

## George McDuffie: Pro Slavery

The following viewpoint is taken from a speech presented to the South Carolina legislature in 1835 by George McDuffie, Democratic governor of South Carolina from 1834-1836. In this speech, McDuffie strongly attacks Northern abolitionists. He stoutly defends the institution of slavery as a positive good rather than a necessary evil. He states that slavery is a moral institution that benefits both the slaves and society as a whole. Many of the ideas expressed in this speech were central to the southern defense of slavery.

No human institution, in my opinion, is more manifestly consistent with the will of God than domestic slavery..... Under both the Jewish and Christian...religion, domestic slavery existed with the...sanction of its prophets, its apostles, and finally its great Author. The patriarchs themselves, those instruments of God, were slave holders.

.....the African Negro is destined by Providence to occupy this condition of servile dependence.....It is marked on the face, stamped on the skin, and evinced by the intellectual inferiority...of this race. They have all the qualities that fit them for slaves, and not one of those that would fit them to be freemen. They are utterly unqualified, not only for rational freedom but for self-government of any kind. They are, in all respects, physical, moral, and political, inferior to millions of the human race.....

In all respects, the comforts of our slaves are greatly superior to...millions of paupers.....There is not upon the face of the earth any class of people, high or low, so perfectly free from care and anxiety. They know that their masters will provide for them, under all circumstances.....

In a word, our slaves are cheerful, contented, and happy, much beyond the general condition of the human race.....

It is clearly demonstrable that the production of cotton depends, not so much on soil and climate as on the existence of domestic slavery.....every practical planter will concur [agree] in the opinion that if all the slaves in these states were now emancipated [freed], the American crop would be reduced the very next year from 1,200,000 to 600,000 bales.

### Friendly Questions:

1. You believe God himself approves of slavery. Can you tell us why?
2. You believe slavery benefits the south. Please explain...

### Unfriendly Questions:

1. Do you honestly believe God wants you to have slaves? Do you believe Jesus would own slaves?
2. Isn't the real reason for slavery is because it makes the south wealthy in the cotton business? Isn't it all about making money for the white man?