

Fellow Citizens – On account of the misfortunes of our color, our fourth of July comes on the fifth; but I hope and trust that when the Declaration of Independence is fully executed, which declares that all men, without respect to person, were born free and equal, we may then have our fourth of July on the fourth. It is thought by many that this is as impossible to take place, as it is for the leopard to change his spots; but I anticipate that the time is approaching very fast. The signs in the north, the signs in the south, in the east and west, are all favorable to our cause. Why, then, should we forbear contending for the civil rights of free countrymen? What man of national feeling would slumber in content under the yoke of slavery and oppression, in his own country? Not the most degraded barbarian in the interior of Africa.

If we desire to see our brethren relieved from the tyrannical yoke of slavery and oppression in the south, if we would enjoy the civil rights of free countrymen, it is high time for us to be up and doing. It has been said that we have already done well, but we can do better. What more can we do? Why, we must unite with our brethren in the north, in the south, and in the east and west, and then with the Declaration of Independence in one hand, and the Holy Bible in the other, I think we might courageously give battle to the most powerful enemy to this cause. The Declaration of Independence has declared to man, without speaking of color, that all men are born free and equal. Has it not declared this freedom and equality to us too?

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ing of the rights of man, with two millions of his brethren in bondage? Let us contend for the prize. Let us all unite, and with one accord declare that we will not leave our own country to emigrate to Liberia, nor elsewhere, to be civilized nor christianized. Let us make it known to America that we are not barbarians; that we are not inhuman beings; that this is our native country; that our forefathers have planted trees in America for us, and we intend to stay and eat the fruit. Our forefathers fought, bled and died to achieve the independence of the United States. Why should we forbear contending for the prize? It becomes every colored citizen in the United States to step forward boldly, and gallantly defend his rights. What has there been done within a few years, since the union of the colored people? Are not the times more favorable to us now, than they were ten years ago? Are we not gaining ground? Yes – and had we begun this work forty years ago, I do not hesitate to say that there would not have been, at this day, a slave in the United States. Take courage, then, ye Afric-Americans! Don't give up the conflict, for the glorious prize can be won.

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