find a passage where Jesus supports slave labor. Besides, he noted, Paul told the slaves, “If thou mayest be made free, use it rather.” (I Cor. 7:21)

The Christian ethic of love, as Hartzell and other abolitionists who had religious motivation applied it, could not but lead to the support

²⁶Jonas Hartzell, “Bible Vindicated,” *The North-Western Christian Magazine* (January, 1857), p. 210.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 211.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 212.

²⁹Campbell “The Fugitive Slave Law,” *op. cit.* (June, 1851), p. 315.

³⁰Hartzell, *loc. cit.*

³¹*Ibid.*

of their views. The ideal of love was stressed many times in their argument. Another example is Hartzell's discussion of the passage, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." (Romans 13:10) If it does not work ill, then it must work good, he said. This leads him to the question, "Is it a *good* or an *ill* to enslave a man, or to hold in slavery those who were enslaved by others?"⁸² He thought the answer was obvious.

When Hartzell came to deal with I Timothy 6:2, he saw a passage which indicates that freedom is demanded. His argument followed these lines: If the master and the slave are converted, their relationship changes. They now become brothers in the faith. The master-slave relation is changed. They can no longer despise each other, but if a brother continues to hold another brother in slavery, the latter cannot help but despise the former. A brother can only esteem a brother when he acts the part of a brother. The words, "beloved partakers of the benefit", could not apply to slavery since the slave received no benefit from the relationship or his labors. This led Hartzell to suggest that the relationship meant here was not that of the master and slave in the American sense, but rather something more like the *Lord and Tenant*.⁸³ This kind of relationship would allow for a Christian approach to the verse without the ethical problem found in the master-slave relationship. They could both be partakers for the good produced. That which was "just and equal" could be done and the laborer could be "worthy of his hire."⁸⁴

In dealing with Philemon and Onesimus, Hartzell's position is somewhat awkward, at least at first glance. Here we have Paul returning a runaway slave to his master, or at least this is what the letter seems to be about. Hartzell admitted this only for the sake of argument. He noted, however, that although Onesimus *may* have been a slave, this is not *absolutely* certain. Perhaps he ran away, but all Paul says is that he "departed", which could have occurred with Philemon's consent. Even if one allows the master-slave relation, Hartzell argues that the passages do not support Onesimus's being returned as a slave, thus the passage did not support the fugitive slave law. Onesimus was discontented with the relationship or he would not have left. He appears to have preferred the life of a fugitive slave over that which he would have had, had he returned. Paul converted him and suggested that Onesimus return to Philemon, which Onesimus freely volunteered to do. Paul returned him, but as a brother rather than as

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.* (February, 1857), p. 238.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 239.

a slave. Thus, Paul was not actually returning a runaway slave as the anti-abolitionists were suggesting.⁸⁵

The interpretation of these Biblical passages led these two leaders of the Disciple movement, although starting from the same premises concerning the way Biblical teaching was to be applied to slavery, to arrive at contradictory conclusions. This development can be accounted for by noting that although the "watchword" seemed to be a clear and simple statement of how the Bible was to be interpreted, what the Bible said on a given subject, was in itself, not as clear as some might expect. The Disciple "creed" failed to take into account the fact that individuals could and did find the Bible saying different things to them on different subjects. Campbell's approach to interpretation was one which was literal. The Bible could either mean consent or, that the matter was not of religious importance.

Hartzell, on the other hand, starting from the "watchword", did not hold to a literal interpretation. His view was that what the Bible said must be interpreted so that all its implications were used. Thus he found that the Bible clearly stated that one was to love the neighbor as one loves oneself, that God demanded justice, to do to others as one would have them do to oneself. Hartzell felt that these things were to be applied to all areas of life. Therefore, those things which one could or might do which did not show one was loving the neighbor as oneself, or caused injustice, or which one would not like done to himself, were going against what the Bible said, and were, therefore, legitimate criteria for a test of fellowship.

Among the Disciples we have, then, two views on the activities that Christians could take in regard to slavery. Campbell said that although slavery was a political and economic evil, Christians could not, as Christians, oppose or work for its elimination. He believed that Disciple brotherhood, as an institution, could take no action which could be interpreted as offering support to abolitionism. Campbell worked to make this view effective among the Disciples, and his was probably the view held by most of them.

On the other hand, Jonas Hartzell, Pardee Butler, and John Boggs represent a group of Disciples who saw slavery as equal to the worst of sins. They attempted to establish institutions within the Disciple brotherhood where this expression could find vent, where action against slavery could be taken. Boggs' two papers provided a press for Disciple abolitionists to express their views. North Western Christian University offered educational experience where abolitionism was

⁸⁵*Ibid.* (April, 1857), pp. 303-309.

openly supported and considered a Christian work.⁸⁶ The Christian Missionary Society offered abolitionist Disciples an institution through which they could support missionaries who preached that slavery was a sin, and in which the supporting church could make anti-slavery as a test of fellowship.⁸⁷

Although the Disciple movement started in the 1830's, hoping that on the basis of the "watchword", it could heal the division in the Christian church as a whole, by 1860 it discovered that major differences of opinion did exist over what the Bible says on social issues, and on what actions are required of Christians on these issues.

⁸⁶Robert O. Fife, "Alexander Campbell and the Christian Church in the Slavery Controversy" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Indiana University, 1960), p. 214; Alexander Campbell, "Reported Troubles in Bethany College," *The Millennial Harbinger*, February, 1816), p. 112.

⁸⁷"Proceedings of the Christian Convention," *The Christian Luminary* (November 17, 1859), p. 130. See also Rosella B. Hastings, *Personal Recollections of Pardee Butler* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1889), pp. 234; 66-109; James B. Lamar, *Memoirs of Isaac Errett with Selections from His Writings* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1893), I, p. 215.

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