Douglass addresses the distortion of religion as a means to credit the hypocritical justification of the institution of slavery. There is a clear divisionary boundary between the pious and the religious. He boldly compares the difference “between the Christianity of the land, and the Christianity of Christ”. The repetition of “Christianity” clarifies Douglass’ attitude toward the captivity of human life in the South as paradoxical to the true ideals of the Christian religion. Douglass emphasizes the moral corruption of unblessed virtues and goodness. Slavery is the direct antithesis of Christian belief. The connotation of “moral harvesting” establishes the irony created by the institution. How can you harvest morals when none can be found? He strikes down the reasoning that bondage is noble and necessary. That in fact, slavery is immoral.

Frederick Douglass explains the contradictions within the church of the South by condemning the religious officials as corrupt beings. Douglass employs anaphora when listing the hypocrisy in the priest’s actions when saying “he who sells my sister, advocates poorly… he who proclaims learning, denies me the right to learn.” The repetition of “he who” generalizes the conduct of religious authority as demonstrating incongruent behavior. They don’t seem to practice what they preach. It diminishes these officials as irresponsible to their profession. The repetition of “behind the scenes” exposes the hidden agenda of church officials. It implies that the horrendous acts of slavery are sanctioned in secret. It creates an image of the corrupt minister unable to reconcile the truth of Christianity that he is called on to teach, and the secret conspiracy of the church to support the slavery of the South.

Douglass starts off venting about his hatred for the slave holding society of the South, and how religious leaders support the institution. He describes the “corrupt, slaveholding, women whipping, cradle plundering Christianity” and lists all the horrendous attributes that warrant his claim. All these evil actions create an image of Southern Christians with their hands stained with incriminating blood. He brings one’s attention to the irony and juxtaposition of this society with epistrophe by saying we have “man stealers for ministers, and women-whippers for ministers”. He continues to elaborate on the juxtaposition of religion and slavery by saying “we have men sold to build our churches”. Churches are a holy place, and they are built on the backs of slaves. The act of slavery taints any good intended Christian by bloody acts.

Frederick Douglass finally speaks about the mass of people who process to Christian and try to help others, but don’t even help their own neighbors. He uses asyndeton to describe a list of things people have forgotten, “neglect the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith” This emphasized that people have forgotten the true meaning of Christianity. This may inspire and remind the readers to never forget the true meaning of something you believe in. He then uses imagery to describe people as “beautiful outwardly, but within full of dead men’s bones.” This powerful image show the underlining identity of the hypocrite

Douglass enforces his stance on religion through the letter. He believes that while Christianity is “pure, peaceable” slaveholding is “corrupt, and wicked.” He uses listing to display his hatred for the type of Christianity that allows slavery to take place. The harsh words, “corrupt, slaveholding women whipping, cradle plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity” give the full impact of what Douglass is trying to say. A image is created that lets us see what he wants us to see about the South. The use of anaphora emphasizes the hypocrisy he sees by these so called Christians going out and whipping, selling, and denying slaves absolutely disgusts him and what he believes being a Christian should represent honesty and integrity and Douglass is pointing out why is this a horrible act.

Frederick Douglass warrants that the American slave is equal in manhood as a white man. He states “we are engaged in all the enterprises common to other men, living, moving, acting, thinking” His use of listing shows the many features a natural human being has while questioning why a specific voice is to be enslaved when they operate as any other race would. He states “and looking hopefully for life to prove that we are men?” His rhetorical questioning enhanced the aforementioned listing by denouncing the immoral reason for slavery that the church and the South hold onto.

Douglass says “the and who wields… the man who robs…he who sells my sister… he who proclaims.. he who is the religious…’ The anaphora used in these sentences characterize each person he is speaking about as someone who calls themselves these Godly names like priests and leaders and at the same time are committing a crime themselves. The priests can’t stand behind a pulpit and preach to the people not to do wrong when there selling people for prostitution and robbing others to, its completely backwards and he knows this isn’t right.