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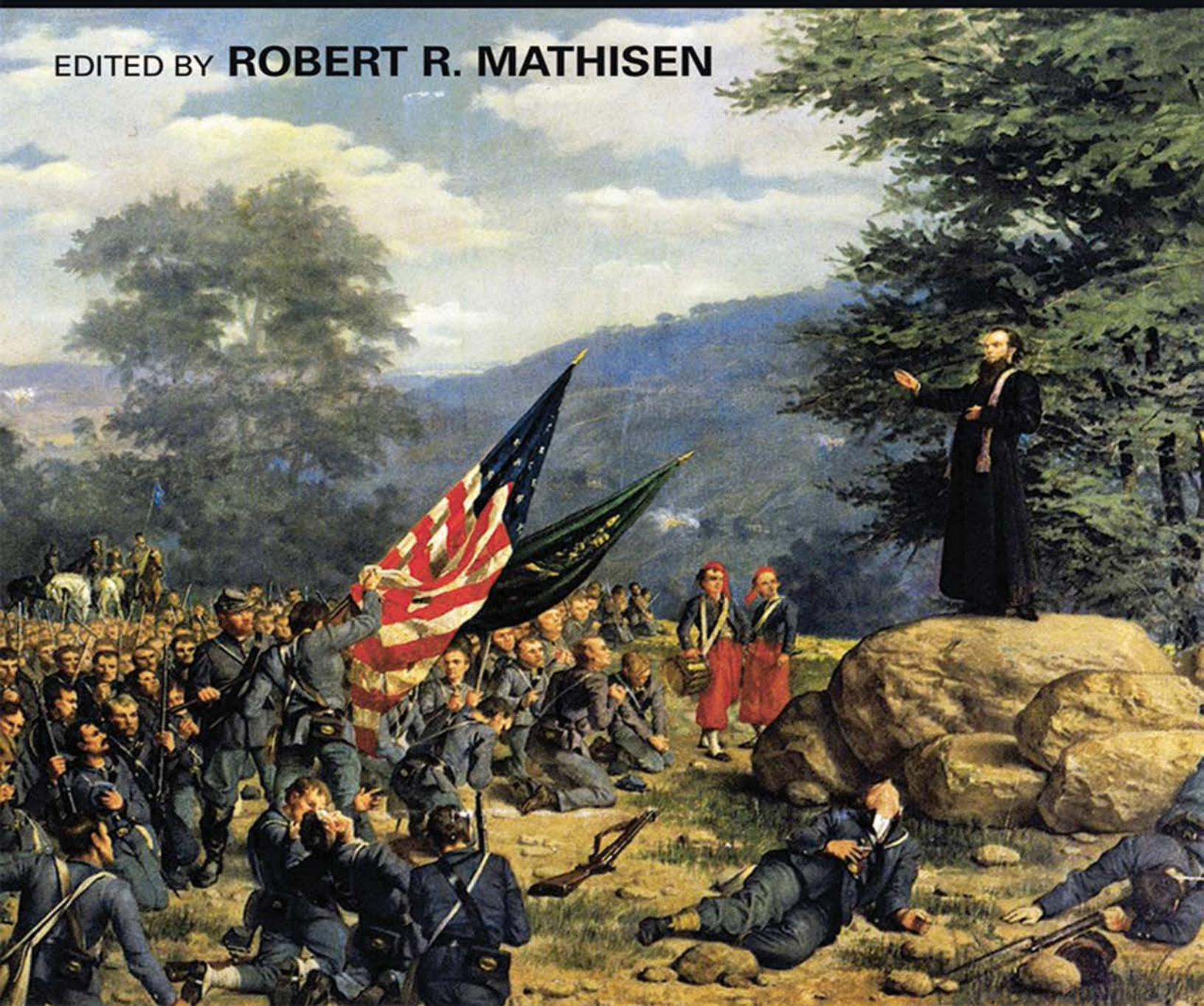
The Routledge Sourcebook of

RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

A HISTORY IN DOCUMENTS

EDITED BY **ROBERT R. MATHISEN**



The Routledge Sourcebook of Religion and the American Civil War

In recent years, the intersection of religion and the American Civil War has been the focus of a growing area of scholarship. However, primary sources on this subject are housed in many different archives and libraries scattered across the U.S., and are often difficult to find. *The Routledge Sourcebook of Religion and the American Civil War* collects these sources into a single convenient volume, the most comprehensive collection of primary source material on religion and the Civil War ever brought together.

With chapters organized both chronologically and thematically, and highlighting the experiences of soldiers, women, African Americans, chaplains, clergy, and civilians, this sourcebook provides a rich array of resources for scholars and students that highlights how religion was woven throughout the events of the war. Sources collected here include:

- Sermons
- Song lyrics
- Newspaper articles
- Letters
- Diary entries
- Poetry
- Excerpts from books and memoirs
- Artwork and photographs

Introductions by the editor accompany each chapter and individual document, contextualizing the sources and showing how they relate to the overall picture of religion and the war. Beginning students of American history and seasoned scholars of the Civil War alike will greatly benefit from having easy access to the full texts of original documents that illustrate the vital role of religion in the country's most critical conflict.

Robert R. Mathisen is Professor of History and Political Science at Corban University. He is the editor of *The Role of Religion in American Life: An Interpretive Historical Anthology* and *Critical Issues in American Religious History*.

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A History in Documents

Robert R. Mathisen

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For Diane

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Note on organization: The documents in each chapter appear in two sections: (1) a larger section of documents arranged chronologically, and (2) a briefer section arranged topically under the heading A CLOSER LOOK.

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Foreword

Steven E. Woodworth

The Civil War has for a century and a half been a topic of great interest to Americans. Books, magazines, and documentaries have explored seemingly endless different aspects of the war—from straightforward military history, to the experience of the common soldiers, to the political struggles within the Union and Confederacy, to the impact of the war on the Constitution, to the experiences of men, women, and children on the home fronts. For the most part, however, one aspect of the war that drew surprisingly little investigation was the impact of Americans' religion on the war, and the impact of the war on religion. There were a few exceptions. Several men who had preached to soldiers in the camps of the Civil War armies compiled their experiences and those of others like them. Edward P. Smith published *Incidents of the United States Christian Commission* in 1868. William W. Bennett authored *A Narrative of the Great Revival* in 1877, and J. William Jones penned *Christ in the Camp* in 1887.[1]

Once the participants themselves had finished giving their accounts of the war, most of which were finished by the beginning of the twentieth century, religion became for the most part something that cropped up only rarely in the extensive literature that historians produced about the Civil War, and a reader at the time of the Civil War centennial celebration, or even later, would have been excused for assuming that Civil War America had no more interest in Christianity, and certainly saw no more public role for that faith, than did the late twentieth century.

Yet Civil War America was a highly religious society. A much larger percentage of Americans attended worship on a regular basis in the mid-nineteenth century than do in the twenty-first; and even more importantly, Christianity was seen as having a much more extensive rightful place in public utterances and events. The diaries and letters of Civil War soldiers and civilians are replete with references to the writers' faith in God. The absence of this faith from most twentieth-century accounts of the war had more to do with what modern historians thought was important than it did with what the war's participants thought was important. The silence on the subject of religion was, in short, a form of presentism.

The historical landscape has begun to change, however. The past fifteen years have seen a growing literature of Civil War religion. In 1998 Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson launched the first salvo with a collection of essays entitled *Religion and the American Civil War*. In the years since then other significant contributions have included books on Civil War chaplains by Warren B. Armstrong and by a group of scholars including John W. Brinsfield, William C. Davis, Benedict Maryniak, and James I. Robertson Jr., as well as a work on Northern soldiers' religion by David Rolfs, a comprehensive religious

[1]Edward P. Smith, *Incidents of the United States Christian Commission* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.), 1869; William W. Bennett, *A Narrative of the Great Revival which Prevailed in the Southern Armies during the Late Civil War between the States of the Federal Union* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger), 1877; J. William Jones, *Christ in the Camp: Or Religion in Lee's Army* (Richmond, VA: B. F. Johnson & Co.), 1887.

history of the war by George C. Rable, and my own contribution in the form of a study of the religious life of the common soldiers.[2]

This surge of recent scholarship is only a beginning. Now that the importance of Christian faith in the lives of the Civil War soldiers and their civilian contemporaries is starting to be recognized, it is becoming increasingly clear that much more remains to be done on the subject. It is for that reason that Robert Mathisen's work in compiling *The Routledge Sourcebook of Religion and the American Civil War* is so much to be welcomed and applauded. While no single-volume compilation can take the place of thorough archival research, such a work provides a valuable starting point for audiences ranging from students to professional researchers to any interested person who wishes to delve deeper into this subject in the words of the participants themselves. No one can say it better.

[2]Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, Charles Reagan Wilson, eds., *Religion and the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Warren B. Armstrong, *For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying: Union Chaplains in the Civil War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); John W. Brinsfield, William C. Davis, Benedict Maryniak, James I. Robertson Jr., *Faith in the Fight: Civil War Chaplains* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003); David Rolfs, *No Peace for the Wicked: Northern Protestant Soldiers and the American Civil War* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009); George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Steven E. Woodworth, *While God Is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001).

Introduction

> "When that glad day comes the interposition of Providence will stay the flow of blood. There will be war no longer. There will be no North, no South—but one country. God hasten and bless the day."
>
> —William H. Walling, New York 142nd

> "God does all things right, and there is some hidden Providence in it. It may be a sorrowful one. It may be a more pleasant one. 'My times, my times are in thy hand Oh Lord.'"
>
> —Edwin H. Fay, Minden Rangers, Mississippi

It was as though God were "dressed in blue" in 1861 when Episcopal bishop Thomas Clark of Newport, Rhode Island, spoke to state militia at a farewell service as they prepared to leave for war. "Your country has called for your service and you are ready. It is a holy and righteous cause in which you enlist. . . . God is with us; . . . the Lord of hosts is on our side." Asking for divine protection for the soldiers, he concluded his comments with a prayer on behalf of those "now going forth to aid in saving our land from the ravages of sedition, conspiracy, and rebellion."

About the same time, many miles to the south, another Episcopal bishop, Leonidas Polk of Louisiana, suspended his churchly duties and joined the Confederate army. For Polk it was as though God were "dressed in gray" when he wrote a fellow bishop to explain his decision. "I believe most solemnly that it is for constitutional liberty, which seems to have fled to us [Southerners, especially churchmen] for refuge, for our hearth-stones, and our altars that we strike," Polk stated. "I hope I shall be supported in the work and have grace to do my duty."

In 1861 the United States was arguably the most religious nation in the world; its religiosity expanded unabated during the four years of its internecine struggle. Yet, until recently historians and other analysts of the American Civil War took little notice of the interplay between religion and the wartime happenings between 1861 and 1865. In a highly acclaimed, voluminous work on the war published a quarter century ago, the foremost author and historian paid scant attention to the role of religion in the conflict. The same can be said about the much viewed 1990 PBS documentary series on the war. As Steven E. Woodworth reminds his readers in *While God Is Marching On* (2001), the viewer of the series is given no clue that the often quoted soldier Elisha Hunt Rhodes (who appears often in this collection) was a devoutly religious man. Throughout the series, little attention is paid to the place of religion in the war.

In more recent years consideration of the interplay between religion and the war has begun to move in a more accurate and meaningful direction. A symposium held in 1994 with many of the leading scholars of American religious history and the Civil War period fostered new conversation on the relationship between the war and religion. From the symposium came an impressive collection of essays edited by Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson and published in 1998 under the title *Religion and the American Civil War*. Recognizing that the religious history of the war had not been written, they demonstrated with their collection that "religion, understood in its broadest context as a culture and community of faith, was found everywhere the war was found."

The collection of documents which follows here clearly illustrates the abundance of evidence in support of the contention that religion "was found everywhere the war was found." The previously mentioned work by Woodworth on the religious world of soldiers in the Civil War is a meticulous description of how the opposing armies placed their trust in the same God. As the two soldiers quoted at the beginning of this introduction noted, both sides believed the ways of Providence, though at times unclear and mysterious, would prevail. This was the same confidence in a sovereign God articulated by earlier Americans, from the Puritan founders to the Founding Fathers. It was also the confidence shared by a convention of Confederate ministers assembled at Richmond in April 1863: "We put forth this address, after much prayer, solemnly invoking the blessing of Almighty God, and committing what we say to that Providence by which we trust we are directed, and by whose authority and power the governments of the earth stand or fall."

The "everywhere" of where religion was found in the war included the churches and seminaries. In *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (2006), historian Mark Noll notes that "most Americans continued to believe that God ruled over the affairs of people and nations, but they were radically divided in their interpretations of what God was doing in and through the war." Excerpts from sermons included in *The Routledge Sourcebook of Religion and the American Civil War* represent only a small fraction of the pronouncements preachers provided their congregations in the search for a deeper understanding of the ways of Providence. If the war was ordained by God, how were losses of battles and the ultimate outcome of the war to be interpreted?

Poems, songs, and pictures also provide enormous assistance to the reader in seeing where and how religion intersected with the war. These evidences of religious engagement with the war express the thoughts and emotions of the most highly literate along with the illiterate. They represent the beliefs and ideals of orthodox religion, civil religion, and skeptics of revealed religion. They are reminders that amidst the bleakness and carnage of the bloody wartime engagement, people of all ranks and locations found time (and took time) to put their thoughts on paper and canvas.

"The puzzling faith of Abraham Lincoln" is how Mark Noll describes the challenge that student and scholar alike have faced in their search to comprehend the religious persuasion of the sixteenth president of the United States. In *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (1999), Allen C. Guelzo describes the president as a "textbook Victorian 'doubter' who could not believe as an orthodox Christian yet could not be easy in his unbelief." William Lee Miller contends in *Lincoln's Virtues: An Ethical Biography* (2002) that Lincoln "does seem either to have held all along or to have come to during the terrible pressures of the war . . . a belief in the God that Bible-believers believe in." With the president's writings such as "Meditation on the Divine Will" and his Second Inaugural Address, Miller's conclusion that "[Lincoln] does seem to have had a profound sense of the unfolding of events quite beyond his own power, perhaps beyond the control of any human agents" appears to be valid. The inclusion of these two Lincoln compositions in this collection of Civil War religious documents allows the reader to discern the basis of Guelzo's and Miller's assessments.

How was the war to be understood in the flow of America's providential history? Statements below by clergymen Henry Ward Beecher, Robert Lewis Dabney, and Horace Bushnell provide some clues. What for some preachers and laity alike was a God of justice was for others a God of vengeance. How could one know the mind of God whose ways and thoughts are higher than those of mere mortal mankind? "Has God forsaken us?" was a common question both during and after the struggle.

While the war was primarily a Protestant religious experience, it was not exclusively so. People of all faiths and of no faith endured the hardships of wartime death, as described eloquently in Drew Gilpin Faust's *This Republic of Suffering* (2008). The story of Catholicism in the war has not received adequate attention from scholars. As she notes, "Catholic chaplains in both the Union and Confederate armies remarked on the effective cooperation among pastors and soldiers of differing religious affiliations." During the war Jews fought off the latent prejudices against them, even as they risked their lives alongside comrades who in other circumstances might well regard them with hostility and suspicion.

Religion *was* found everywhere the battles ensued and even into the stillness that followed Appomattox. Though it was not a religious war, the Civil War was a war about religion. The documents which follow

constitute only a small sample of the multiplicity of sources which give evidence to this significant, reciprocal relationship—how religion affected the war, and how the war affected religion.

The recent works by Harry S. Stout (*Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War*, 2006) and George C. Rable (*God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War*, 2010) have done much to help fill the once existing void of scholarship on the topic of religion and the Civil War. Yet, they would likely acknowledge that much more is to be done. The purpose of this volume is to provide additional tools for both the aspiring and the accomplished scholar who would seize the opportunity to pursue the detective work of the historian on this important topic.

Significant effort has been made in this collection of documents to include materials that represent the demographics of the nation. Both white and black Americans are present. Catholics, Jews, and a variety of Protestants are present, as are religious doubters. Both men and women, young and old appear here. Even the dissenting voices within the North and within the South are heard from. The editor regrets the omission of the un- or underrepresented and welcomes readers to advise him of such cases.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the many people who assisted me with this project. Routledge Senior Editor Kimberly Guinta and Senior Editorial Assistant Genevieve Aoki were always available to answer my numerous questions and provide needed words of encouragement.

Many of my Corban University colleagues have given me timely support in this enterprise. Provost Matt Lucas cleared the way in providing the clerical support and semester sabbatical needed for the completion of the book. Librarians Floyd Votaw and Garrett Trott made me aware of documents and assisted with interlibrary loan requests. Instructional technologist Dan Rapoza used his expertise in working with me in identifying and collecting the images. Faculty secretary Jan Hopkins deserves many jewels in her crown for the many hours she devoted to scanning and compiling the documents. Faculty colleague Jim Hills never turned down my requests to be that extra pair of eyes looking for misplaced commas and unnecessary words. Student Sam Pearson made me aware of numerous documents that found their way into this collection. And to the many other Corban colleagues who inquired from time to time about my sanity as I mumbled unintelligibly about this book—I thank you.

A special word of appreciation goes to Steven Woodworth (Texas Christian University) for writing the Foreword for the book. He and other notable historians such as George Rable (University of Alabama), Harry Stout (Yale University), Mark Noll (University of Notre Dame), and many others have mentored me on the dynamic intersection of religion and the Civil War through their writings. I am deeply indebted to them.

My wife, Diane, to whom I dedicate this book, and my extended family were always patient as I attempted to explain to them why this project was necessary. I shall always be grateful to them for listening and spurring me on.

Chapter 1
From the Election through Secession November 1860 to June 1861

"It does seem as if our people are tempting the vengeance of God by the madness of their [South Carolina's] conduct."

—*Wilmington (N.C.) Herald* November 9, 1860

Weeks before the election of Abraham Lincoln on November 6, 1860, South Carolina had been sending signals that an election of the "abolitionist Lincoln" would be grounds for the state to secede from the Union. Though less than 40 percent of the people's votes were cast that day for A. Lincoln (as he often signed his name), he easily defeated his three opponents by collecting 180 of the 303 electoral votes. South Carolina, which had threatened secession as far back as 1828, now moved forward to execute what it had earlier only talked about. It was the growing intention of South Carolinians to seek what the *Wilmington (N.C.) Herald* referred to as "the madness of their conduct."

This increasing anticipation of secession found its way into the homes, legislative halls, and pulpits in both the South and the North. In the North, Congregational minister Henry Ward Beecher was never shy about pointing to slavery as the principal reason for the sectional discord, and, indeed, the South made it easy for Beecher and many other Northern preachers by its continued linking of slavery to secession talk. In many of his sermons Beecher allowed little room for compromise with the South. The avoidance of a national split was made even more difficult due to the clerical debate over the question of the sinfulness of slavery.

On December 14, President James Buchanan designated January 4, 1861, to "be set apart for Humiliation, and Fasting, and Prayer throughout the Union," seeking God's "Omnipotent Arm [to] save us from the awful effects of our own crimes and follies—our own ingratitude and guilt towards our Heavenly Father." Before that could take place, however, on December 17, South Carolina assembled its secession convention in the Baptist Church in Columbia, where it passed unanimously a resolution to secede from the Union. Three days later the convention met in Charleston and adopted the Ordinance of Secession with no dissenting votes.

The nation was now divided, and a review of some Fast Day sermons delivered on January 4 indicates that humiliation, fasting, and prayer may have been in short supply. While Rabbi Bernard Illowy of Baltimore was asking, "Who can blame our brethren of the South for their being inclined to secede?" in Boston, Rev. Orville Dewey was already referring to the national conflict as "a holy war . . . a righteous cause." And war had not yet been declared.

Before another month had passed, six additional Southern states joined South Carolina in organizing a separate and independent government, the Confederate States of America (CSA). By the middle of March both President Abraham Lincoln of the United States of America and President Jefferson Davis of the CSA had delivered their inaugural addresses, invoking the favor of God upon their respective lands as they groped into an unknown, hazardous future. Both hoped for a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and neither expected a war.

The beginning of the war at Fort Sumter in mid-April resulted in more finger-pointing, as each side now could blame the other not only for the crisis of the previous months, but for the war itself. The blame game played out not only in newspapers and legislative halls, but also in churches. In early May, Southern Episcopal Bishop Thomas Atkinson and Northern Unitarian James Walker sparred over where the right resided, with the former claiming Southerners to be "the servants of Christ" and the latter predicting that "a righteous Providence" would accomplish His will on behalf of the North.

As the two militaries positioned themselves for their next moves during the weeks following the events at Sumter, the clergy of the two regions exercised their power of the pulpit by recruiting and encouraging young men going into battle. And so it seemed that by the end of June each side in its own way was "tempting the vengeance of God by their conduct," just as the *Wilmington (N.C.) Herald* had feared eight months earlier.

"The Christian's Best Motive for Patriotism"[1]—November 1, 1860

Robert L. Dabney (1820–1898) was a prominent Presbyterian theologian, educator, minister, and defender of the defeated South in the post–Civil War period. He served as a chaplain in the Confederate army and for a few months in 1862 as General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's chief of staff. On November 1, 1860, designated by the Presbyterian Synod of Virginia as a Day of Prayer, Fasting, and Humiliation, Dabney preached the sermon "The Christian's Best Motive for Patriotism" at the Hampden-Sydney College Church, which he co-pastored. Coming only five days before the presidential election, Dabney anticipated the possible onset of civil war.

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But civil feud has ever been known as the most bitter of all. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." The very tenderness of brothers' love makes them more tender to the injury. The strength of the mutual obligations, which should have bound them to kindness, enhances the hot indignation at mutual outrage. When the twin lands which now lie so intimately side by side, parted by a line so long, so faint, so invisible, that it does not separate, begin to strike each other, the very nearness and intimacy make each more naked to the other's blows. How dire, then, would be the conflagration of battle which would rage along this narrow line across the whole breadth of a continent? How deadly the struggle, when the republican hardihood and chivalry, the young, giant strength, and teeming wealth, which begin to make the mightiest despots respectful, are turned against each other. Some seem to delight in placing the relative prowess of the North and South in odious comparison. Should we not, my brethren, rather weep tears of blood at the wretched and wicked thought, that the common prowess with which the North and South have so often side by side carried dismay and rout into the ranks of common enemies—that terrible prowess which, in North and South alike, withstood the force of the British Lion while we were yet in the gristle of our youth, and which ever since has overthrown and broken every enemy, with the lion's force and the eagle's swiftness combined—should hereafter be expended in fratricidal blows? And, then, this vast frontier must be forted and guarded. This hostile neighborhood, so dangerous because so intimate, must be watched on either hand by armies; and these armies become, as among the unhappy and suspicious nations of Europe, as much the machines of internal oppression as of outward defence. Our future growth of men and wealth would be swallowed up by the devouring maw of strife. These teeming fields, whose increase fills the granaries of the famishing nations, and makes their owners' bosoms to overflow with wealth, must go to feed the barren waste of warlike preparation and labor. The source of half the missionary activities which now gladden the waste places of the earth would be dried up. Farewell to the benign career of imperial *Peace*, by which we had hoped the Empire Republic would teach the angry nations nobler

triumphs than those of war. A long farewell to that dream we had indulged—dream not unworthy surely to have been inspired by the *Prince of Peace—that* here a nation was to grow up on this soil, which God had kept till "the fullness of time was come," wrapped in the mysteries of pathless seas, and untainted by the steps of civilized despots, or organized crime; a nation composed of the strong, the free, the bold, the oppressed of every people, and, like the Corinthian brass, more precious than any that composed it; which should come, by the righteous arts of peace, to a greatness such as at last to shame and frighten war away from the family of kingdoms; which should work out the great experiment of equal laws and a free conscience, for the first time, for the imitation of the world; and from whose bosom a free Church, unstained by the guilt of persecution, and unburdened by the leaden protection of the State, should send forth her light and salvation to the ends of the earth to bring the millenial morning. This cunning machine of law, which now regulates our rights, would be wrecked amidst the storms of revolution. The stern exigencies of danger, would compel both the rivals, perhaps, to substitute the strong, but harsh will of the soldier, for the mild protection of constitutions. And the oppressors of soul and body, from every stronghold of absolutism throughout the earth, would utter their jubilant and scornful triumph: "Lo! the vain experiment of man's self government has drowned itself in its own blood and ruin!" The movement of the world's redemption might be put back for ages, and the enthroning of the Prince of Peace over his promised dominion, so long ravaged by sin and woe, would be postponed, while eternal death preyed upon yet more of the teeming generations.

Now, in view of this tremendous picture of possible crime and misery, would to God that I could reach the ear of every professed servant of Jesus Christ in the whole land! I would cry to them: Christians of America—Brothers—Shall all this be? Shall this Church of thirty thousand evangelical ministers, and four millions of Christian adults—this Church, so boastful of its influence and power; so respected and reverenced by nearly all; so crowned with the honors of literature, of station, of secular office, of riches; this Church, which moulds the thought of three-fourths of our educated men through her schools, and of all, by her pulpit and her press, this Church; which glories in having just received a fresh baptism of the Spirit of Heaven in a national revival—permit the tremendous picture to become reality? Nay, shall they aid in precipitating the dreaded consummation, by traitorously inflaming the animosities which they should have allayed, and thus leave the work of their Master to do the Devil's? Then, how burning the sarcasm, which this result will contain upon your Christianity in the eyes of posterity! Why, they will say, was there not enough of the majesty of moral weight in these four millions of Christians, to say to the angry waves, "Peace: be still?" Why did not these four millions rise, with a Love so Christ-like, so beautiful, so strong, that strife should be paralyzed by it into reverential admiration? Why did they not speak for their country, and for the House of the Lord their God which was in it, with a wisdom before whose firm moderation, righteousness, and clear light, passion and folly should scatter like the mist? Were not all these strong enough to throw the arms of their loving mediation around their fellow citizens, and keep down the weapons that sought each other's hearts; or rather to receive them into their own bosoms than permit our mother-country to be slain? Did this mighty Church stand idly by, and see phrensy immolate so many of the dearest hopes of man, and of the rights of the Redeemer, on her hellish altar? And this Church knew too, that the fiend had borrowed the torch of discord from the altar of Christianity, and that therefore Christians were bound, by a peculiar tie, to arrest her insane hand, before the precious sacrifice was wrapped in flames. Then, shame on the boasted Christianity of America, and of the nineteenth century! With all its parade of evangelism, power, and light, wherein has it been less impotent and spurious than the effete religion of declining Rome, which betrayed Christendom into the dark ages; or than the baptized superstitions which, in those ages, sanctioned the Crusades and the Inquisition? In the sight of Heaven's righteous Judge, I believe that if the Christianity of America now betrays the interest of man and God to the criminal hands which threaten them, its guilt will be second only to that of the apostate Church which betrayed the Saviour of the world; and its judgment will be rendered in calamities second only to those which avenged the Divine blood invoked by Jerusalem on herself and her children.

"A Few Reflections on Secession"[2]—November 9, 1860

With the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency of the United States on November 6, 1860, the clouds of secession grew more ominous for the entire nation. Was South Carolina's promise to secede from the Union if Lincoln were elected now to be carried out? On November 9 the Wilmington (N.C.) Herald *published "A Few Reflections on Secession" by an anonymous writer who expressed great apprehension about the meaning of a possible South Carolina secession for North Carolina. "It does seem as if our people are tempting the vengeance of God by the madness of their [South Carolina's] conduct."*

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It is thought by some persons that a dismemberment of our government is imminent, and almost inevitable; others are more sanguine as to the result of our present difficulties, but all agree that there is some cause for apprehension. . . .

We do not propose to argue the *right* of secession. The ablest statesmen of the country have differed about that, although the weight of authority is greatly against it; but, admitting the right, there are other considerations which a good man, an honest man and a true patriot cannot disregard. There are a great many so-called *rights*, incident both to the nations and to individuals, which it would be very unwise and impolitic to exercise. There is, too, a vast difference, sometimes, between a legal and a moral right. And it is to the moral and the economical aspect of secession we wish to look. Peaceable secession is an impossibility. The State that secedes must pass through a baptism of blood, in which the garments of her surrounding sisters will be freely dipped, although against their will. Self-defense, which is nature's first law, can alone justify such a course on the part of any State, and the necessity for self-defense does not exist. Any State that exercises the so called right of secession, *under any circumstances*, does it at the expense of her neighbors, and to that extent, inflicts upon them an injury; and this, when not done in self-defense, nothing can justify. This principle underlies all law human, and divine. And we are not begging the question in asserting that the necessity does not exist. The ostensible reason for secession, and indeed, the only reason given, is the election of Lincoln, and it is admitted that he is powerless to do harm to the South if he desired, inasmuch as he has neither judicial nor legislative power to aid him. To confess this, and attempt to avoid it by anticipating his *future* ability to do harm, is yielding the position entirely. And in involving other States in the consequences of secession, the injury is not confined to the loss of some blood. The foundations of government are broken up, nationality is destroyed, trade is ruined, the industrial pursuits of the country are stopped, and universal distress, and bankruptcy follow. Is there anything, even in Lincoln's election, to justify all this? It does seem as if our people are tempting the vengeance of God by the madness of their conduct, and their total disregard of the untold blessings he has poured upon us beyond all other people.

As a nation, we possess all the elements of greatness and power.

Peace smiles upon us from all quarters of the globe; a material prosperity, unparalleled in the annals of the world, surrounds us; our territory embraces almost the entire continent; we enjoy wide-spread intelligence, and universal plenty; we are happy, WE ARE FREE, and yet—degrading thought—there are those among us, who, regardless of all, would have us exchange these blessings for the expected benefits of a Southern Confederacy!

Are the enlightened and conservative people of North Carolina desirous of the change? Do they wish, will they *submit* to be dragged into revolution and anarchy, and all to please the State of South Carolina, who, by her insufferable arrogance, and conceited self-importance, has been a constant source of annoyance and disquietude to the whole county, North and South, for the last thirty years? Will our people so far forget their independence, and their manhood, as blindly to follow the lead of that State into civil war? Where is the fraternal bond between us? Is it to be seen in the self-sufficiency and offensive air of superiority, which the people of that State have ever exhibited towards the people of this, in all their intercourse, of every kind, with us? We say unhesitatingly, that there are no two adjoining States in the Union, whose people have so little community of feeling as North and South Carolina; and no one State that owes less to another than

the former to the latter—but our people are charitable and generous to a fault, and in this is our danger, and against this *we* intend to struggle.

"Our National Sins"[3]—November 21, 1860

James Henley Thornwell (1812–1862) has been described as "the Calhoun of the Church" for his strong biblical defense of slavery, and "the prince among Southern Presbyterian theologians." One of the most influential Southern ministers before the Civil War, and a strong defender of slavery prior to secession, he expressed doubts about slavery in 1861 and began to move "for the gradual emancipation of the negro." About a month before South Carolina seceded, the state called for a day of state fast. This was the occasion for Thornwell's sermon "Our National Sins," in which he prescribed how the individual should approach God and what must be done to overcome collective sins. He delivered it on November 21 in the Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina.

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The day has been set apart by the constituted authorities of this Commonwealth, by joint resolution of both branches of the Legislature, and proclaimed by the Chief Magistrate of the State, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer. South Carolina, therefore, as an organized political community, prostrates herself this day before God. It is a time of danger, of blasphemy and rebuke, and, imitating the example of Hezekiah, she rends her clothes, covers herself with sackcloth, and comes into the House of the Lord. The question is, how she should demean herself under these solemn circumstances. Every minister, this day, becomes her organ, and he should instruct the people as to the attitude we should all assume in the presence of Jehovah. It is a day of solemn worship, in which the state appears as a penitent, and lays her case before the Judge of all the earth.

The points, to which I shall direct your attention, are, first, the spirit in which we should approach God, and second, the errand on which we should go.

As the individual, in coming to God, must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently search Him, so the State must be impressed with a profound sense of His all-pervading providence, and of its responsibility to Him, as the moral Ruler of the world. The powers that be are ordained of Him. From Him the magistrate receives his commission, and in His fear, he must use the sword as a terror to evildoers and a praise to them that do well. Civil government is an institute of Heaven, founded in the character of man as social and moral, and is designed to realize the idea of justice. Take away the notion of mutual rights and the corresponding notions of duty and obligation, and a commonwealth is no more conceivable among men than among brutes. As the State is essentially moral in its idea, it connects itself directly with the government of God. It is, indeed, the organ through which that government is administered in its relations to the highest interests of earth. A State, therefore, which does not recognize its dependence upon God, or which fails to apprehend, in its functions and offices, a commission from heaven, is false to the law of its own being. The moral finds its source and center only in God. There can be no rights without responsibility, and responsibility is incomplete until it terminates in a supreme will. The earthly sanctions of the State, its rewards and punishments, are insufficient either for the punishment of vice or the encouragement of virtue, unless they connect themselves with the higher sanctions which religion discloses. If the State had to deal only with natures confessedly mortal; if its subjects were conscious of no other life than that which they bear from the cradle to the grave; if their prospect terminated at death; if they were only brutes of a more finished make, but equally destined to everlasting extinction, who does not see that the law would lose its terror, and obedience be stripped of its dignity: The Moral nature of men is inseparably linked with immortality, and immortality as inseparably linked with religion. Among Pagan idolaters, the instinct of immortality, though not developed into a doctrine, nor realized as a fact in reflection, is yet

the secret power which, in the spontaneous workings of the soul, gives efficacy to punishment, and energy to rewards. Man feels himself immortal, and this feeling, though operating blindly, colors his hopes and his fears. The State, therefore, which should undertake to accomplish the ends of its being, without taking into account the religious element in man, palsies its own arm. Subjects that have no religion are incapable of law. Rules of prudence they may institute; measures of precaution they may adopt; a routine of coercion and constraint they may establish; but laws they cannot have. They may be governed like a lunatic asylum; but where there is no nature which responds to the sentiment of duty, there is no nature which confesses the majesty of law. Every State, therefore, must have a religion, or it must cease to be a government of men. . . .

"Against a Compromise of Principle"[4]—November 29, 1860

Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), proclaimed by some of his day to be "the most famous man in America," was a Congregational minister and religious editor. As a social reformer, he called for rights for women and the end of slavery. During the battle over slavery in Kansas, he used his power of the pulpit to raise money for the purchase of rifles ("Beecher's Bibles") for protection of antislavery Northern settlers relocating in Kansas. When governors across the nation designated Thursday, November 29, 1860, as a Day of Thanksgiving, many ministers, including Henry Ward Beecher, took advantage of the opportunity to promote their ideas on a wide range of issues during the weeks of turmoil following the election of Lincoln and before South Carolina's secession. In his sermon "Against a Compromise of Principle," Beecher depicted the South as the land of slavery and the North as the land of liberty. He offered no room for compromise with the South.

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The Southern States and the Northern alike found poisonous seed sown in colonial days. The North chose to weed it out. The South determined to cultivate it, and see what it would bear. The harvest-time has now come. We are reaping what we sowed. They sowed the wind, and they are about to reap the whirlwind. Let us keep in view the causes of things. Our prosperity is the fruit of the seed that we sowed, and their fears, their alarms, their excitements, their fevers, their tumults, and their rages are the fruit of the seed that they sowed. Ours is wholesome; theirs is poisonous. All, now, that we demand is, *that each side shall reap its own harvest*.

It is this that convulses the South. They wish to reap fruits of liberty from the seed of slavery. They wish to have an institution which sets at naught the laws of God, and yet be as refined and prosperous and happy as we are, who obey these laws; and since they cannot, they demand that we shall make up to them what they lack. The real gist of the controversy, as between the greatest number of Southern States and the North, is simply this. The South claims that the United States government is bound to make slavery as good as liberty for all purposes of national life. That is the root of their philosophy. They are to carry on a wasting system, a system that corrupts social life in its very elements, to pursue a course of inevitable impoverishment, and yet, at every decade of years, the government is, by some new bounty and privilege, to make up to them all the waste of this gigantic mistake! And our national government has been made a bribed judge, sitting on the seat of authority in this land, to declare bankruptcy as good as honesty; to declare wickedness as good as virtue; and to declare that there shall be struck, from period to period, a rule that will bring all men to one common municipal and communal prosperity, no matter what may be the causes that are working out special evils in them.

The Southern States, then, have organized society around a rotten core,—slavery: the North has organized society about a vital heart,—liberty. At length both stand mature. They stand in proper contrast. God holds them up to ages and to nations, that men may see the difference. Now that there is a conflict, I ask which is to yield? Causes having been true to effects, and effects true to causes; these gradually unfolding commercial and political and moral results having been developed in the two great opposing extremes

of this country, the time has come in which they are so brought into contact that the principle of the one or the principle of the other must yield. Liberty must discrown her fair head; she must lay her opal crown and her diamond scepter upon the altar of Oppression; or else Oppression must shrink, and veil its head, and depart. Which shall it be? Two queens are not to rule in this land, one black and the other white; one from below and the other from above. Two influences are not to sit in culminated power at the seat of influence in this nation, one dragging and pulling toward the infernal, and the other drawing and exciting toward the supernal. No nation could stand the strain to which it would be subjected under such a state of things.

There is a Divine impulsion in this. Those who resist and those who strive are carried along by a stream mightier than mere human volition. Whether men have acted well or ill, is not now the question; but simply this: *On which side will you be found?* This controversy will go on. No matter what *you* do, God will carry out his own providences with you or without you, by you or against you. You cannot hide or run away, or shift the question, or stop the trial. Complaints are useless, and recriminations foolish and wicked.

The distinctive idea of the Free States is Christian civilization, and the peculiar institutions of civilization. The distinctive idea of the South is barbaric institutions. In the North mind, and in the South force, rules. In the North every shape and form of society in some way represents liberty. In the South every institution and element of society is tinged and pervaded with slavery. The South accepts the whole idea of slavery, boldly and consistently. The North will never have peace till she with equal boldness accepts liberty.

While liberty and slavery are kept apart, and only run upon parallels, there may be peace. But there is no way in which they can be combined; there is no unity made up of these deadly antagonisms. And all devices, and cunning arrangements, and deceitful agreements, are false and foolish.

The truth that men cannot hush, and that God will not have covered up, is the irreconcilable difference between liberty and slavery! Which will you advocate and defend?

There are three courses before us:

1. To go over to the South.
2. To compromise principles.
3. To maintain principles upon just and constitutional grounds, and abide the issue. . . .

What compromise can there be between sickness and health? Between violence and peace? Between speech for liberty and speech for despotism? There may be peace between opposites, but no harmony, no compromise. If the South is fixed in her servile institutions, the North must be equally firm in her principles of liberty. . . .

Compromise is a most pernicious sham. To send compromises to the South would be like sending painted bombs into the camp of an enemy, which, though harmless in appearance, would blow up and destroy them.

"Thanksgiving Sermon"[5]—November 29, 1860

Benjamin Morgan Palmer (1818–1902) was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans for more than forty-five years, during which time he became known as one of the South's most outstanding pulpit orators. He also served as minister to both the Army of Tennessee and the Army of the West during the Civil War. His "Thanksgiving Sermon" was widely published throughout the South and did much to persuade the people of New Orleans and all of Louisiana to support secession and the Confederacy. Preached the same day as Beecher's sermon presented above, Palmer's words described a providential trust for conserving slavery and resisting Northern pressure.

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In determining our duty in this emergency it is necessary that we should first ascertain the nature of the trust providentially committed to us. A nation often has a character as well defined and intense as that of an individual. This depends, of course upon a variety of causes operating through a long period of time. It is due largely to the original traits which distinguish the stock from which it springs, and to the providential training which has formed its education. But, however derived, this individuality of character alone makes any people truly historic, competent to work out its specific mission, and to become a factor in the world's progress. The particular trust assigned to such a people becomes the pledge of the divine protection; and their fidelity to it determines the fate by which it is finally overtaken. What that trust is must be ascertained from the necessities of their position, the institutions which are the outgrowth of their principles and the conflicts through which they preserve their identity and independence. If then the South is such a people, what, at this juncture, is their providential trust? I answer, that it is *to conserve and to perpetuate the institution of domestic slavery as now existing*. It is not necessary here to inquire whether this is precisely the best relation in which the hewer of wood and drawer of water can stand to his employer; although this proposition may perhaps be successfully sustained by those who choose to defend it. Still less are we required, dogmatically, to affirm that it will subsist through all time. Baffled as our wisdom may now be in finding a solution of this intricate social problem, it would nevertheless be the height of arrogance to pronounce what changes may or may not occur in the distant future. In the grand march of events Providence may work out a solution undiscoverable by us. What modifications of soil and climate may hereafter be produced, what consequent changes in the products on which we depend, what political revolutions may occur among the races which are now enacting the great drama of history: all such inquiries are totally irrelevant because no prophetic vision can pierce the darkness of that future. If this question should ever arise, the generation to whom it is remitted will doubtless have the wisdom to meet it, and Providence will furnish the lights in which it is to be resolved. All that we claim for them, for ourselves, is liberty to work out this problem, guided by nature and God, without obtrusive interference from abroad. These great questions of Providence and history must have free scope for their solution; and the race whose fortunes are distinctly implicated in the same is alone authorized, as it is alone competent, to determine them. It is just this impertinence of human legislation, setting bounds to what God alone can regulate, that the South is called this day to resent and resist. The country is convulsed simply because "the throne of iniquity frameth mischief by a law." Without, therefore, determining the question of duty for future generations, I simply say, that for us, as now situated, the duty is plain of conserving and transmitting the system of slavery, with the freest scope for its natural development and extension. Let us, my brethren, look our duty in the face. With this institution assigned to our keeping, what reply shall we make to those who say that its days are numbered? My own conviction is, that we should at once lift ourselves, intelligently, to the highest moral ground and proclaim to all the world that we hold this trust from God, and in its occupancy we are prepared to stand or fall as God may appoint. If the critical moment has arrived at which the great issue is joined, let us say that, in the sight of all perils, we will stand by our trust; and God be with the right!

The argument which enforces the solemnity of this providential trust is simple and condensed. It is bound upon us, then, by the *principle of self preservation*, that "first law" which is continually asserting its supremacy over all others. Need I pause to show how this system of servitude underlies and supports our material interests; that our wealth consists in our lands and in the serfs who till them; that from the nature of our products they can only be cultivated by labor which must be controlled in order to be certain; that any other than a tropical race must faint and wither beneath a tropical sun? Need I pause to show how this system is interwoven with our entire social fabric; that these slaves form parts of our households, even as our children; and that, too, through a relationship recognized and sanctioned in the Scriptures of God even as the other? Must I pause to show how it has fashioned our modes of life, and determined all our habits of thought and feeling, and moulded the very type of our civilization? How then can the hand of violence be laid upon it without involving our existence? The so-called free States of this country are working out the social problem under conditions peculiar to themselves. These conditions are sufficiently hard, and their

success is too uncertain to excite in us the least jealousy of their lot. With a teeming population, which the soil cannot support; with their wealth depending upon arts, created by artificial wants; with an external friction between the grades of their society; with their labor and their capital grinding against each other like the upper and nether millstones; with labor cheapened and displaced by new mechanical inventions, bursting more asunder the bonds of brotherhood—amid these intricate perils, we have ever given them our sympathy and our prayers, and have never sought to weaken the foundations of their social order. God grant them complete success in the solution of all their perplexities! We, too, have our responsibilities and trials; but they are all bound up in this one institution, which has been the object of such unrighteous assault through five and twenty years. If we are true to ourselves we shall, at this critical juncture, stand by it and work out our destiny.

"I bow to what God will do"[6]—December 1860

James P. Boyce (1827–1888) was a professor of theology before the Civil War and in 1861 volunteered to serve as chaplain of the 16th South Carolina Infantry. In his letter to his brother-in-law, Henry Allen Tupper, chaplain of the 9th Georgia Infantry, he expressed his apprehension over the secession of South Carolina and mused on the meaning of a possible Georgia secession. He noted the sins caused by slavery and feared "God is going to sweep it away."

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I have been all along in favor of resistance, by demanding first new guarantees, and if these were not granted, then forming a Southern Confederacy. If you Georgia people come in, we are safe enough; though we shall yet suffer, because the plan of co-operation has not preceded secession. We are going to have the Confederacy of New England, the Free City of New York, the Confederacy of the Middle States, and that of the West—or the two united—and that cutting through our Southern territory to the Gulf, the Confederacy of the Border States, that of the Cotton States—Texas standing alone—and the Confederacy of the Pacific. Alas, my country! . . . I know I am cautious about taking any step without arranging for the consequences. I have always had such a desire for justice, even to my foes, that I wish to leave no one any ground to charge me even with failure in form. I do wish to see the North put entirely in the wrong, by making them dissolve the Union, if it must be, through refusing to grant what we ask. And again, I have always been old fogy enough to love the past, with all its glorious associations. Moreover, I believe I see in all this the end of slavery. I believe we are cutting its throat, curtailing its domain. And I have been, and am, an ultra pro-slavery man. Yet I bow to what God will do. I feel that our sins as to this institution have cursed us,—that the negroes have not been cared for in their marital and religious relations as they should be; and I fear God is going to sweep it away, after having left it thus long to show us how great we might be, were we to act as we ought in this matter.

"The Character and Influence of Abolitionism"[7]—December 9, 1860

Henry J. Van Dyck (1822–1891) was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, New York. In the course of the ongoing debate over the role of abolitionism, Van Dyck expounded on the biblical text taken from I Timothy 6:1–5 to blame abolitionists for the crisis the nation faced during the lame duck period.

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And what has brought us to the verge of this precipice? What evil spirit has put enmity between the seed of those whom God, by his blessing on the wisdom and sacrifices of our fathers, made one flesh? What has created and fostered this alienation between the North and the South, until disunion—that used to be whispered in corners—stalks forth in open daylight, and is recognized as a necessity by multitudes of thinking men in all sections of the land? I believe before God, that this division of feeling, of which actual disunion will be but the expression and embodiment, was begotten of Abolitionism, has been rocked in its cradle and fed with its poisoned milk, and instructed by its ministers, until, girded with a strength which conies not altogether of this upper world, it is taking hold upon the pillars of the constitution, and shattering the noble fabric to its base.

There was a time when the constitutional questions between the North and South—the conflict of material interests growing out of their differences in soil and production—were discussed in the spirit of statesmanship and Christian courtesy. Then such men as Daniel Webster on the one side, and Calhoun on the other, stood up face to face, and defended the rights of their respective constituency, in words which will be quoted as long as the English tongue shall endure, as a model of eloquence and a pattern of manly debate. But Abolitionism began to creep in. It came first as a purely *moral* question. But very soon its doctrines were embraced by a sufficient number to hold the balance of power between contending parties in many districts and States. Aspirants for the Presidency seized upon it as a weapon for gratifying their ambition or avenging their disappointments. Under the shadow of their patronage, sincere Abolitionists became more bold and abusive in advocating their principles. The unlawful and wicked business of enticing slaves from their masters was pushed forward with increasing zeal. Men who, in the better days of the republic, could not have obtained the smallest office, were elected to Congress upon this single issue; and ministers of the gospel descended from the pulpit to mingle religious animosity with the boiling caldron of political strife. Nor was this process confined to one side in the contest. Abuse always provokes recrimination. So long as human nature is passionate, hard words will be responded to by harder blows. And now behold the result! In the halls where Webster and Calhoun, Adams and McDuffie, rendered the very name of American statesmanship illustrious, and revived the memory of classic eloquence, we have heard the outpouring of both Northern and Southern violence from men who must be nameless in this sacred place; and in the land where such slaveholders as Washington and Madison united with Hamilton and Hancock in cementing the Union, which they fondly hoped would be perpetual, commerce and manufactures, and all our great industrial and governmental interests, are trembling on the verge of dissolution. And as Abolitionism is the great mischief-maker between the North and South, so it is the great stumbling block in the way of a peaceful settlement of our difficulties. Its voice is still for war. The spirit of conciliation and compromise it utterly abhors; and, mingling a horrid mirth with its madness, puts into the hands of the advocates of secession the very fans with which to blow the embers of strife into a flame. One man threw a torch into the great temple of the Ephesians, and kindled a conflagration which a hundred thousand brave men could not extinguish. One man fiddled and sang, and made his courtiers laugh amid the burning of Rome. And so, the Abolition preacher "feels good" and overflows with merriment, when he sees our merchants and laboring men running after their chests and the bread of their families, "as if all creation was after them," and snuffs on the Southern breeze the scent of servile and civil war. Oh, shame—shame that it should come to this, and the name of our holy religion be so blasphemed! Let us hope, in Christian charity, that such men do not comprehend the danger that stares them in the face. Indeed who of us does fully comprehend it? In the eloquent words of Daniel Webster, "While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting gratifying prospects spread out before us—for us and for our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise." I repeat the noble sentiment; God grant that in my day the curtain may not rise! Let the night of the grave envelop these eyes in its peaceful sleep, ere their balls are seared with the vision of dissolution and civil war. He must be blind who does not perceive that such a vision is just ready to burst upon us.

"The 20th Day of December in the Year of Our Lord, 1860"[8]—December 21, 1860

The day after South Carolina's secession from the Union, the Charleston Mercury *published the thoughts of an anonymous writer concerning this action. Noting that the state had "cut the Gordian knot of colonial dependence," it had done so "in reverence before God."*

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Inscribed among the calends of the world—memorable in time to come—the 20th of December, in the year of our Lord 1860, has become an epoch in the history of the human race. A great Confederated Republic, overwrought with arrogant and tyrannous oppressions, has fallen from its high estate amongst the nations of the earth. Conservative liberty has been vindicated. Mobocratic license has been stricken down. Order has conquered, yet liberty has survived. *Right* has raised his banner aloft, and bidden defiance to *Might*. The problem of self-government under the check-balance of slavery, has secured itself from threatened destruction.

South Carolina has resumed her entire sovereign powers, and, unshackled, has become one of the nations of the earth. . . .

The State of South Carolina has recorded herself before the universe. In reverence before God, fearless of man, unawed by power, unterrified by clamor, she has cut the Gordian knot of colonial dependence and her dignity before the world. Prescribing to none, she will be dictated to by none; willing for peace, she is ready for war. Deprecating blood, she is willing to shed it. Valuing her liberties, she will maintain them. Neither swerved by frowns of foes, nor swayed by timorous solicitations of friends, she will pursue her direct path, and establish for herself and for her posterity, her rights, her liberties and her institutions. Though friends may fail her in her need, though the cannon of her enemies may belch destruction among her people, South Carolina, unawed, unconquerable, will still hold aloft her flag, "ANIMIS OPTBUSQUE PARATI."

"To the People of the United States"[9]—December 25, 1860

On December 14, President James Buchanan designated Friday, January 4, 1861, a day for "Humiliation, and Fasting, and Prayer throughout the Union." Noting the dangerous condition of the country, he asked, "In this, the hour of our calamity and peril, to whom shall we resort for relief but to the God of our Fathers?" The proclamation was printed in the Macon (GA) Daily Telegraph *on December 25.*

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Numerous appeals have been made to me by pious and patriotic associations and citizens, in view of the present distracted and dangerous condition of our country, to recommend that a day be set apart for Humiliation, and Fasting, and Prayer throughout the Union. In compliance with their request, and my own sense of duty, I designate, Friday, the 4th day of January, 1861, for this purpose, and recommend that the people assemble on that day, according to their several forms of worship, to keep it as solemn Fast.

The Union of the States, is, at this present moment, threatened with alarming and immediate danger—panic and distress of a fearful character prevails throughout the land—our laboring population are without employment, and consequently deprived of the means of earning their bread—indeed, hope seems to have deserted the minds of men. All classes are in a state of confusion and dismay; and the wisest counsels of our best and purest men are wholly disregarded.

In this, the hour of our calamity and peril, to whom shall we resort for relief but to the God of our Fathers? His Omnipotent Arm only can save us from the awful effects of our own crimes and follies—our own ingratitude and guilt towards our Heavenly Father.

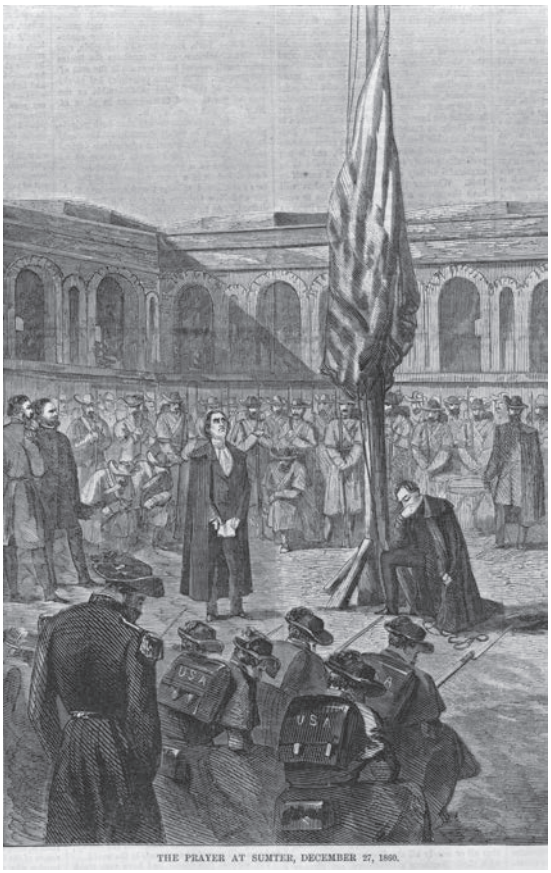

Figure 1.1 In "The Prayer at Sumter, December 27, 1860," Major Robert Anderson kneels at the base of the flag pole. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62–126966.

Let us, then, with deep contrition and penitent sorrow, unite in humbling ourselves before the Most High, in confessing our individual and national sins, and in acknowledging the justice of our punishment. Let us implore Him to remove from our hearts that false pride of opinion which would impel us to persevere in wrong for the sake of consistency, rather than yield a just submission to the unforeseen exigencies by which we are now surrounded. Let us, with deep reverence, beseech Him to restore the friendship and good will which prevailed in former days, among the people of the several States; and, above all, to save us from the horrors of civil war and "blood-guiltiness."

Let our fervent prayers ascend to His Throne, that He would not desert us in this hour of extreme peril, but remember us as He did our fathers in the darkest days of the Revolution, and preserve our Constitution and our Union, the work of their hands, for ages yet to come. An Omnipotent Providence may overrule existing evils for permanent good. He can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He can restrain. Let me invoke every individual, in whatever sphere of life he may be placed, to feel a personal responsibility to God and his country for keeping this day holy, and for contributing all in his power to remove our actual and impending calamities.

"Fast Day Sermon"[10]—January 4, 1861

Rabbi Bernard Illowy (1814–1875) delivered his fast day sermon at the Lloyd Street Synagogue in Baltimore. The success of the sermon with Jewish secessionists led to an invitation from the Congregation Shaarei Hassed in New Orleans to be its spiritual leader. In the sermon he argued that since slaves were property, they should be protected by the government. Failure by the North to do so meant it was wrong to threaten the South.

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The ends for which men unite in society and submit to government, are to enjoy security for their property and freedom for their persons from all injustice or violence. The more completely these ends are attained, with the least diminution of personal liberty, the nearer such government approaches to perfection.—But who, for example, can blame our brethren of the South for their being inclined to secede from a society, under whose government those ends cannot be attained, and whose union is kept together, not by the good sense and good feelings of the great masses of the people, but by an ill-regulated balance of power and heavy iron ties of violence and arbitrary force? Who can blame our brethren of the South for seceding from a society whose government cannot, or will not, protect the property rights and privileges of a great portion of the Union against the encroachments of a majority misguided by some influential, ambitious aspirants and selfish politicians who, under the color of religion and the disguise of philanthropy, have thrown the country into a general state of confusion, and millions into want and poverty? If these magnanimous philanthropists do not pretend to be more philanthropic than Moses was, let me ask them, "Why did not Moses, who, as it is to be seen from his code, was not in favor of slavery, command the judges in Israel to interfere with the institutions of those nations who lived under their jurisdiction, and make their slaves free, or to take forcibly away a slave from a master as soon as he treads the free soil of their country? Why did he not, when he made a law that no Israelite can become a slave, also prohibit the buying and selling of slaves from and to other nations? Where was ever a greater philanthropist than Abraham, and why did he not set free the slaves which the king of Egypt made him a present of?

Why did Ezra not command the Babylonian exiles who, when returning to their old country, had in their suit seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven slaves, to set their slaves free and send them away, as well as he commanded them to send away the strange wives which they had brought along? It is an historical fact, that even the Therepentae and Essenes, two Jewish sects, who with a kind of religious frenzy, placed their whole felicity in the contemplation of the divine nature, detaching themselves from all secular affairs, entrusted to their slaves the management of their property.

All these are irrefutable proofs that we have no right to exercise violence against the institutions of other states or countries, even if religious feelings and philanthropic sentiments bid us disapprove of them. It proves furthermore, that the authors of the many dangers, which threaten our country with ruin and devastation, are not what they pretend to be, the agents of Religion and Philanthropy.

Therefore, my friends, there is only one rampart which can save our country from degradation and ruin, and shield it against all the danger arising within and threatening from without. This is, the good will, the good sense and feelings of the great mass of the people. They must have no other guide than the book of G-d and the virtues which it teaches, and make their hearts inaccessible to the pernicious influence of some individuals who exert all their efforts to mislead them, under the disguise of Religion and Philanthropy, from the TRUE PATH OF TRUE RELIGION.

The foundation of all the happiness of a country must be laid in the good conduct of the mass of the people, in their love of industry, sobriety, justice, virtue, and principally in their unfeigned religious feelings. Such virtues are the sinews and strength of a country: they are the supports of its prosperity at home and of its reputation abroad. Righteousness and justice will ever exalt a nation.

"Prayer for Rulers, or, Duty of Christian Patriots"[11]—January 4, 1861

William Adams (1807–1880) helped organize hundreds of Sunday schools and co-founded the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Later he served as president of Union Seminary and assisted in establishing the Madison Square Presbyterian Church. It was from that pulpit he delivered his fast day sermon, extending a conciliatory appeal for unity and asking for God's forgiveness. "We cannot pretend to dictate or mark the way for Divine Providence—but with all the heart we have, we will pray for the peace and prosperity of our country. Let us confess our sins most heartily before God."

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On the one hand, we of the North—I say *we*, since I speak of a prevalent habit—must cease from all vituperation and angry reproaches. We must not speak of our southern brethren as oppressors and barbarians, nor vilify them, nor taunt them, nor goad them, as if they were sinners above all others. We must bear in mind that had we been born in the same circumstances with themselves, in connexion with a system which sends its roots through the whole social structure, there is no reason to suppose that we should have been more humane, more kind, more wise than they. We must acknowledge that among them, familiar with this relation, are some of the best specimens of philanthropy and religion the world can furnish, men and women worthy to stand by the side of the man in the New Testament, who held the same relation to a *doulos*, whom Christ healed, of whom Christ said, "I have not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel."

On the other hand, we say to our brethren of the South, while we acknowledge and defend every right guaranteed to you by the Constitution, you must not take new ground which is untenable; you must not force us to join a new issue; nor give resurrection to questions which have long ago been considered as settled by the civilized world; you must not resort to violence; if the solemn tramp of the census instructs you as to the certainty of prospective changes, you must meet the fact as an appointment not of man, by which to be irritated, but of God, with acquiescence, with equanimity; you must not forswear reason, nor put the torch to that edifice which we occupy in common, and in which we and our children, and children's children, have such incomparable and ineffable advantages.

Surely, then, we find abundant occasion for prayer, full of faith in God, and charity for our fellow men, in the presence of this great embarrassment. If any man pretends to know by what method this great problem of our history is to be solved without detriment to either race, our own or the African, for as Christians our regard is for all, in Christ all are our brethren; if any one, I say, pretends to know the future of this history, without aid from divine wisdom, I pity his self-sufficiency and arrogance. . . .

More than all, will we call aloud on the name of our God, beseeching him by the very arguments which he has put upon our lips, not to give us up to reproach. Political zealots may scoff at the inutility of prayer. But I speak today to men and women who have faith in its efficiency. Before the spirit of prayer, the false guides of passion and an evil temper disappear, and the great lights of charity, and meekness, and hope, come forth to point us in the way. What will the nations say if our experiment of self-government should thus early prove a failure? How should we lie ashamed to confess before the world our weakness and imbecility, if the bond of our Confederated States should prove a rope of sand, instead of a chain of gold. We cannot pretend to dictate or mark the way for Divine Providence—but with all the heart we have, we will pray for the peace and prosperity of our country. Let us confess our sins most heartily before God. "Think you," said Christ, "that they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all others? I tell ye nay. But except *ye* repent, *ye* shall all likewise perish." Sin of every name and form is a leak in the ship, and humbling ourselves before God is our strength and security. For the sake of all the hopes and prospects of mankind—for the sake of rational liberty—for the sake of the Christian Church, with its new domains and auspices—for our brethren and companions' sakes—we will pray for our rulers, and pray to Almighty God for ourselves—that here, beneath the vines and trees which our fathers planted, we may lead a quiet and peaceful life. Should reason be borne down by passion; should it prove that a fire has already been kindled which may not by any human power be quenched, still will we not let go our hold of faith and the

guardianship of God. Still we cling to the altars of religion, and invoke the grace of the Almighty. Still will we pray that we may keep a conscience void of offence before God and man, so that in any extremity we may have the security which springs from confidence in Supreme direction, believing that He, in the day of evil, will say to his own wherever they are, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until this indignation be overpast." But prayer and faith will win a blessing. After the storm behold the bow in the clouds, and brightness covering the whole heavens.

"Mutual Relation of Masters and Slaves as Taught in the Bible"[12]—January 6, 1861

Joseph R. Wilson (1822–1903) was the father of President Woodrow Wilson and a well-known Presbyterian minister. Before moving to Augusta, Georgia, in 1857, he was professor of theology at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia. On the Sunday two days after the fast day sermons of January 4 given above, Wilson delivered his discourse at his First Presbyterian Church in Augusta. In it he contended that "besides being one of the colored man's foremost sources of blessing, [slavery] is likewise directly sanctioned by both the utterance and silence of Scripture."

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EPHESIANS, VI: 5–9:—"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good-will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. . . ."

The time has fully come when all who are interested personally in the subject of Southern institutions—whether masters or servants—should comprehend their *scriptural* relation to them—should know whether or not the holiness of God receives or rejects them—and whether in all our possible contentions for their maintenance we are to have only men for our enemies or, in addition, our Sovereign Ruler also. Now, we have already seen that the Holy Spirit employs words which He has intended to be understood as distinctly enunciating the existence of domestic servitude—that He has sent to all the world a volume of truth, which is indisputably addressed to men who hold slaves and to the slaves who possess masters—and that, from the connections in which these highly suggestive words occur, He has included slavery as an organizing element in that family order which lies at the very foundation of Church and State. A study of such words is, therefore, a first and an important step in ascertaining the will of God with respect to an institution which short sighted men have indiscriminately and violently denounced, and which wicked men have declared unworthy of the countenance of a Christianity whose peaceful and conservative spirit, as applied to society, they neither respect nor understand.

I am sure that you will bear with me while I take another step in this great argument, and show how completely the Bible brings human slavery underneath the sanction of divine authority, upon other and stronger grounds. Indeed, my text *compels* me to take this course—for, if *our* domestic servitude be *essentially* different from that to which the Apostle's exhortations refer, we do but beat the air with empty sounds when we endeavor to apply them to the masters and servants who compose the christian congregations of this section of our country. If Paul, or rather the great God, speaking by his inspired lips, meant to confine his evangelical teachings to a state of things wholly unlike that under which we live, then this portion of Scripture is to us a dead letter, and can have no influence upon our consciences or conduct. If we preach from it at all, therefore, it must be employed for the practical benefit of hearers *now* as much as when the *Ephesian* church opened their ears and hearts to its reception. And, in truth, in

the suggestions of this very thought, there is a remote scriptural plea to be found for the divine sanction of slavery. It would seem, that, inasmuch as the Bible was intended for all times and all ages, and not for one period and a single country, the fact that it gives directions as plain and full and forcible for the regulation of domestic service as it does for defining and limiting the marital, parental and filial relations in families, furnishes an inferential proof of the proposition that, everywhere, such *service* ought to be as universal as such higher and tenderer relations: that no household is perfect under the gospel which does not contain all the grades of authority and obedience, from that of husband and wife, down through that of father and son, to that of master and servant. Accordingly, we do find, as a matter of historical fact, that, among all people, during all the periods of time, there have been those, in every family, whom the very law of necessity itself has made servants to the others; servants, if not always in the rigid sense which slavery seems to imply, yet in a sense sufficiently obvious and strict. Go where you will—visit what family you may, and you will find members of the household, under some law which requires them more than the others, to perform menial services for all the little community. The hireling, the wife, the eldest child, the dependent stranger, may be the voluntary or involuntary doer of offices which must fall to the lot of *some* one. I need not point you to the manifold illustrations of this idea, which appears in all conditions of human society—even in those which are most favored—even in those from which come the most heated denunciations of a slavery which, existing among us, differs at best from their own more in degree and form than in essential qualities. There *must* be such inequalities in society; and whenever an attempt has been made to remove them—whenever radicalism has proposed to smooth down all individuals in the family or other community to a common level—as in the experiments of Fourierism, which once excited so much attention in the world,—it was found that a fundamental law had been transgressed, and failure inevitably attended such unscriptural and disorganizing attempts. God has evidently made one to serve another. The simple question is, what must be the *nature* of this service? The answer is, that its nature depends upon circumstances. And out of this answer springs the interrogation, has God ever shown us that there are circumstances under which *involuntary* service may be required and yielded on the part of masters and slaves? Has He ever declared this kind of service to be right, and lifted its existence entirely above the charge of sinfulness? Are we at full liberty to carry to Him upon the arms of our faith, our households, and as confidently ask Him to bless our servants as our children? Does this great, beneficial, civilizing institution of slavery live beneath the light of His face, with no fault to be found with it upon the part of His infinite holiness, except when and wherein it may suffer abuse at the hands of the parties concerned? Surely the Bible is clear enough upon this point to satisfy the most sensitive conscience. Light cannot shine with greater brightness than does the doctrine of the sinlessness—nay, than does the doctrine of the righteousness—of an institution, which, besides being sustained and promoted by a long course of favorable providences, besides being recognized as a prime conservator of the civilization of the world, besides being one of the colored man's foremost sources of blessing, is likewise directly sanctioned by both the utterance and silence of Scripture.

"Farewell Address in U.S. Senate"[13]—January 21, 1861

Jefferson Davis (1808–1889) was senator from Mississippi when the state seceded from the Union on January 9, 1861. A regular attender of the Episcopal church, he believed in the providential oversight of God in the affairs of the nation. Accordingly, he delivered his farewell speech on the floor of the United States Senate on January 21. Toward the end of his address he remarked, "We will invoke the God of our fathers, who delivered them from the power of the lion, to protect us from the ravages of the bear; and thus, putting our trust in God and in our own firm hearts and strong arms, we will vindicate the right as best we may."

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I rise, Mr. President, for the purpose of announcing to the Senate that I have satisfactory evidence that the State of Mississippi, by a solemn ordinance of her people in convention assembled, has declared her separation from the United States. Under these circumstances, of course, my functions are terminated here. It has seemed to me proper, however, that I should appear in the Senate to announce that fact to my associates, and I will say but very little more. The occasion does not invite me to go into argument; and my physical condition would not permit me to do so if it were otherwise; and yet it seems to become me to say something on the part of the State I here represent, on an occasion so solemn as this.

It is known to Senators who have served with me here, that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union. Therefore, if I had not believed there was justifiable cause; if I had thought that Mississippi was acting without sufficient provocation, or without an existing necessity, I should still, under my theory of the Government, because of my allegiance to the State of which I am a citizen, have been bound by her action. I, however, may be permitted to say that I do think she has justifiable cause, and I approve of her act. I conferred with her people before that act was taken, counseled them then that if the state of things which they apprehended should exist when the convention met, they should take the action which they have now adopted.

I hope none who hear me will confound this expression of mine with the advocacy of the right of a State to remain in the Union, and to disregard its constitutional obligations by the nullification of the law. Such is not my theory. Nullification and secession, so often confounded, are indeed antagonistic principles. Nullification is a remedy which it is sought to apply within the Union, and against the agent of the States. It is only to be justified when the agent has violated his constitutional obligation, and a State, assuming to judge for itself, denies the right of the agent thus to act, and appeals to the other States of the Union for a decision; but when the States themselves, and when the people of the States, have so acted as to convince us that they will not regard our constitutional rights, then, and then for the first time, arises the doctrine of secession in its practical application.

A great man who now reposes with his fathers, and who has been often arraigned for a want of fealty to the Union, advocated the doctrine of nullification, because it preserved the Union. It was because of his deep-seated attachment to the Union, his determination to find some remedy for existing ills short of a severance of the ties which bound South Carolina to the other States, that Mr. Calhoun advocated the doctrine of nullification, which he proclaimed to be peaceful, to be within the limits of State power, not to disturb the Union, but only to be a means of bringing the agent before the tribunal of the States for their judgment.

Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. There was a time when none denied it. I hope the time may come again, when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent anyone from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever.

I therefore say I concur in the action of the people of Mississippi, believing it to be necessary and proper, and should have been bound by their action if my belief had been otherwise; and this brings me to the important point which I wish on this last occasion to present to the Senate. It is by this confounding of nullification and secession that the name of a great man, whose ashes now mingle with his mother earth, has been invoked to justify coercion against a seceded State. The phrase "to execute the laws," was an expression which General Jackson applied to the case of a State refusing to obey the laws while yet a member of the Union. That is not the case which is now presented. The laws are to be executed over the United States, and upon the people of the United States. They have no relation to any foreign country. It is a perversion of terms, at least it is a great misapprehension of the case, which cites that expression for application to a State which has withdrawn from the Union. You may make war on a foreign State. If it be the purpose of gentlemen, they may make war against a State which has withdrawn from the Union; but there are no laws of the United States to be executed within the limits of a seceded State. A State finding herself in the condition in which Mississippi has judged she is, in which her safety requires that she should provide for the maintenance of her rights out of the Union, surrenders all the benefits, (and they are known to be many,) deprives herself of the advantages, (they are known to be great,) severs all the ties of affection, (and they are

close and enduring,) which have bound her to the Union; and thus divesting herself of every benefit, taking upon herself every burden, she claims to be exempt from any power to execute the laws of the United States within her limits.

I well remember an occasion when Massachusetts was arraigned before the bar of the Senate, and when then the doctrine of coercion was rife and to be applied against her because of the rescue of a fugitive slave in Boston. My opinion then was the same that it is now. Not in a spirit of egotism, but to show that I am not influenced in my opinion because the case is my own, I refer to that time and that occasion as containing the opinion which I then entertained, and on which my present conduct is based. I then said, if Massachusetts, following her through a stated line of conduct, chooses to take the last step which separates her from the Union, it is her right to go, and I will neither vote one dollar nor one man to coerce her back; but will say to her, God speed, in memory of the kind associations which once existed between her and the other States.

It has been a conviction of pressing necessity, it has been a belief that we are to be deprived in the Union of the rights which our fathers bequeathed to us, which has brought Mississippi into her present decision. She has heard proclaimed the theory that all men are created free and equal, and this made the basis of an attack upon her social institutions; and the sacred Declaration of Independence has been invoked to maintain the position of the equality of the races. That Declaration of Independence is to be construed by the circumstances and purposes for which it was made. The communities were declaring their independence; the people of those communities were asserting that no man was born—to use the language of Mr. Jefferson—booted and spurred to ride over the rest of mankind; that men were created equal—meaning the men of the political community; that there was no divine right to rule; that no man inherited the right to govern; that there were no classes by which power and place descended to families, but that all stations were equally within the grasp of each member of the body-politic. These were the great principles they announced; these were the purposes for which they made their declaration; these were the ends to which their enunciation was directed. They have no reference to the slave; else, how happened it that among the items of arraignment made against George III was that he endeavored to do just what the North has been endeavoring of late to do—to stir up insurrection among our slaves? Had the Declaration announced that the negroes were free and equal, how was the Prince to be arraigned for stirring up insurrection among them? And how was this to be enumerated among the high crimes which caused the colonies to sever their connection with the mother country? When our Constitution was formed, the same idea was rendered more palpable, for there we find provision made for that very class of persons as property; they were not put upon the footing of equality with white men—not even upon that of paupers and convicts; but, so far as representation was concerned, were discriminated against as a lower caste, only to be represented in the numerical proportion of three fifths.

Then, Senators, we recur to the compact which binds us together; we recur to the principles upon which our Government was founded; and when you deny them, and when you deny to us the right to withdraw from a Government which thus perverted threatens to be destructive of our rights, we but tread in the path of our fathers when we proclaim our independence, and take the hazard. This is done not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit; but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our sacred duty to transmit unshorn to our children.

I find in myself, perhaps, a type of the general feeling of my constituents towards yours. I am sure I feel no hostility to you, Senators from the North. I am sure there is not one of you, whatever sharp discussion there may have been between us, to whom I cannot now say, in the presence of my God, I wish you well; and such, I am sure, is the feeling of the people whom I represent towards those whom you represent. I therefore feel that I but express their desire when I say I hope, and they hope, for peaceful relations with you, though we must part. They may be mutually beneficial to us in the future, as they have been in the past, if you so will it. The reverse may bring disaster on every portion of the country; and if you will have it thus, we will invoke the God of our fathers, who delivered them from the power of the lion, to protect us from the ravages of the bear; and thus, putting our trust in God and in our own firm hearts and strong arms, we will vindicate the right as best we may.

In the course of my service here, associated at different times with a great variety of Senators, I see now around me some with whom I have served long; there have been points of collision; but whatever of offense there has been to me, I leave here; I carry with me no hostile remembrance. Whatever offense I have given which has not been redressed, or for which satisfaction has not been demanded, I have, Senators, in this hour of our parting, to offer you my apology for any pain which, in heat of discussion, I have inflicted. I go hence unencumbered of the remembrance of any injury received, and having discharged the duty of making the only reparation in my power for any injury offered. Mr. President, and Senators, having made the announcement which the occasion seemed to me to require, it only remains to me to bid you a final adieu.

"The Scriptural Vindication of Slavery"[14]—January 27, 1861

Ebenezer W. Warren (1820–d) was a minister who served for many years at the First Baptist Church of Macon, Georgia. Eight days after Georgia seceded from the Union, he delivered before a packed sanctuary at his church his sermon vindicating slavery as biblical. Only days later it was printed in the Macon Telegraph. *For Warren both the validity of the Bible and the will of God hinged on the truth of black slavery. Even "the blessed Saviour descended from a slave-holder, Abraham."*

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More than two thousand years before the Christian era, slavery was instituted by decree of heaven, and published to the world by Noah, a "preacher of righteousness." Here is the decree, Genesis 9:25–27, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants, shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." The Jews descended from Shem, the Europeans and Americans from Japheth, the Africans from Ham, the father of Canaan.

To show that the above language was the announcement of heaven's decree concerning slavery, and that Noah was speaking as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, we have only to refer to its explanation and fulfillment by the descendants of Shem, as recorded in the 25th chapter of Leviticus. God gave to Abraham, a descendant of Shem, and to his seed after him the land of the Canaanites, into the possession of which they came in the days of Joshua. After the children of Israel came into the possession of the land, God gave them the following instruction as to bringing the people into bondage: "Both thy bond men and thy bond maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you (these were the descendants of Canaan, and hence called Canaanites), of them shall ye BUY BOND MEN AND BOND MAIDS. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possessions. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for possession; they shall be your bond men forever." (verses 44–46)

Here is a decree from the Creator, giving to one man the right of holding another in involuntary servitude. Man holding his fellow man as his property, and enjoined to perpetuate that property by inheritance to his children, forever.

Three points are here gained.

1. The establishment of slavery by divine decree.
2. The right to buy and sell men and women into bondage.
3. The perpetuity of the institution by the same authority.

A theocratic government, that is, one in which God, as the ruler, gives immediate direction, was established over the Israelites and continued for about four hundred years. The government was fully organized

at Mount Sinai. The Constitution (called the Decalogue) given on that occasion, is considered the basis of all good law, and the standard of moral action, in every age of the world down to the present time—it is as of universal application as the gospel of Christ. It guarantees to the slaveholder the peaceable and unmolested right to his slave property, in language as emphatic as does the Constitution of the United States. Hear its enactment on this subject.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his MAN SERVANT, not his MAID SERVANT, nor his ox, nor his ass, not anything that is thy neighbor's."

Is a man entitled to the unmolested occupation of his house? This Divine Constitution guarantees to him the same right to his servants. Has any man the right to interfere with the domestic relation of husband and wife? Equally secure is the relation of master and servant made by this enactment of heaven. Should a man's right to the exclusive and perpetual possession of his ox, or his ass, or of any other property of which he may be possessed, be secured to him by constitutional enactment? No more so, determined the unerring wisdom of the most high God, than the right of masters to their slaves.

Had God, the Great Law Giver, been opposed to slavery, he would perhaps have said, "thou shalt not hold property in man: thou shalt not enslave thy fellow being, for all men are born free and equal." Instead of reproving the sin of covetousness, he would have denounced the sin of slavery; but instead of this denunciation, when He became the Ruler of his people, He established, regulated and perpetuated slavery by special enactment, and guaranteed the unmolested rights of masters to their slaves by Constitutional provision.

"Abraham Lincoln's Illinois Farewell Address"[15]—February 11, 1861

Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) was first elected to the presidency of the United States on November 6, 1860. On the day he left Springfield, Illinois, for Washington, D.C., he bid farewell to friends and family while he stood on the rear platform of the train car that took him to the nation's capital. Though a religious person, he was not a traditional churchman. His providential view of the world was reflected in his statement "Let us all pray that the God of our Fathers may not forsake us now."

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Today I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon General Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail; but if the same Omniscient Mind and Almighty Arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me, I shall not fail—I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke His wisdom and guidance for me.

"Jefferson Davis's First Inaugural Address"[16]—February 18, 1861

Jefferson Davis (1808–1889) was named provisional president of the Confederate States of America on February 9, 1861. Nine days later he delivered his first inaugural address. Like his Northern counterpart, Abraham Lincoln, Davis held to a providential view of the world. Toward the end of his inaugural remarks, he was careful to invoke the blessing and favor of "the God of our fathers."

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Gentlemen of the Congress of the Confederate States of America:

Called to the difficult and responsible station of Executive Chief of the Provisional Government which you have instituted, I approach the discharge of the duties assigned me with an humble distrust of my abilities, but with a sustaining confidence in the wisdom of those who are to aid and guide me in the administration of public affairs, and an abiding faith in the patriotism and virtue of the people. Looking forward to the speedy establishment of a provisional government to take the place of the present one, and which, by its great moral and physical powers, will be better able to contend with the difficulties which arise from the conflicting incidents of separate nations, I enter upon the duties of the office for which I have been chosen with the hope that the beginning of our career as a Confederacy may not be obstructed by hostile opposition to the enjoyment of that separate and independent existence which we have asserted, and which, with the blessing of Providence, we intend to maintain.

Our present position has been achieved in a manner unprecedented in the history of nations. It illustrates the American idea that government rests upon the consent of the governed, and that it is the right of the people to alter or abolish a government whenever it becomes destructive of the ends for which it was established. The declared purposes of the compact of Union from which we have withdrawn were to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, to provide for the common defence, to promote the general welfare, and to secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity; and when in the judgment of the sovereign States now comprising this Confederacy it had been perverted from the purposes for which it was ordained, and had ceased to answer the ends for which it was established, an appeal to the ballot box declared that so far as they were concerned the government created by that compact should cease to exist. In this they merely asserted a right which the Declaration of Independence of 1776 defined to be inalienable. Of the time and occasion for its exercise, they, as sovereign, were the final judges each for itself. The impartial and enlightened verdict of mankind will vindicate the rectitude of our conduct, and He who knows the hearts of men will judge the sincerity with which we have labored to preserve the government of our fathers, in its spirit and in those rights inherent in it, which were solemnly proclaimed at the birth of the States, and which have been affirmed and reaffirmed in the Bills of Rights of the several States. When they entered into the Union of 1789, it was with the undeniable recognition of the power of the people to resume the authority delegated for the purposes of that government whenever, in their opinion, its functions were perverted and its ends defeated. By virtue of this authority, the time and occasion requiring them to exercise it having arrived, the sovereign States here represented have seceded from that Union, and it is a gross abuse of language to denominate the act rebellion or revolution. They have formed a new alliance, but in each State its government has remained as before. The rights of person and property have not been disturbed. The agency through which they have communicated with foreign powers has been changed, but this does not necessarily interrupt their international relations. . . .

Experience in public stations of subordinate grade to this which your kindness has conferred on me, has taught me that care and toil and disappointments are the price of official elevation. You will have many errors to forgive, many deficiencies to tolerate, but you will not find in me either a want of zeal or fidelity to a cause that has my highest hopes and most enduring affection. Your generosity has bestowed upon me an undeserved distinction, one which neither sought nor desired. Upon the continuance of that sentiment, and upon your wisdom and patriotism, I rely to direct and support me in the performance of the duties required at my hands. We have changed the constituent parts, not the system of our government. The constitution formed by our fathers is the constitution of the "Confederate States." In *their* exposition of it, and in the judicial constructions it has received, it has a light that reveals its true meaning. Thus instructed as to the just interpretations of that instrument, and ever remembering that all public offices are but trusts, held for the benefit of the people, and that delegated powers are to be strictly construed, I will hope that by due diligence in the discharge of my duties, though I may disappoint your expectations, yet to retain, when retiring, something of the good will and confidence which welcome my entrance into

office. It is joyous in perilous times to look around upon a people united in heart, who are animated and actuated by one and the same purpose and high resolve, with whom the sacrifices to be made are not weighed in the balance against honor, right, liberty and equality. Obstacles may retard, but cannot prevent their progressive movements. Sanctified by justice and sustained by a virtuous people, let me reverently invoke the God of our fathers to guide and protect us in our efforts to perpetuate the principles which by HIS blessing they were able to vindicate, establish and transmit to their posterity, and with the continuance of HIS favor, ever to be gratefully acknowledged, let us look hopefully forward to success, to peace, and to prosperity.

"Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address"[17]—March 4, 1861

Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) was elected to the presidency of the United States on November 6, 1860, but had to wait four months for his inauguration. By then seven Southern states had seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America, and Jefferson Davis had been inaugurated as president of the Confederacy. All of this was on the mind of President Lincoln when he delivered his first inaugural address. Like Davis, Lincoln referenced God, "the Almighty Ruler of nations," and expressed "a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land."

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Fellow-citizens of the United States:

In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take, in your presence, the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary, at present, for me to discuss those matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety, or excitement.

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States, that by the accession of a Republican Administration, their property, and their peace, and personal security, are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this, and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And more than this, they placed in the platform, for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves, and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

> *Resolved*, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes.

I now reiterate these sentiments: and in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace and security of no section are to be in anywise endangered by the now incoming Administration. I add too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section, as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

> No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it, for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the law-giver is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause, "shall be delivered up," their oaths are unanimous. Now, if they would make the effort in good temper, could they not, with nearly equal unanimity, frame and pass a law, by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath?

There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by national or by state authority; but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him, or to others, by which authority it is done. And should any one, in any case, be content that his oath shall go unkept, on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well, at the same time, to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause, in the Constitution which guaranties that "The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States?"

I take the official oath to-day, with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws, by any hyper-critical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest, that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to, and abide by, all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens, have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils; and, generally, with great success. Yet, with all this scope for precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years, under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold, that in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper, ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

Again, if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade, by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual, confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution, was "to form a more perfect Union."

But if destruction of the Union, by one, or by a part only, of the States, be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no State, upon its own mere motion, can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and, to the extent of my ability, I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it, so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or, in some authoritative manner, direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend, and maintain itself. . . .

That there are persons in one section, or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm or deny; but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step, while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from, have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to, are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake? . . .

Plainly, the central idea of secession, is the essence of anarchy. A majority, held in restraint by constitutional checks, and limitations, and always changing easily, with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it, does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy, or despotism in some form, is all that is left. . . .

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both cases after the separation of the sections, than before. The foreign slave trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived, without restriction, in one section; while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence, and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible then to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves,

instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the federal government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable.

The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend" it.

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

"Constitution of the Confederate States"[18]—March 11, 1861

Both sides in the Civil War prayed to the same God and read the same Bible, and both sides claimed to be the more godly through words and symbols. Even before the war began, the South pointed out the godlessness of the North, which had failed to acknowledge divine sovereignty in its Constitution. So as not to make the same mistake, the South included a phrase in the preamble of its Constitution "invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God."

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We, the people of the Confederate States, each State acting in its sovereign and independent character, in order to form a permanent federal government, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Confederate States of America.

"Abolitionism Defined"[19]—March 22, 1861

The subject of abolitionism had entered into the pulpit long before the start of secession; its merit and evil had long been debated. In the vocabulary of the South the Republican Party was the Abolition Party and Abraham Lincoln was an abolitionist. The Illinois Daily State Journal *noted the definition of abolitionism published in Richmond, Virginia, in the* Southern Literary Messenger. *It specified that anyone who did not regard slavery as "a means of human reformation second in dignity, importance and sacredness alone to the Christian religion" was an abolitionist.*

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An Abolitionist is any man who does not love slavery for its own sake, as a divine institution; who does not worship it as the corner-stone of civil liberty; who does not adore it as the only possible social condition on which a permanent republican government can be erected; and who does not, in his inmost soul, desire to see it extended and perpetuated over the whole earth, as a means of human reformation second in dignity, importance and sacredness alone to the Christian religion. He who does not love African slavery with this love, is an Abolitionist.

"The Battle Set in Array"[20]—April 14, 1861

Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) was a Congregational minister who had been a strong opponent of slavery before the Civil War began, and in a November 1860 sermon he left no room for compromise between the two sides. So when the war broke out on April 14, 1861, it was easy for him to blame the South for bringing it on. This sermon, which Beecher delivered during the siege of Fort Sumter, included his assessment that war was better than the continuation of slavery, and that apparently God had allowed its onset. "And now if it please God to do that which daily we pray that he may avert,—if it please God to wrap this nation in war,—one result will follow: we shall be called to suffer for our faith."

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Seven States, however, in a manner revolutionary not only of government, but in violation of the rights and customs of their own people, have disowned their country and made war upon it! There has been a spirit of patriotism in the North; but never, within my memory, in the South. I never heard a man from the South speak of himself as an American. Men from the South always speak of themselves as Southerners. When I was abroad, I never spoke of myself as a Northerner, but always as a citizen of the United States. I love our country; and it is a love of the country, and not a love of the North alone, that pervades the people of the North. There has never been witnessed such patience, such self-denial, such magnanimity, such true patriotism, under such circumstances, as that which has been manifested in the North. And in the South the feeling has been sectional, local. The people there have been proud, not that they belong to the nation, but that they were born where the sun burns. They are hot, narrow, and boastful,—for out of China there is not so much conceit as exists among them. They have been devoid of that large spirit which takes in the

race, and the nation, and its institutions, and its history, and that which its history prophesies,—the prerogative of carrying the banner of liberty to the Pacific from the Atlantic.

Now, these States, in a spirit entirely in agreement with their past developments, have revolutionized and disowned the United States of America, and set up, a so-called government of their own. Shall we, now, go forward under these circumstances?

For the first time in the history of this nation there is a deliberate and extensive preparation for war, and this country has received the deadly thrust of bullet and bayonet from the hands of her own children. If we could have prevented it, this should not have taken place. But it is a fact! It hath happened! The question is no longer a question of choice. The war is brought to us. Shall we retreat, or shall we accept the hard conditions on which we are to maintain the grounds of our fathers? Hearing the voice of God in his providence saying, "Go forward!" shall we go?

I go with those that go furthest in describing the wretchedness and wickedness and monstrosity of war. The only point on which I should probably differ from any is this: that while war is an evil so presented to our senses that we measure and estimate it, there are other evils just as great, and much more terrible, whose deadly mischiefs have no power upon the senses. I hold that it is ten thousand times better to have war than to have slavery. I hold that to be corrupted silently by giving up manhood, by degenerating, by becoming cravens, by yielding one right after another, is infinitely worse than war. Why, war is resurrection in comparison with the state to which we should be brought by such a course. And although war is a terrible evil, there are other evils that are more terrible. In our own peculiar case, though I would say nothing to garnish it, nothing to palliate it, nothing to alleviate it, nothing to make you more willing to have it, nothing to remove the just abhorrence which every man and patriot should have for it, yet I would say that, in the particular condition into which we have been brought, it will not be an unmixed evil. Eighty years of unexampled prosperity have gone far toward making us a people that judge of moral questions by their relation to our convenience and ease. We are in great danger of becoming a people that shall measure by earthly rules,—by the lowest standard of a commercial expediency. We have never suffered for our own principles. And now if it, please God to do that which daily we pray that he may avert,—if it please God to wrap this nation in war,—one result will follow: we shall be called to suffer for our faith. We shall be called to the heroism of doing and daring, and bearing and suffering, for the things which we believe to be vital to the salvation of this people.

"Cowardly and Unprovoked Attack"[21]—April 15, 1861

In response to the attack on Fort Sumter, Northern newspapers were divided over whom to blame. Some Democratic papers in the North, including the Hartford Daily Times*, pointed their editorial fingers at the Republican Party; "this horrible drama" did not have to happen. Other Northern newspapers, like the* Boston Advertiser*, blasted the Confederacy for the "cowardly and unprovoked attack," claiming, "We have on our side the prayers of freemen throughout the whole world, the sympathy of civilized humanity everywhere."*

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Never was attack more cowardly and unprovoked than that of the seceders upon Sumter. Upon the mere rumor of an attempt to send in supplies under convoy of a few vessels, the opposing army opened their innumerable batteries upon the little garrison. . . . The confederate States are determined to have war; and war now exists by their act. . . . It is now a question of life and death for the nation. There is no excuse—we believe there is no disposition—for faltering or hesitation on the part of the Northern people. We are in the right; we are the strongest; we are the party in possession, we have on our side the prayers of freemen throughout the whole world, the sympathy of civilized humanity everywhere.

"To the Men of the North and West"[22]—April 17, 1861

Richard Henry Stoddard (1825–1903) was born in Massachusetts and lived much of his life in New York. Largely self-taught, he began publishing poems by the time he was twenty. A prolific writer, Stoddard published many works of poetry, along with children's books, critical studies, and other collections of writings. In "To the Men of the North and West," he presents a call to action; do all you can as you face death in your eyes, then "leave to God all the rest."

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Men of the North and West,
Wake in your might,
Prepare, as the Rebels have done,
For the fight;
You cannot shrink from the test,
Rise! Men of the North and West!

They have torn down your banner of stars;
They have trampled the laws;
They have stifled the freedom they hate,
For no cause!
Do you love it, or slavery best?
Speak! Men of the North and West!

They strike at the life of the State—
Shall the murder be done?
They cry, "We are two!" And you?
"We are one!"
You must meet them, then, breast to breast,
On! Men of the North and West!

Not with words; they laugh them to scorn,
And tears they despise;
But with swords in your hands, and death
In your eyes!
Strike home! leave to God all the rest,
Strike! Men of the North and West!

"May God Direct us All."[23]—April 21, 1861

During the war, women played an important role through their writing of letters and keeping of diaries. Ann Stevens of East Montpelier, Vermont, was a young Quaker who taught school at People's Academy in Morrisville. Early in the war she responded to her brother's letter in which her devout Quaker faith was clearly evident.

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Morrisville, Vt.

My Dear Brother:—

Do not think because I have not written to thee, I have not valued thy letters, though anyone, who did not know how much I have to do might draw that inference. I have had a very hard cold the past week that I caught at the Falls a week ago, and have coughed so much, my head aches very hard and I am sore and old all over, it makes a pretty large sore doe'nt it? Mary writes thee is some better, how glad I am to hear it. maybe the journey if not the physician will do thee good. Thee must be very careful and still keep good courage, though Prof. Lee says thee will never lose that, which is a very desirable thing where there are so many dis-couraging things to be met. through all storms may the bird of Hope sing on sweetly as ever. We have been to hear Grandpa Gleed preach to-day. he prayed long and earnestly for our Nation, and that civil war and bloodshed might be stayed, and peace be restored to the country. May the prayers of him and the thousands of others In the pulpit by the home fireside and in the camps prevail before Him who is the God of battles.—The war seems to be inevitable. There is scarcely anything else thought or talked about here, men gather in the streets and a crowd is ever in the bar room, talking hotly concerning the state of affairs. Last evening there was a very spirited meeting at the Hall, where resolutions were passed giving their wealth, strength and life if need be to the cause of freedom, Mr. Gleed was President. I will send an account when they are printed. Mr. Blanchard and Thomas Gleed have sworn to go to the battle. Blanchard says he will be ready the day after school closes, if more volunteers are called for. There will [be] a company formed in a few days here. They do not wilfully rush to battle and destruction but calmly and considerately give themselves for their country. Mrs. Whipple with red eyes says she will give her husband up for her country. I think she is a noble woman. That which we have so dreaded has come upon us. May God direct us all.

We cannot think of anything else. We hurd last night from Philip he was going to enlist. the Northfield company passed through Richmond and three young men had already gone from that place. Young man from the Park. [Hyde Park, Vt.] hurd of the surrender of Fort Sumpter, dropped his work and the next day shouldered his knapsack and started for Charlestown. Forty of the Students of Middlebury have enlisted. The Green Mountain State will not have withholden her support in so necessitous a time. The Lord have mercy and turn the thunderbolt from this land. I visited at Susan's the other day, she is such a good woman. Uncle Pollos is quite sick has had the Lung fever,[ ]has returned, so as to stay there nights. She brought us up some hulled corn & we had Mr. & Mrs. Blanchard in here and had quite a party, George Doty is going to the war. O dear, what sorrow! what sorrow! Susan wants one of thy pictures I do not know which on[e] to leave her I like the Photographs very much. took the liberty to give one to Mrs. B. who was very much pleased with it. I am afraid Jay will not pay me the visit he expected to. I think he is a good boy and always shall, let [Leeve?] sputter all he is a mind to, and he will make a smart man, and I think a good one, I expect to hear Isaac and Levi have gone to the South, do not have very much fears concerning my own relatives excepting Timothy, for I hope the Quaker principle is strong enough to restrain them. I worry a good deal about Timothy. I am going to write to him to-day if I feel able to, though by that another need not think I am very near my grave, though I feel some as though its rest would feel pretty good, and welcome. I have received a beautiful letter from Nancy. she talks of being heare at the close. Unless the excitement cools down some I am afraid there will not be much but a close, Mrs. Blanchard has copied that piece Horace likes so well, onto sheets and is going to have it sung they rehearsed it last night. It is splendid

"Calm all commotion
That may arise,
Increase devotion
Strengthen our ties.