

Slavery and American Ideals

C

DIRECTIONS: Read each quotation and decide which constitutional principle(s) it reflects, if any. Draw an arrow from the quotation’s number to or list the number after the principle(s). Then, on your own paper, explain your reasoning.

Property Rights

1

Federalism/Powers of States

2

Liberty

3

Equality

4

Limited Government

5

6

1. “It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished. The honor of the states, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused.”
—John Jay, 1786

2. “[The Constitutional Convention] thought it wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in men.”
—James Madison, 1787

3. “Slavery, or an absolute and unlimited power in the master over the life and fortune of the slave, is unauthorized by the common law.... In the enjoyment of their persons and of their property, the common law protects all.”
—James Wilson, 1804

4. “I believe [slavery] to be a great political and a great moral evil. ... It is, however, one of those moral evils, from which it is impossible for us to escape, without the introduction of evils infinitely greater.”
—James Buchanan, 1826

5. “(T)he great truth (is) that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his natural and normal condition.”
—Alexander H. Stephens, Vice President of the Confederate States of America, 1861

6. “I am naturally anti-slavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I can not remember when I did not so think, and feel. And yet I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling.”
—Abraham Lincoln, 1864