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## The Preface to the Reader.

*Christian Reader ;*

**I**T is not singularity or Ostentation that I appear in Print, but my Christian Duty, in Honour to God, and the Salvation and well being of the souls of men, in the Detection of the Anti-christian Practice in *making Slaves* of them who bear the Image of God, *viz.* their fellow, Creature, Man; A Practice so *cruel* and *inhumane*, that the more it is thought upon by judicious men, the more they do abhor it; It being so vile a contradiction to the Gospel of the blessed Messiah.

And if our Negro-Masters were put to it, to bring an Instance that a man denied the Christian Faith, I think they could not bring a stronger Instance, then that he was found in the Practice of making slaves of men. And furthermore, I doubt not, but this may be to some a very unwelcome Theme, and they would wonder to find their beloved *Detestab.* the making Slaves of Negros, and others rejected, although the more moderate Christians do full well know, that I have

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the Truth on my side. And if these Lines should come to the *Island of Great Britain* (my native Land) I hope the sincere Christians there of all Sects will commend my Christian care, in detecting so gross a corruption as this, crept in by reason of the Ease and Gains it brings to our *American Christians*; And I hope the *learned Christians* there will admonish their *American Brethren*, for putting such an Affront upon the ever blessed *Messiah*, and his glorious Gospel, as this their Practice doth, in making Slaves of Men.

This Practice cannot but be very offensive to sincere and honest hearted Christians, that this Practice should be heard among the Heathen, to harden them in such *heathenish Practices*.

And now, *Reader*, I am going to shew thee a Wonder, and that is, this thirty years that I have been in *America*, this Practice has been carried on almost in profound silence, which it is like the Negro-Masters will take it the harder to be opposed now. It is true, *John Tillotson* of *Canterbury* hath two Sermons in print concerning *Restitution*, and he tells them there, that *they cannot have Admittance into Heaven without making Restitution of the wrong done to there fellow Creatures:*

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*Creatures.* And if this be applied to the wrong done to Negroes, I have Bishop *Tillotson* on my side. This and many other excellent things have dropt from the Pen of that (in many things, no doubt, an) excellent man.

And *Cotton Mather* calls the Inslaving of Negroes, *A crying Sin in the Land.*

And *George Fox* printed against this Practice, and sent it to the *Barbadoes - Quakers.* Such was the early care of this excellent man above forty years ago; But his Christian Admonition was rejected. It is true, there are some excellent souls among them still, who came out of *Old England*, that have kept their Integrity, namely *John Sitkill*, *Thomas Chalkley*, and others, who when they see this Abomination acted by their *American Brethren*, they openly bear Testimony in their publick Assemblies, and declare against it (as I am credibly informed) There was another Paper Printed by (I think) *G. Keith* his Party at *Philadelphia*; and half a Sheet was printed against this Practice at *London*, called *the Athenian Oracle.* But the most of all those writings I doubt are destroyed by *Negro-Masters*, that the Reader will find them almost as scarce to be found as the *Phenix Egg.* And last of all,

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all, I have appeared against this Practice, although I have lain dormant above this thirty years; for the which I acknowledge my Failure before God and man, and I desire forgiveness of God, and next I desire the forgiveness of man; for the reason that I was silent so long, because I waited for my betters to undertake the work; and if any had appeared in this Work, it is like I had been silent still.

Now whether they will hear or forbear for the future, I hope to be clear of their Blood, and if they will not repent and make Restitution, I cannot help it; for I have faithfully warned them of their Danger; For I earnestly contended for the Truth, and honestly declared against this *Inriching Sin*, in making Slaves of Men. And now I think to end my Preface as I began it, and that is, I chiefly design the *Honour of God*, and next the *Welfare and Salvation* of Souls. If happily I might be instrumental to deter any one Soul from being caught with this inriching Sin, or instrumental of the Repentance of Restitution made by one Soul that is and already guilty, then I desire they should give God the Glory, and I make no Question in having my Reward.

*And*

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*And now to find the Longitude,  
Many a Man hath gone about,  
But the Perpetual Motion,  
Our Negro Masters have found out.*

*New-Jersey,  
1<sup>st</sup> Month, 1714.*

**John Hepburn**

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