

# John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1741–45)

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From Anne (Williams) Dutton

[Great Gransden, Huntingdonshire]

c. January 1, 1741

Reverend Sir,

Yours I received,<sup>1</sup> and embrace the first opportunity to answer it. I am glad you express so great a regard to the sacred oracles, and take the weapons of your warfare out of this armoury in that good work you are now engaged in—viz., in contending against those doctrines you mention, which some of late have asserted. And as to the first,

1. 'That there are no *degrees* in faith, that *weak* faith is *no* faith, that there is no faith at all in one that has any doubt or fear.' I look upon this to be a very *false* one. You will observe that I leave out the last clause, 'or that is not, in the full sense, a new creature'. Because I judge that wherever *true faith* is wrought, however *weak* it is, that person, in the sense of God's word, is a new creature, though not grown up to the full stature designed.

If there were no *degrees* in faith, if *weak* faith was *no* faith, if there was no faith at all in one that has any doubt or fear; why did our Lord say to his disciples, 'O ye of *little faith*'? (Matt. 6:30); and unto Peter in particular, who in the general was one of the *strongest* in faith, 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' (14:31); and again, to his disciples, 'O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves because ye have brought no bread?' (16:8). He doth not say, 'O ye of *no* faith', but 'O ye of *little* faith'. Which plainly implies that there are *degrees* in faith; that *weak* faith is *true* faith, although attended with doubts and fears; and that doubts, fears, and carnal reasonings are evidences that faith is weak or small, either as to the habit thereof in the soul or as to the present exercise thereof by it. And in vain it is for any to object and say,

*Objection.* This is no proof that there are *degrees* in *New Testament* faith, or in the faith of believers under the gospel, inasmuch as *that* faith which our Lord's disciples had while he was with them on earth was not the *same* that they had towards him when Jesus was glorified. For,

*Answer.* The faith even of *Old Testament* saints and of our Lord's *disciples* while in the days of his flesh was the very *same* that true *believers* now have under the gospel. Their faith was conversant with the same object, for the same end. Only with this difference: *They* looked unto Christ as the alone saviour, for all salvation, as he *was* to work it out for them (although they had not such a distinct view of the way and manner how as we now have). And *we* look to him as having done it. Hence our Lord says, 'Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it and was glad.'<sup>2</sup> And all those worthies in the eleventh of Hebrews, who received not the promises (i.e., the fulfilment of them, in the coming of the messiah), who died in faith, are said to have 'seen them afar off',<sup>3</sup> to have been persuaded of them and embraced them. And when many of our Lord's disciples left him and he asks the twelve, 'Will ye also go away?'<sup>4</sup> Peter, in the name of the rest that had true faith, replies, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.'<sup>5</sup> Whence it is evident that *they* had the same faith that *we* have—and that as there were *degrees* in faith then, that *weak* faith was *true* faith *then*, although attended with *doubts* and fears, even so it is *now*.

But further, that there are *degrees* in faith, etc., is evident by what our Lord spake concerning the centurion, 'Verily I say unto you, I have not found so *great* faith, no not in Israel' (Matt. 8:10). If there

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<sup>1</sup>JW records in his diary writing Anne Dutton on Dec. 23, 1740. The letter is not known to survive.

<sup>2</sup>John 8:56.

<sup>3</sup>Heb. 11:13.

<sup>4</sup>John 6:67.

<sup>5</sup>John 6:68–69.

had been no *degrees* in faith there would have been no room for distinguishing faith into great or little, greater or lesser. Where there is no *difference* in things, nor *degrees* in the same thing, there can be no *comparison*, to show the excellency of one above the other in *good* things, or the *iniquity* of one above the other in *evil* things. Our Lord then, by this of 'so great faith', sets forth the *excellency* of this man's faith with respect to the *greatness* of its degree, above all that he had found even in Israel. And thus, as to the woman of Canaan, 'O woman, *great* is thy faith' (Matt. 15:28). And hence a peculiar blessedness is pronounced upon believing without sight, because of the purity, excellency and strength of *that* faith to *that* which leans much upon sense. 'Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed' (John 20:29). And to show that there are degrees in faith, Stephen is said to be a man *full* of faith (Acts 9:6, 8). And Barnabas also (11:24). And thus Abraham likewise is said not to be *weak* in faith because 'he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God' (Rom. 4:19–20). But this I think may suffice to prove that there are degrees in faith, that *weak* faith is *true* faith, or that true *faith* may be in that *soul* where there are *doubts* and *fears*; and that the *excellency* of faith lies in its strength, and therefore all true believers should labour after the highest degree of faith.

Before I proceed to the next doctrine I would just beg leave to observe the *ground* of these persons' mistake who assert that there are no degrees in faith, etc. And I think it is this, that they take nothing to be faith but full assurance, or a full assurance of *interest* in Christ's great salvation.

Now, though I grant that true saving faith has *assurance* in the essence or *nature* of it, and more or less in the *actings* of it, yet this assurance is latent, or lies hid as it were, in the *first* actings of faith, and is not sensibly discerned or felt by the soul until faith arrives at a greater strength, under special *manifestations* of divine favour and *sealings* by the Holy Spirit of promise. I believe it is generally experienced by the saints that in their *first* actings of faith their *assurance* is rather an assurance of the saving object than of their own *salvation* thereby. And this might be largely proved from the Word of God. When I say 'an assurance of the saving object', I mean not a *bare* assurance that Christ is the saviour, for this unregenerate persons have, yea the devils; but *such* an assurance that Christ is the saviour that strongly and sweetly draws the soul into an *approbation* of him and a *cleaving* unto him alone as such, even when it doth not know whether he *will* save it or not. And this mistake, that nothing is faith but *assurance*, excludes all those *first* actings of it which are soul-saving, or such to which the salvation of the soul is inseparably connected. And these *are* such as *looking* unto Jesus (Heb. 12:2), *coming* unto him (John 6:37), *fleeing* for refuge (Heb 6:18), etc.

It is Christ's command to the ends of the earth, to sinners at the greatest distance, that they *look* unto him, the great Saviour (Isa. 45:22). And unto all that *look*, upon their *looking*, he grants *salvation*—as in the next words 'Be ye saved'. And *this* act of faith, towards its object Christ, was typed out by the stung Israelites looking to the brazen serpent; as is evident in that our Lord applies that type unto himself the antitype (John 3:14–15), 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believeth in him' (i.e., looketh to him, as the stung Israelites looked to the serpent) 'should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Our dear Lord invites weary, heavy laden sinners to *come* unto him, the mighty Saviour; and upon their coming, has promised to give them *rest*—soul-rest, present and eternal rest (Matt. 11:28). And in his gospel he warns poor sinners to *flee* from the *wrath* to come, unto him, the hiding-place prepared of God for their shelter from the storm of his eternal vengeance. And there is the highest assurance given by the word and oath of a God that cannot lie that those who *flee* unto Christ for refuge, to lay hold on this hope set before them, shall be eternally secure. Whence the consolation hereby given them, is exceeding strong (Heb. 6:18). Now these acts of faith do not denote the presence but the *absence* of assurance of personal safety, previous to their performance.

There is indeed an assurance of the saving object, such an one that draws the soul into *motion* after it, and *coalition* with it, though not an assurance of its present *salvation* by it. The Israelites looked to the serpent *for* healing, not as *having* it; and the soul, in its first actings of faith, looks unto Jesus *for* salvation, and not as *having* it. The soul comes unto Christ *for* life, not as *having* it; as is plain by the

opposite, 'ye will not come unto me that ye *might* have life' (John 5:40). The *manslayer* fled to the city of refuge *for* safety, not as *having* it.<sup>6</sup> And the *soul* flees by faith unto Christ, the refuge of poor sinners, *for* security and not as *having* it. And as healing, life, security and salvation are *consequent* upon these acts of faith, so is the *assurance* thereof likewise. And therefore salvation is proposed to distressed souls as an *encouragement* to faith. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts 16:31). For though it is true that the soul is saved *to* faith, yet it is as true that it is saved *through* it; or, that the great salvation of God in Christ *devolves* in the *declaration* of the divine Word and in the *application* thereof by the blessed Spirit upon that *soul* that believes. So that *faith* is separable from assurance, or faith in its *first* actings is *previous* to assurance. Doubtless it is before it in order of *nature*, and it is often so in order of time. For though there is some degree of assurance, liberty, or soul-rest that follows immediately upon an act of faith, yet it is often not strong enough to prevail above *doubting*, much less to *exclude* it. And is therefore not *reflected* on by the soul as assurance, nor called by that name.

Indeed it is the *duty* of a believer to take God at his word, as to his eternal salvation in his 'believing on the name of his Son Jesus Christ'.<sup>7</sup> And so to take up the *assurance* thereof, and thereby to set to his seal that God is true. But such is the *weakness* of faith at first that without there be auxiliary supplies, as I may say, of help from above, by *influxes* of divine favour, love, and grace upon the soul, it is not *able* to do this. And God herein acts entirely as a sovereign, both as to the *degrees* of his manifestative favour beaming forth upon the soul, and as to the *time* of its manifestation. And hence it is that *some* souls have *assurance of faith* immediately as it were, or the *assurance* of their own interest immediately upon their believing, and others wait longer for it. And hence also arises those different *degrees* of assurance which are in *different* souls, and in the *same* soul at *different* times. That may properly be called assurance of faith which rises so high as a comfortable persuasion of the soul's interest in Christ, so as to prevail *above* doubting, as well as *that* which *excludes* it. Only the latter is more *full*, or properly full assurance. God calls us to *believe* first, and then *after* we have believed he *seals* us; as Eph. 1:13, 'In whom, *after* that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.' And he has wise and gracious ends herein. And according to the *degree* of the Spirit's sealing, so is the *degree* of a believer's assurance. So then, assurance and full assurance of faith being distinguishable and in some sort *separable* from the essence or being and the first actings of faith in the soul, we ought by no means to conclude that there are no degrees in faith, or that there is no *faith at all* in that soul where there are *doubts* and *fears*. For wherever any soul *looks* unto *Christ alone* for the whole of its salvation, that *soul* has *true, saving faith*, whether it has *full assurance* of its own salvation or not. It has the salvation, if it wants the *comfort* of it. And if doubts and fears *prevail*, it is one that is weak in faith, and ought to be *nourished* and *cherished* in a due use of all the means of grace.

And therefore I can't but judge the second doctrine to be as *false* as the first; which is, 2) that till a man has such a faith (i.e., full assurance of faith) he ought not to use the ordinances, not to read the Scripture, not to pray, and not to communicate. I have not room to enlarge on this but shall only give some hints from the Word of God to show the falsity hereof. And,

If those who have not full *assurance* of faith, that are not *strong* in faith, or that are not grown up unto the full *stature* of a perfect man in Christ Jesus (i.e., *comparatively* with other Christians, who are in their minority and weak in faith; not absolutely, for so there are no Christians that either do or can arrive to a fulness of stature, a perfection of *manhood* in Christ, in this life, that being a *glory* reserved for us till the life to come. But if these, I say, that are not strong in faith, or grown up, comparatively, unto a fulness of stature) are not to *use* the ordinances, why are the saints, *when* new-born babes and *as* such, exhorted and commanded to 'desire the sincere milk of the Word, that they might grow thereby'(1 Pet. 2:2)? The milk, the grace of the Word, or the free grace of God in Christ, is by his appointment *contained* in and *communicated* through the *breasts of ordinances*.

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<sup>6</sup>See Num. 35.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. John 1:12.

Ordinances are God's appointed means, by and through which he has promised to *communicate* appointed *grace* unto his children. And therefore it is that they, even when weak, are commanded to use them. And that with this view, or to this end, that they might grow thereby. And what God has joined together, let no man put asunder. If none but full-grown saints were to use the ordinances, the *end* here specified, that they might grow thereby, would be null and void. There would be no place for it. It remains therefore that *weak* saints, even so weak as newborn babes, ought, because commanded, to use the ordinances for their *growth* and nourishment, or that they might be 'nourished up in faith', as the apostle's phrase is. And let none deny this truth, lest taking from God's Word, he reprove them and they be found liars. For that which is here in St. Peter commanded was by the prophet Isaiah long ago predicted and promised, concerning Sion's (the church's) children, even her *weak* ones, that they should 'suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, that they should milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend peace unto her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her side, and dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem' (Isa. 66:11–13). And hence it appears what great encouragement *weak* saints have, or those who are *weak* in faith, to use the ordinances, or to *do* as they are commanded, even to desire the sincere milk of the Word in the *use* of those ordinances, of reading the Scripture, prayer, and communicating at the Lord's table, since the Lord has graciously *promised* such abundant consolation to them thereby, and that they are to seek for and *expect* it unto their *growth* in grace accordingly.

As for *reading God's Word* and prayer, they are parts of *natural* worship *commanded* by God's law to be used even by *natural* creatures, or by *natural unregenerate* men, as that which is *due* unto God their creator as the God of nature, and unto *him* also as he has revealed himself to be the God of all grace in Christ. Hence our Lord exhorted and commanded even those Jews who did not believe in him to 'search the Scriptures, for in them' (saith he) 'ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me' (John 5:39). And the apostle exhorts and commands even a Simon Magus, who was apparently in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, to pray God if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him (Acts 8:22). And if *natural* men are *commanded* to read the Scriptures and to pray, as these duties are part of those appointed *means* whereby God communicates grace to sinners, much more are *spiritual* men *obliged* to use them—that so the good work *begun* in their souls might be *carried on* and *perfected* according to God's appointment. And therefore the apostle having informed *those* converted among the Ephesians that they were no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; that they were built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, etc. He adds, 'For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)' (Eph. 2:19–21, and 3:1, etc.). For what *cause* did the apostle write this epistle to them? It was that they might read it. And for what *cause* was they *obliged* to read it? Why, that they might grow thereby. Which is evident as the first verse of this third chapter stands connected with the 21st of the second. It was that they might *understand* his knowledge of the mystery of Christ. Not that they might have a *bare* simple understanding how great *his* knowledge was in the mystery of Christ, but that by their *reading* thereof they might have *fellowship* with the mystery (as ver. 9); that so they might have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Christ; and so that they might not *faint* at his tribulations for them, which (says he) is your glory. 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc.' And as it is the *duty* of even *weak* saints to read the gospel, so the whole of God's Word, the law or doctrine thereof, that so they may grow thereby. Hence a peculiar *blessedness* is pronounced upon the man that delights in the law of the Lord (Ps. 1), which doubtless includes *reading* thereof. 'And he' (saith the Holy Ghost) 'shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper' (ver. 3–4). The ungodly are not so; that is, not so employed in *reading God's Word* and not so *blest* in the *performance* of that duty. So that not to read the Scriptures is one of the *characters* of the

ungodly, and a part of ungodliness.

And as for prayer, God's dear children, even the *weakest* of them, are *commanded* by the Lord Jesus, Sion's king, to be found in the constant observance thereof; as Luke 11: 9, 'And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you, ....' And they were to ask *for* the Spirit, which was promised to be given them upon their asking (ver. 13)—as the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation* in the knowledge of Christ, to *increase* their graces; and as the Spirit of consolation, to *seal up* their *interest* in the Lord Jesus. So that for these great blessings in the gift of the Holy Ghost, weak believers are to pray.

And as for the Lord's Supper, it is certain that all who have spiritual life ought to do this in remembrance of Christ, that their faith might be *strengthened* thereby. In as much as true believers, therein have *communion with the body and blood of Christ* to their souls' edification (1 Cor. 10:16, 11:24), this being appointed of God to be a *sealing* ordinance to his children. Hence those three thousand souls which were converted under St. Peter's sermon (Acts 2), being immediately baptized and added to the church, continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers (ver. 41–42), and so were filled with gladness of heart (ver. 46).

I should now come to the last doctrine, which is 3) that one that has such a faith, (i.e., a *weak* faith) *may* use the ordinances, but is not obliged or *commanded* so to do.

And as to this, which is as *untrue* as the former, the proofs given under that head that weak believers *are* to use the ordinances may serve to prove the negative assertion of this, 'that they are not obliged to it', to be false. And therefore I shall only add a few queries concerning the positive assertion thereof, 'That they *may* use them'. Which are these: If *weak* believers are not commanded, and so not *obliged*, to use the ordinances, how is it that they *may* use them? How came they by this *liberty*? Doth not all our liberty to use the ordinances of God arise from his *ordaining* them to be used by us? And without a special *command* from God, would not our *observance* of them be *will-worship*? And so far from being accepted, that it would be an *abomination* to the Lord? Again, to what *end* should persons use them if they are not *commanded* so to do? Will God ever *bless* those things which he hath not appointed for the *good* of any *soul*? No, verily.

Let us then cast away all these three doctrines, as not current coin, having brought them to the *balance* of the sanctuary and found them wanting. The design of the enemy of souls herein is to rob God of the glory due his name, and his children of their joy of faith and privileges as believers.

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

Source: published transcription; Dutton, *Letters*, 34–49.



From Anne (Wesley) Lambert

[London]  
January 10, 1741

Dear Brother,

I received yours.<sup>1</sup> I give you thanks. Your reprimand is very gentle. As they are just, it does not in any respect become me to find fault with your proceedings.

The true cause of my false imaginations proceeds from my wanting a new heart, which I fancied I had long since (as I vainly thought). Because my outward actions were<sup>2</sup> restrained, I found myself much weaned off of the pleasures of this world. As my trials are great, my health and strength entirely gone, I regarded nothing this world could afford. I thought my heart changed indeed.

My brother [CW] in a sermon Thursday night last gave me to know my mistake. I now find my wants more and more every day. I did in some measure begin to see my mistake before you left me, but not as I do now. This is what I have long wanted, and I hope I shall in God's good time have it. I find myself nothing indeed. I hope you will pardon, pity, and pray for me. I am sure your prayers by my bedside the morning you left me are in some measure heard for me already. I never could see my wants before, in any degree.

My brother seems to like me not, which don't give me any uneasiness. Nay, I think I love him the better. What is all the world to me if God love me. Such I am sure he does, or I should not have been permitted to have seen my wants. I never once suspected the wickedness of my heart. I have faith I shall have comfort in his good time. I shan't say anything to you concerning my husband, because I hope to see you soon.<sup>3</sup> I have not<sup>4</sup> said anything to my brother about going home.<sup>5</sup> I leave it all to God. As to my uneasiness about your expenses, I hope if it be to your determent God will not suffer it to continue long. I see many things stumbled me since I came hither. But I don't now concern myself with any. Tis nothing to me indeed. Can I once attain my longed desire, how happy shall I be. This world will be regarded no more.

My dear brother, pray for me. I wish I was only worthy to call you so. Mrs. [Arabella] Seaton gives her duty. My love and blessing to Jacky.<sup>6</sup> I am,

Yours affectionately,

A. Lambert

P. S. Nanny Smith gives her duty, is much grieved Betty Baddiley<sup>7</sup> don't write.

*Address:* 'To the Revd. Mr. Wesley / at the New Room in / the Horse-Fair / Bristol'.

*Postmark:* '10/IA'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'S[ister] Nanc. Jan. 12. 1741 / ad. in C[harles]'s'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDWF 10/1.

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<sup>1</sup>JW records in his diary writing to his sister Anne, or 'Nancy', on Jan. 5 (see *Works*, 19:446); the letter is not known to survive.

<sup>2</sup>Orig., 'ware'.

<sup>3</sup>John Lambert was plagued with financial troubles and prone to drinking. He would die in 1743.

<sup>4</sup>Orig., 'hant'.

<sup>5</sup>Anne was staying at the Foundery, while sick.

<sup>6</sup>Her son, John Lambert Jr., who was apprenticing with Felix Farley in Bristol.

<sup>7</sup>Anne spells 'Bedly'.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley<sup>1</sup>

[London]  
Saturday Night [January 10, 1741]

Be pleased to pay Mrs. Walker 6 shillings from Mrs. Whitcher.<sup>2</sup>  
If you think of Mr. Matthews as I do, send you for him without loss of time.<sup>3</sup> Webb is impatient to go to his place.<sup>4</sup>

Away with the saw! I am weary of it. Keep your spinners, and yourself, till God shows you if there is *anything* in my advices.

In leading souls we seem *nearly* agreed. For the presumptuous, self-willed, self-conceited, you are not so much used as I—but perhaps I am self-conceited in thinking so.

Here's a great outcry for you to come and save the life of self in many. It is in great danger. Make haste, or it will be too late. I knew I should soon frighten you up to town; but I promise you, when you hear all, you will confirm my saying.

I beseech you, keep my brother Ironsides at arm's length—brother [John] Purdy I mean, my most self-conceited, valdevaltical<sup>5</sup> brother Purdy. I hope shortly to hear him say with Job, 'I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder; he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces.'<sup>6</sup>

If George Whitefield has declared against the truth, George Whitefield will come to nothing. Therefore leave him. He that believeth shall not make haste.

God is leading the blind by a way that I knew not. The whole secret is our letting Christ take all the matter into his own hand.

My love to the brethren. Adieu.

I narrowly escaped drowning last night.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr Wesley / at the New School / Bristol'.

*Postmark:* '10/IA'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'C[harles] Jan. 10, 1741 / a[nswere]d 12'.

*Sources:* holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/11. Also CW's reference copy in his hand; Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 2001/8281/1.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Answering a non-surviving letter from JW on Jan. 7 (see JW, diary, *Works*, 26:630). This period is missing from CW's MS Journal, but clearly he was meeting with difficulties in the London society.

<sup>2</sup>Likely Mary Whitcher, who appears in a married women's band at the Foundery in the first surviving list, for Apr. 1742 (Foundery Band Lists).

<sup>3</sup>Likely William Matthews, who appears in a single men's band in Apr. 1742 in the Foundery Band Lists.

<sup>4</sup>The first two sentences do not appear in CW's reference copy. The person mention is likely Samuel Webb, another member of a single men's band in the Foundery Band Lists.

<sup>5</sup>CW appears to be intentionally doubling the Latin word '*valde*', which means certain or sure of oneself; hence something like 'very sure of himself'.

<sup>6</sup>Job 16:12.

<sup>7</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:45–46.

From Joseph Humphreys

Deptford  
January 17, 1741

Dear Sir,

By the good hand of God I came safe to Deptford on Wednesday evening [Jan. 14]. The next day I was going to the Quarter Sessions<sup>1</sup> but was prevented, being informed that I was too late. So that in that respect my journey from Bristol was in vain. I am told that there will be another Sessions in about three weeks' or a month's time, which is to be at Greenwich, than which time I believe I ought to defer the thing no longer. The devil had got an advantage over some souls at Deptford by my being absent. But I trust it will turn out for their good. As to my coming to Bristol again, indeed I do not seem to have a liberty in my own soul. You may remember sir, when I broke off from the academy,<sup>2</sup> I told you that I judged it to be my incumbent duty in the first place to take care of the souls at Deptford and Greenwich, and next to this I should be willing to serve with you in the gospel according to the ability that God gave me. And this is my judgment still. So far as I can be serviceable under you without breaking in upon my prior engagement I shall be heartily willing. But I judge that my coming to Bristol will be inconsistent with discharging my conscience at Deptford. Your brother Charles, it seems, would not have been there at all, had he not been provoked to it by the outrage of the scoffers. So that I may thank them for his service. Besides, sir, should not I be guilty of the same that you charged upon Mr. [Richard] Viney, who having ministered for the Oxford society for so long a time, afterwards left them? Your observation was, 'What could be more like a Jesuit than this?'

But you will say, perhaps, I am not to leave them totally. But sir, how can it be otherwise? If Mr. [John] Cennick leaves Bristol and Kingswood, and I am once engaged in his place, how shall I remove from thence again? The same reason that calls me there for a week will urge me also to stay there for months, or perhaps years. Another thing is (for I will speak my mind freely), so far as I see at present I cannot cordially do anything in opposition to Mr. Cennick. As to his particular opinions, so long as he is silent about them, so long they can do no harm.<sup>3</sup> Were he to leave your people of his own accord, this objection would drop to the ground. But indeed my way is not clear at present to do anything in order to exclude him from labouring in those parts, for I should think that I prevented a useful instrument, especially since my labours were called for in another part.

Upon the whole, I would beg of you sir to put yourself in my case. Should you think it right to leave a flock, to supply whose lack of service you had suffered the loss of all things, and the oversight of which you had had for so long a time, and whose ears and hearts did still seem open and ready to receive your sayings with gladness. This is the case. And I see none who are like-minded, who do as it were naturally care for them so as I do. I will now leave you to judge.

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<sup>1</sup>A county court held quarterly; in this case, at Epiphany.

<sup>2</sup>The son of a zealous dissenting minister, Humphreys had studied at Deptford Academy with this ministry in view (1733–39). But he was converted by Whitefield in the summer of 1738, while on vacation in his home town of Burford, Oxfordshire. He formed a religious society at Deptford for Whitefield's converts that fall, which led to his expulsion from Deptford Academy. So Humphreys moved to study with John Eames in Moorfields, where he became friends with JW and CW. In Sept. 1740 he began to preach at the Foundery, and to serve as JW's pastoral assistant (JW called him 'the first lay preacher that assisted me in England in 1738'). But within about a year Humphreys recognized his divergence from JW's Arminianism, and joined forces with Whitefield. This relationship was also short lived; by 1744 Humphreys had gone independent.

<sup>3</sup>At this point Humphreys is still siding with the Wesley brothers' Arminianism and with their stress on Christian perfection. Things will soon change on both counts.

If I come down again, indeed sir it must be upon this condition, that you will engage not to confine me there, except it be for a short season—as it were, for a present distress. If I am wrong in these things, I beg of the Lord to open my eyes. I hope you will take nothing amiss, for it is better to speak the real sentiments of one's heart than to cover anything. I shall be willing still to serve you at London as usual, and hope I shall speak the *same things*, for the main. I entreat of you in return to write your whole mind to me in plain words. I trust I shall receive it in love, and hope the Lord will direct me to do nothing that may offend you or grieve your spirit. I know it would be cutting to me, were I to do any such thing. I am sensible of, and therefore I cannot help acknowledging, my unworthiness to serve with you in the gospel. And indeed I esteem it a very great favour and condensation on your part that you have thus far taken me into relationship with you. I hope I shall eternally love you! And as you have hither to, so I trust you always will bear with my infirmities whensoever you see them.

I would have you send me word what to do with the horse that I brought up. Brother Andrews told me it would kill it to be at grass during the frost. So at present it is at brother Brown's at Deptford,<sup>4</sup> at hay, where it will hardly cost less than half a crown a week.

If your brother Charles has carried anything to an extreme, I am persuaded it will turn out for the best. For indeed I have thought for some time that many have stood in need of being awakened out of their sleep. And it seems his discourses have been very sharp since he has been in London.

Brother Church and the family give their duty to you. My love to all that are seeking the Lord Jesus—to brother [Edward] Nowers and [John] Purdy; and tell him I should be glad if he would write to me.

I desire your prayers for the welfare of my soul. Sometimes I have a witness that I thirst exceedingly for the living water, and at other times I feel as it were no desire for God. Though at the same time I would fain have a desire towards him, and the remembrance of his holiness! Once upon the road, and twice since I have been at London, I have felt a very great inward power of the Lord indeed. I long to feed continually upon that which I once tasted of. O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my soul. That scripture is applicable and comfortable to me: 'Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding and love you freely.'<sup>5</sup> My old enemy has pushed fore at me, and indeed I have not been faithful to the grace given. But though I fall, yet shall I rise again! God has given me to believe that I shall one day overcome my enemies; yea, and be more than a conqueror through him whose name I am absolutely unworthy to take into my lips. O for that change of the heart which shall take away even the possibility of sinning any more. Till then, may I fight the good fight of faith. I believe we may be kept from the commission of sin for a season, before we are born again. But in Scripture the character of him that is born again is not only that he doth not commit sin, but also that he cannot commit it. This state I verily believe. O that I may never rest till I myself am in it. Jesus, thou knowest all my heart. Come quickly and take possession of thy temple.

I am

Yours for Jesus' sake,

J. H.

After having tasted grace  
How could I sin again;  
Pierce the Son of God afresh  
And cause him second pain?

Could I be again restor'd  
Free grace indeed I then should prove

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<sup>4</sup>Likely the 'honest' William Brown whom JW visited on Feb. 10, 1769 as he neared death (see *Journal, Works*, 22:170–71).

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Jer. 3:22.

O my hard heart! pierce it, Lord,  
And change it into love.<sup>6</sup>

*Address:* 'To / The Rev. Mr John Wesley / at the New Room / in the Horsefair / Bristol'.

*Postmarks:* '19/IA', and triangle with 'PENY POST PAYD'. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW: 'b Humphreys Jan. 17, 1741'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/79.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>This appears to be a hymn of Humphreys's composition.

<sup>7</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:46–47.

From the Rev. Ralph Erskine<sup>1</sup>

Dunfermline  
January 31, 1741

Reverend and Dear Sir,

...<sup>2</sup> I was glad to find the Lord was pleased to enlighten you in that point relating to the indisputable right that every Christian congregation hath to choose its own pastor. The modesty, judgment, and caution with which you write concerning other points relating to discipline, wherein it is not yet given to us to agree, appears with a very beautiful and promising aspect unto me. It is no doubt a great blessing that we can love and bear with one another till it please our Lord to reveal even this unto us. And in the meantime it yields some hope to me that God is on his way to do so that you are convinced of that one point, which you own you knew not before, so it is a point of very great moment and carries along with it many other things respecting church government, such as the Lord hath appointed in his Word. May the Lord show more and more to all the lovers of his name how much of a general reformation even in this, as well as other things, is necessary; and excite instruments for bringing it about in due time. May the King of Zion appear in his glory and build up Zion. May the time to favour her come, yea the set time. And may gospel truth especially be seen in its beauty, and felt in its power and efficiency.

A woman in this town, being not long ago at London where her husband stays at present, told me that she heard you and observed two things wherein she thought you and we would differ. One was that you seemed to allow all promiscuously to come to the Lord's table, which we hold to be a confirming ordinance for friends and disciples, and not properly a converting one. Another was that you seemed to hold that the sins of those that are believers did, after conversion, flow no more from the remains of corrupt nature that may be in the regenerate, but merely from outward temptations; or in words to that purpose. I questioned the good woman, whom I take to be both religious and judicious, if she was very sure that she had not mistaken you; and she having again affirmed it was as she reported, I told her I would seek an account thereof from yourself, which she was willing I should do. If you please therefore at your leisure to inform me how that matter stands, and whether she has misrepresented it, I'll be glad to know, especially if it be found we differ not in these points. ...<sup>3</sup>

I am, reverend dear sir,

Your affectionate and loving brother,

Ralph Erskine

Source: published transcription; Erskine, *Fraud and Falshood discover'd*, 34–35.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Answering JW's letter of June 26, 1740, but mainly an attempt to assess their doctrinal differences. Erskine added: 'To this letter I never got any return from him, nor did I ever write to him since.' JW thought that he had replied, as he mentioned in his last letter to Erskine, dated Nov. 30, 1742.

<sup>2</sup>Erskine's transcription begins with a dash, showing that he has elided the earlier opening material.

<sup>3</sup>There is another dash in Erskine's printed transcription here; likely again indicating elided material at the end of the letter.

<sup>4</sup>Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:48.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

[On board the Minerva  
[February 1, 1741]

My Dear, Dear Brethren,

Why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination?<sup>1</sup> Why did you in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymn-book?<sup>2</sup> How can you say you will not dispute with me about election and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon over against election to Mr. Garden<sup>3</sup> and others in America? Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge, I always was, and hope I always shall be, desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ, and that I cannot *now* do without speaking of election. My answer to the sermon is now printing at Charleston; another copy I have sent to Boston, and another I now bring with me, to print in London.<sup>4</sup> If it occasion a strangeness between us, it shall not be my fault. There is nothing in my answer exciting to it, that I know of. O my dear brethren, my heart almost bleeds within me! Methinks I could be willing to tarry here on the waters for ever, rather than come to England to oppose you.

Yours, etc.,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters* (1976), 509.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>JW, *Free Grace, Works*, 3:544–59.

<sup>2</sup>CW's hymn 'Universal Redemption' was appended to JW's sermon (see *ibid.*, 3:559–63). The Wesley brothers then included this hymn in *HSP* (1740), 136–42—along with a few others of similar theme.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. Alexander Garden (c. 1685–1756), rector of St. Philip's Church in Charleston, South Carolina and currently the ranking clergyman in the south, as Commissary to the Bishop of London.

<sup>4</sup>Whitefield, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (Dec. 24, 1740).

<sup>5</sup>Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:48–49.

From Joseph Humphreys

Deptford  
February 26, 1741

My Dear Brother, and Much Esteemed in the Lord,

I and Peter Böhler and Mr. [Westley] Hall came from Oxford to London on Monday. I bless the Lord I am now safe at Deptford.

I thank my God he has again delivered me from the love of the creature. O praise God on my behalf. He is long-suffering and gracious. He has remembered his covenant and has not forgot his word upon which he caused me to trust. Therefore my soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.<sup>1</sup> I know not how to express myself with sufficient gratitude. As I was riding alone through the wood near West Wycombe,<sup>2</sup> there the Lord manifested his love to me. I was fixed as in former times. O that I may be faithful! I dare not trust in my own heart. But I know if I trust the Lord Jesus I shall be kept from this time forth, even for evermore! I do feel again that a good work is begun upon my soul. I pray God to carry it on, for without him I can do nothing.

What do you think of Sally Church's<sup>3</sup> coming down to Bristol? Could not she be at Kingswood house in the room of Hannah?<sup>4</sup> I will leave it to your consideration.

I suppose brother [Edward] Nowers will tell you that I took part with the separatists at Kingswood.<sup>5</sup> But if advising them to have no separate meetings was to take their part, then I did. This I own, I thought that there wanted more long-suffering with them. But whether I thought right or no I cannot tell. I heard both sides separately, and each seemed to clear themselves. I was not able to be a perfect judge without hearing both sides face to face. But this brother Nowers was unwilling to do. So that to this hour I am not capable of judging. I thought brother Nowers was far from using Nanny Davis<sup>6</sup> well, when he turned her out of Bristol house. I don't think Jesus would have done so.

Dear sir, I hear that you are going to disclaim John Cennick publicly. Permit me to be free, to ask how this is consistent with what you declared of him at Kingswood at the love-feast when I was there, namely that you were of one heart, and that you were joined hand in hand together. Certainly you knew as much of him then as you do now. If I judge wrong, I should be glad to be set right. John Cennick has declared to me that he should not have meddled with that point of final perseverance had not your brother begun to speak against it! Is this true? For my part I am of Peter Böhler's mind, who says we must preach up daily perseverance, and let alone all controversies.

I hear that you was informed that I had altered my mind concerning perfection. I still believe as I always did, in the full sense, that he that is born of God does not commit sin. But whether there be sin in the flesh is, I think, an unscriptural nicety. I know that when we are pure in heart the members of our body will be universally yielded as instruments of righteousness unto God. In this sense we are free from

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<sup>1</sup>See Luke 1:47.

<sup>2</sup>West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire; on the road from Oxford to Deptford. Humphreys spells 'Wiccomb'.

<sup>3</sup>Surely a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Church of Deptford; see Humphreys letter of Jan. 17 above.

<sup>4</sup>Hannah Barrow was currently the house keeper or 'Mistress' at the Kingswood school; cf. CW, MS Journal, Apr. 22, 1741.

<sup>5</sup>A split had emerged among Methodists in Bristol and Kingswood around John Cennick's vigorous advocacy of unconditional election or predestination; see JW, *Journal*, Dec. 16–26, 1740 (*Works*, 19:174–75) and Feb. 21–Mar. 14, 1741 (*Works*, 19:181–87).

<sup>6</sup>Anne ('Nanny') Davis, an early convert in Bristol, was currently siding with those affirming unconditional election and eternal security. She would later become one of CW's most trusted friends in Bristol. See the hymn he wrote when she died in Nov. 1775 in MS Funeral Hymns (1756–87), 77–78.



sin. I believe that when a person is fully born of God he walks so continually under a sense of the love of God in Christ to him in particular that he cannot yield or consent to sin—no not for a moment, neither in thought, word, nor deed. Sin is defined to be the transgression of the law of God. When our hearts are pure and right with God (or in other words, when we love God with our whole heart) we can no longer then, no not in our hearts, transgress the law of God. And this is that change of the heart, or new birth, without which no one can enter into the kingdom of God. Not but that there may be a work of God upon the soul before we come to this perfection. Nay it must be, or else we can never be brought to it. A person therefore may have true faith before he is thus fully born of God. We must be begotten before we can possibly come to the [new] birth. The first time that we look to Christ by faith our sins are covered. This is our justification, and if we keep looking to Christ we shall have a continued sense of this justification. If we are faithful to the grace given, the little leaven shall leaven the whole lump. If our eye is [turned away] from Christ, we shall be entangled with sin again. We may go great lengths and yet fall away finally. But I believe there is such a a state from which we cannot fall away. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. And I believe Christ is never divided from himself. These things have been my belief, I think, ever since I knew you. Neither have I altered my mind, as I know of, in anything. If you observe anything amiss in what I have said, pray be quite free to tell me of it.

As to predestination, I always desired to let it quite alone, so as neither to speak for it nor against it in a controversial way. Some scriptures which are brought for it I pretend not to understand. There is a mystery in them. One thing I am sure of—it is my business to make my own election sure, and so call upon others also to make theirs sure. One thing is needful. I see the emptiness of all notions. I see the necessity of Christ the substance. I am determined to know nothing by Jesus, and him crucified. This is the rock of ages. Here we have strength, righteousness, election, perseverance, and all that is necessary for our soul's eternal welfare.

I find the dissenters rage more and more against you, as false prophets. I trust you are servants of the most high God. If otherwise, the Lord shall reveal even this unto me. I heard that you publicly tore Mr. Whitefield's letter.<sup>7</sup> Indeed I think it was not right. You have often, dear sir, bid me be free, and so I am. You will bear with me. And be in your turn free with me. My love to brother Nowers, and be pleased to tell him those things that I have mentioned about him in this letter. My love to [John] Purdy and all the brethren and sisters. I pray God to direct us in everything. I approve not for anyone to say of himself: 'I am perfect.' 'I am clean.' The apostle was never the less sanctified for saying 'I am the chief of sinners'!<sup>8</sup> The Lord Jesus be with us. I remain

Your sincere brother and humble servant,

J.H.

*Address:* 'To / The Rev. Mr. John Wesley / at the New Room / Bristol'.

*Postmark:* ['26/FE' obscured]. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'b[rother] Humphreys / Feb 26, 1741 / a[nswere]d March 3'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/80.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Whitefield, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (Dec. 24, 1740).

<sup>8</sup>1 Tim. 1:15.

<sup>9</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:51–52.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]  
February 28, [17]41

I wish you had talked yourself with Peter Böhler.<sup>1</sup> He has not said six words about it, but I guess he only denies that *a perfect freedom from temptation* is of the essence of *Christian perfection*. Whether it is or no, neither he, nor you, nor I can possibly determine. Therefore I have often wished you had let it alone in your preface.<sup>2</sup> You spoke not from your own experience, and those on whose experience you built your doctrine are but of yesterday. None of them<sup>3</sup> in Christ longer than [a] few months. It doth not yet appear what they *shall* be. Mark the end. G—, etc., stand convicted of sloth, lying, etc. Many other offences are there, which you may find out in due time. But I will not touch the apple of your eye.

Peter Böhler is leaving us next week, and [August Gottlieb] Spangenberg. Union is most desirable; and can *hardly* be bought too dear—unless you sacrifice the [Methodists?].<sup>4</sup> I think and judge as you do in this matter. Fear me not.

Perhaps you may see me next week in Bristol. But speak not of it, for tis only a perhaps; perhaps I may go with Böhler to Germany.

If you are shortly left alone, take notice beforehand that I do not depart by reason of any alteration of my judgment (much less affection), but merely through weakness both of soul and body. I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. May his pleasure and work prosper in your hand.

Source: CW's manuscript reference copy; Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 2001/8281/2.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Böhler had just returned from America *en route* to Germany. CW was considering a pilgrimage to Herrnhut. Letters such as this caused his brother to suspect that he was becoming unduly enamoured of the Moravians; see JW to CW, Apr. 21, 1741, *Works*, 26:55–57.

<sup>2</sup>The Preface to *HSP* (1740), particularly §§6–7 (*Works*, 13:43–45).

<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'you'.

<sup>4</sup>A blank is left in the copy.

<sup>5</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:52–53.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]  
c. March 3, 1741

[...] If you think proper, you may show brother [John] Cennick what follows. (N.B. I did not think it proper then.<sup>1</sup>)

My Dearest Brother John Cennick,

In much love and tenderness I speak. You came to Kingswood upon my brother's sending for you. You served under him in the gospel as a son. I need not say how well he loved you. You used the authority he gave you to overthrow his doctrine. You everywhere contradicted it. (Whether true or false is not the question.) But you ought first to have fairly told him, 'I preach contrary to you. Are you willing, notwithstanding, that I should continue in your house, gainsaying you? If you are not, I have no more place in these regions. You have a right to this open dealing. I now give you fair warning. Shall I stay here opposing you, or shall I depart?'

My brother, have you dealt thus honestly and openly with him? No. But you have stole away the people's heart from him. And when some of them basely treated their best friend, God only excepted, how patiently did you take it? When did you ever vindicate us, as we have you? Why did you not plainly tell them, 'You are eternally indebted to these men. Think not that I will stay among you to head a party against my dearest friend—and brother, as he suffers me to call him, having humbled himself for my sake, and given me (no bishop, priest, or deacon) the right hand of fellowship. If I hear that one word more is spoken against him, I will leave you that moment, and never see your face more.'

This had been just and honest, and not more than we have deserved at your hands. I say we, for God is my witness how condescendingly loving I have been toward you. Yet did you so forget yourself as both openly and privately to contradict my doctrine, while in the meantime I was as a deaf man that heard not, neither answered a word, either in private or public.

Ah, my brother, I am distressed for you! I would—but you will not receive my saying. Therefore I can only commit you to him who hath commanded us to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Mar. 8, 1741 (*Works*, 19:186–87).

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<sup>1</sup>JW describes as excerpted from a larger letter; this parenthetical remark is his.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley<sup>1</sup>

[London]  
March 10, 1741

Yesterday morning sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus.<sup>2</sup> He finished his work, and cut it short in mercy; full of thankfulness, resignation, and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus and fell asleep.<sup>3</sup>

[...<sup>4</sup>]

These sons of Zeruiah are too hard for us.<sup>5</sup> Look for no concession from them.<sup>6</sup> All things are possible with God, and for this only reason I do not despair of union. John Cennick's verses I have sent back to his brother.<sup>7</sup> His ingratitude I detest and abhor. A plain sign that I do not know my own. O Hazael, Hazael!<sup>8</sup>

*Sources:* printed extract, Whitehead, *Life*, 1:75–76; and CW's manuscript reference copy, Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 2001/8281/3.

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<sup>1</sup>Answering a non-surviving letter from JW on Jan. 7 (see Diary, *Works*, 26:630). Only two short excerpts from CW's reply have survived.

<sup>2</sup>Kezia Wesley died Mar. 9, 1741, and was buried the following day as St Luke's in Finsbury, Middlesex.

<sup>3</sup>This excerpt is found only in Whitehead, *Life*, 1:75–76. It likely would have been the leading item in the letter.

<sup>4</sup>The paragraph which follows is dated by CW as from a letter of Mar. 10, 1741, and comes near the bottom of a page of reference copy in CW's hand. Frank Baker assumed that the earlier material on that page is also from this letter (see JW, *Works*, 26:53), but it is actually CW's transcription of part of a letter of Benjamin Ingham to JW dated Oct. 3, 1740 (see *Works*, 26:33–34). It seems safest to conclude that only the specifically dated paragraph is from CW's letter to JW.

<sup>5</sup>See 2 Sam. 3:18ff; the three sons are described for their dogged pursuit of their quarry.

<sup>6</sup>CW is clearly focusing on the strong Calvinist voices in Methodist circles, particularly in Bristol.

<sup>7</sup>Likely the verses that Cennick published that year: *Sacred Hymns, for the Children of God in the Days of Their Pilgrimage* (London: B. Milles, 1741).

<sup>8</sup>See 2 Kings 8:15; Hazael was a court official who suffocated his own king.

From Anne (Williams) Dutton

[Great Gransden, Huntingdonshire]  
c. March 15, 1741

Reverend and Dear Brother,

Yours I received,<sup>1</sup> and return you thanks for the same. And as to your queries, I can, through grace, answer them in the affirmative. And with all humility and meekness, wonder and reverence, say I feel Christ living in my heart. That he hath revealed the Father in me. That the Father, Son, and Spirit dwell in my heart. And that *I am as sure by immediate, inward knowledge that the Three-One God dwelleth in me as that my soul inhabiteth my body.*

As to 'Christ's living in me',<sup>2</sup> this is a manifest proof. In that he has given me to see and feel my own *deadness* towards God, as related to and a descendant from the first Adam. That continual *need* I stand in of the quickening influences of the second Adam. And likewise to *feel* the same, in some measure, in my poor soul, unto the exercise (I hope growing exercise) of all graces, and the performance of all duties, with ineffable delight in the liberty of his dear children.

But my brother, my heart trembles to talk of 'graces' and performances. This somewhat *quiets* me, that I am speaking of what Christ doth in me, rather than of what I do. For indeed, I see so much *imperfection* in my graces and duties that I am glad to run by faith, out of my imperfect self, into my perfect Jesus, and to see *my* beauty in *his* fairness, and *my* blackness swallowed up in *his* comeliness. I rejoice in *his* living *for me*, which has made me fair—yea, *all-fair!* And I would not be without that gracious experience I have of his living in me for a *thousand worlds!* And I verily believe, I know, I know to my unspeakable joy, that the *life* of Jesus which I *feel* in my soul shall *remain* in me, and increase, until it has swallowed up all my *death* and darkness, and filled all my *powers* brimful with its own immense *glories!* And oh for that happy day!

As to 'Christ's revealing the Father to me',<sup>3</sup> all glory to my *Lord*, he *has* in a great *measure* done it! He has given me to *know* his *relation* to me as a 'Father' by grace, in his new covenant, and mine to him as a child by the same grace! He has opened his *heart-love* to me, and shown me how *anciently* it was *fixed* upon me in him, even upon *me*, upon my individual person, before the mountains had a birth! And how *freely* this love of his heart, as a sovereign act of his *will*, wrought towards me. Freely, without any *motive* from me, without any *foreseen goodness* in me! For indeed I had none, but what this *free love* must give. (Nor was it possible for God to *foresee* any *goodness* in a creature but he must first *see* it in himself, as the resolution of his *will* to bestow it upon that creature.) And so this love was a *preventing* love, it was *aforehand* with my *goodness!* I see that this *love* was fixed upon my *person* without *regard* to my goodness. And that out of its own riches, as a *flow* of this infinite ocean, it resolved to *bestow* all goodness, greatness, and glory upon me! Further, Christ has revealed the *Father* to me in his love, as it was distinguishing a *sovereign* love to Jacob to me, that was no better than Esau, than my brother that was passed by! He has likewise shown me the glory of the Father's love, as it is unchangeable, like himself—yea, *himself-loving!* Again, Christ hath shown me the Father in the greatness, invincibleness, inseparableness, and eternity of his *love!* That was so great as to give his Son *for me* and *to me*, and in and with him, all things freely! That it is so invincible that none of all my great sins and innumerable *provocations* ever were, or *shall* be, able to *overcome it!* That it is so inseparable that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to *separate* me from this *love* which is in Christ Jesus my Lord! And as to the *eternity* of it, he hath shown me that it will *flow out* upon me, unto all grace and glory,

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<sup>1</sup>JW records in his diary writing Mrs. Dutton on Feb. 28, 1741. The letter is not known to survive, but JW's main queries are evident through her responses.

<sup>2</sup>One of JW's queries.

<sup>3</sup>Another of JW's queries.

without the least diminution, unto *ages without end*! Thus Christ *hath* revealed, *doth*, and *will* reveal the Father to me.

And from this revelation of the Father in his *relation* to me, and *love* towards me (and I might say, in the rich provision he has made for me in his everlasting covenant), I am strongly drawn, by the cords of love, to love him again. To love his law, and to hate evil. To love holiness, because of the excellency of its nature as *conformable* to God, and because it *honours* and *pleaseth* him. And to hate sin as the *worst* of evils, because of its *contrariety* to God, the chief good, and because of the *dishonour* it casts upon him, and the *provocation* it gives him. Christ's revealing the Father to me engageth me to cleave unto him delightfully, to raise him joyfully, to cry to him *earnestly*, 'Abba, Father', and to obey him freely in the liberty, the glorious liberty of his children. Not with a bondage, slavish *fear* of being cast out of his family, but with a *filial* reverence, a *child-like* freedom, as being no more a servant, to return to bondage, but a son, a child, an *heir* of promise, that shall *abide in the house for ever*.

As to 'the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost's dwelling in my heart',<sup>4</sup> verily it is *so*! Oh infinite *condescension*! Amazing *wonder*! For God, the Three-One God, hath chosen Zion, the church, and every particular believer for his habitation. This is my rest for ever. Saith he, 'Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.'<sup>5</sup> And of his new covenant children he says, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them.'<sup>6</sup> And, through grace, I, a vile unworthy worm, am one of that number!

God's *essential* presence fills all places and things, in heaven, earth, and hell. His *glorious* presence fills the upper world. His *wrathful* presence, the dreadful deep. His *general sustaining* presence, the whole universe. And his *special gracious* presence, his saints on earth. He is present, as the God of nature, with all the works of his hands, to support their beings and natural operations. He is *present* in his *people* as the God of grace, to support their life of grace and all its *operations* in and by them. And though the *manner* of his dwelling, as the God of nature in and with all the *works* of his hands, and as the God of grace in and with his people, is ineffable; yet is his *presence* in and with them both, manifest by his Word and by his various *operations* upon, in, and by them. It may suffice us then to know that God dwelleth in us believers as the God of all grace, by the testimonies which his *Word* give of it and by the *effects* of his dwelling, without a too curious enquiry *how* he doth dwell.

But yet, as I humbly conceive, the *Father* dwelleth by the Son, the Son by the Spirit, and the Spirit from both. So that it is the *Holy Ghost* only that *personally* dwelleth in our hearts. And that by the Spirit's dwelling in us personally, the Father and the Son may be said to dwell in us relatively; or, with relation to *his* dwelling in us, in as much as *he* comes in *their* name, to manifest *their* glory in us, and to give us communion with their persons; and is the next and immediate *flow* of all divine *communications* unto us, by which the Father and the Son *dwell* in, and flow out, in their *love, life, and glory* upon our souls.

Thus the Father, Son and Holy Ghost dwell in my heart. For 'He', saith our Lord, 'that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. . . . And we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.'<sup>7</sup> And I can say, through grace, 'Truly my fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ',<sup>8</sup> by the blessed Spirit. That the Father and the Son dwell in and flow *out* upon my Soul in love, by the *Holy Ghost* the comforter. And that at times I have sweet communion with *all* the three persons in love, in the love-glory of the Godhead, in all its displays through Christ, and sometimes distinct communion with *each* of the divine persons in those displays of grace which more peculiarly belong to *each* of them respectively, in the great work of my salvation. And this

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<sup>4</sup>Another of JW's queries.

<sup>5</sup>Ps. 132:14.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. 2 Cor. 6:16.

<sup>7</sup>John 14:21–23.

<sup>8</sup>1 John 1:3.

*communion* which I have with God is an inward, efficacious, soul-transforming thing. For while I behold the glory of the Lord, while in the very inmost of my soul the glorious Godhead shines, I am *changed* into the same *image* from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. And therefore,

In answer to your last query, I am 'as sure by inward immediate consciousness that the Three-One God dwelleth in my soul as that my soul inhabiteth my body'. I know that God dwelleth in my soul by the *displays* of his glory there, and by the *operations* of the same in and upon me. I am as conscious of this as I am that my soul dwelleth in my body, by its inward operations and its *enlivening* and *actuating* all the parts and members thereof to perform their several functions. I need not *go out of myself* to ask others whether I have a soul dwelling in me, so long as I *feel* the operations of my own mind and *see* their powerful effects in every member of my *body*. Neither need I go abroad to ask others whether God dwells in my soul, while I *see* his glory *and feel* his power there. And I am certain, from the divine Word and from my own experience, that where God *dwells* by his gracious presence in any soul, that soul, at the *times* of his manifesting forth his glory there, has the fullest demonstration, the most delightful *sensation* of his *presence*. And that soul that does not experimentally know what God's enlightening, quickening, strengthening, and comforting *presence* is, has no reason to conclude that the God of all grace dwells in him, but the *contrary*.

I doubt not, sir, you'll think my answers very long. Pray bear with me. I have answered according to the measure of light and experience given, and assistance afforded. I shall leave the whole with God, to make it of some use to your soul, if it be his good pleasure.

Wishing you all joy and peace in believing, and all assistance, success, and defence in our dear Lord's work, I am, sir,

Yours in him for ever, etc.

*Source:* published transcript; Dutton, *Letters*, 49–56.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]  
Monday [March 16, 1741]

[[Dear Brother,]]

By the time this reaches Bristol I suppose you will be at London. But if you *should not* be set out, this is to summon you hither immediately. [[George Whitefield, you know, is come.<sup>1</sup>] His fair words are not to be trusted to, for his actions show most unfriendly. An answer to your sermon he just put into my hands. The title was enough. I endorsed it, 'Put up again thy sword into its place',<sup>2</sup> and deferred reading till it is in print.<sup>3</sup>

Some say you cannot help disputing and preaching and printing against him. Let us by the grace of God disappoint them. He that believeth shall not make haste!<sup>4</sup>

My love to all. Tell John Ellison<sup>5</sup> he will soon have an opportunity of telling me all his heart—unless something extraordinary prevents.

Adieu.

Tuesday Morning [March 17]

George Whitefield came into the desk while I was showing the believer's privilege, i.e., power over sin.<sup>6</sup> After speaking some time I desired him to preach. He did—predestination, perseverance, and the necessity of sinning. Afterwards I mildly expostulated with him, asking if he would commend me for preaching the opposite doctrines in his orphan-house,<sup>7</sup> protesting against the publishing his answer to you, and labouring for peace to the utmost of my power. Asked whether he held reprobation, which he avowed, as also his intention of preaching it upon the housetop. Behold, the hope of him is in vain. He is determined to follow his friend Seward,<sup>8</sup> *passibus equis*.<sup>9</sup> Καὶ σὺ, Τέκνον! Καὶ σὺ εἶ Ἐκείνων!<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Whitefield landed at Falmouth on Mar. 11, 1741, and reached London on Sunday, Mar. 15. For some weeks CW had been urging JW to return from Bristol to London. This letter had the desired effect, as JW wrote in his *Journal*: 'Finding all things now, both at Kingswood and Bristol, far more settled than I expected, I complied with my brother's request, and, setting out on Wednesday the 25th, the next day came to London.'

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 26:52.

<sup>3</sup>It appeared the next month as George Whitefield, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley: In Answer to his Sermon entitled Free-Grace* (London: W. Strahan, 1741).

<sup>4</sup>See Isa. 28:16.

<sup>5</sup>John Ellison, their nephew, was in Bristol serving as an apprentice to Felix Farley the printer.

<sup>6</sup>CW often preached on this topic from Rom. 8; cf. MS Journal, Sept. 15, 1739.

<sup>7</sup>Whitefield had built an orphan house in Georgia.

<sup>8</sup>I.e., William Seward.

<sup>9</sup>'With equal steps.'

<sup>10</sup>'And you, lad! You also are one of them!' According to Suetonius, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars: The Deified Julius*, 82.3, these were the words of Julius Caesar as Brutus stabbed him.



Warn all among you not to make mention of his name within their lips, except in prayer. Bring up Barclay<sup>11</sup> if ready—(to be published the day *after* his reply), with the *Hymns*.<sup>12</sup> Our third volume should *now* be printed.<sup>13</sup> But in the use of means. O let us look through all. Lord, our eyes are unto thee! Arise, and maintain thine own cause.

I am marvellously unconcerned at the prospect of the storm and distraction that must surely follow. My soul is otherwise taken up.

*Non me tua fervida terrent  
Dicta, puer, dii me terrent et Jupiter hostis.*<sup>14</sup>

I am struggling in the toils of death:

Who shall tell me if the strife  
In heaven or hell shall end!<sup>15</sup>

*Address:* 'For / The Revd Mr Wesley / at the New School / Bristol'.

*Endorsements:* by JW, 'C[harles] March 16, 1740 / a[nswe]r[d] 20'. JW added on the other address flap, 'Kath. Ellis / Mary Crease / Kath. Stephens / Mary Boshier / Martha Chiswell / Mary Withers / Mary Taylor'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/12.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>JW had extracted a portion of the Quaker Robert Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* rejecting unconditional election and was just preparing to publish it under the title *Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination* (see *Bibliography*, No. 48).

<sup>12</sup>[CW,] *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love; To Which is Added the Cry of a Reprobate and the Horrible Decree* (Bristol: Farley, 1741).

<sup>13</sup>CW was encouraging more rapid publication of the third volume in the *HSP* series; JW would work it through press in late 1741, though its publication page would list it as 1742.

<sup>14</sup>'Your fiery words do not frighten me, lad; the gods frighten me, and having God as my enemy.' Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, xii.894–95.

<sup>15</sup>CW, Hymn 8, st. 9, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love*, (1741), 15.

<sup>16</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:54–55.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon<sup>1</sup>

[Enfield Chase, Middlesex<sup>2</sup>]

April 2, 1741

Reverend Sir,

Oh how am I ashamed to look up when I think of the loving kindness of the Lord and my fears are ready to speak every moment my misery and nothingness. For my tongue cannot enough declare it, my breast so overwhelmed with his goodness and the flame that is ever burning there. I could go on to you for ever thus. But I know how precious your time is to many souls, as well as me. I will therefore only entreat you to spare a few moments to this bearer, who I really believe is an humble soul seeking the Lord in great simplicity. I have directed him to you, as I find he has been a strong predestinarian and is now trying to flay it off. I have given him many earnest entreaties not to go near the still brethren, as I find Mr. Simpson seems to have much weight with him.<sup>3</sup> And under his present doubts, one other I have a true love for is to be avoided—viz., Mr. [George] Whitefield. My prayers are ever with you and your most valuable brother. I cannot forget while I live the comfort he was the minister of to my soul on Easter day.<sup>4</sup> Whenever a few hours will be most easy to you, spent from your flock, remember a Christian friend who will think it a blessing to have you under her roof.

I will only add, by way of query, do you know one Ann Zouch of Islington, whose letter I send you, to be what she there represents herself?

I beg my love to your mother<sup>5</sup> and Mr. [Westley] Hall, Mr. Whitefield, etc. I am, with high esteem,

Your faithful servant in Christ.

Don't forget me in your prayers, for I am a worm *indeed*.

I shall want much to show you how deep they have drank in Yorkshire of the still brethren's poison.

*Address:* 'For / The Revd Mr John Wesley' (hand-delivered).

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'Lady Huntingdon / April 2, 1741 / a[nswere]d by going'.<sup>6</sup>

*Source:* holograph; MARC, WCB D6/1/194.

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<sup>1</sup>Selina (Shirley) Hastings (1707–91) was the wife of Theophilus Hastings, 9th Earl of Huntingdon. Their home was Donington Park, Castle Donington, Leicestershire, though they also owned houses in London and Bath, where they spent much of their time. Benjamin Ingham introduced Lady Huntingdon to the renewal movement in 1739, but their relationship soured by mid-1740, when Ingham announced his intention to marry her sister-in-law, Lady Margaret Hastings. Thus, when Lady Huntingdon returned to London in autumn 1740 she decided to attend the Foundery instead of Fetter Lane, and her relationship with the Wesley brothers was launched. This is the first known surviving letter in her correspondence with JW.

<sup>2</sup>Location of the London area home of Lord and Lady Huntingdon.

<sup>3</sup>John Simpson (or Sympson) had become an advocate of 'stillness' at the Fetter Lane society.

<sup>4</sup>Easter was on Mar. 29, 1741. CW was in London preaching, but no journal or journal letter survives to record the text.

<sup>5</sup>Susanna (Annesley) Wesley; currently living at the Foundery.

<sup>6</sup>JW's diary records a visit to Lady Huntingdon's London house on Apr. 15 (*Works*, 19:458).

From Joseph Humphreys

Deptford  
April 5, 1741

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I think I love you better than ever I did in my lifetime. I would not grieve you by any means, if I could possibly help it. And I trust it will be no offence to you if I simply declare what the Lord has done for my soul.

Last Friday I was alone in my chamber. I was reading the latter part of the eighth [chapter] of Romans. It immediately darted into my mind that nothing could by any means separate those whom God had justified from the love of Christ. I know I was once justified, and then it came *with* great power upon my soul that *the Lord had loved me with an everlasting love*.<sup>1</sup> I bowed down before God and begged him not to suffer me to be *deluded*. And if I had ever spoken one word against HIS TRUTH, I humbly besought him to pardon me and to show me clearly what his truth was. I was melted down with love, being sensible that God was my father, and I his child, though I had been rebellious. That *peculiar, special love* called 'electing love' has filled my soul, and almost ravished me ever since. It is not *new doctrine*, but only a *farther discovery* of God's love. It has been impressed upon my heart as truth. I know and am persuaded it *leads me to be holy, and to love God*. It also constrains me to *love and seek after souls. And where ever I shall find sinners, as God shall enable me, I will preach unto them the forgiveness of sins; even unto each and all of them, if God peradventure shall grant them repentance unto life*. I think I had never more power in preaching than I had *this morning*. And if these are the consequences of *electing everlasting love*, may my soul be ever filled with it. Indeed, I speak that I *do know*, and testify that I *feel*. No reasoning or arguments could have prevailed with me. But when God overpowered me with love, what was I that I should withstand God! I thought proper to write you this, and hope to see you by and by.

I am, reverend sir,

Your unworthy servant and brother,

Joseph Humphreys

Source: published transcription; *Weekly History*, No. 11, p. 3.

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<sup>1</sup>See Jer. 31:3. Humphreys is now coming out publicly as differing from JW and CW on the question of eternal security.

From Joseph Humphreys

Deptford  
April 10, 1741

Reverend Sir,

I think I heard you without prejudice last night.<sup>1</sup> But indeed many things that you spoke concerning David troubled me much. You enlarged exceedingly upon his *faults*, but mentioned hardly anything of his *graces or virtues*. If anyone that had never heard of David before had heard you last night, they would have thought him a *wicked villain*. For my own part, I never heard of such a character before, except it was in Dr. Morgan the deist's book, called *The Moral Philosopher*. The chief difference, I think, between *your* description of David and *his* is this: *You allow that David might be saved at last*; and Morgan in the conclusion of his character says, 'Away with him to the devil, from whence he came.'<sup>2</sup> I think we should be very cautious how we speak concerning those whom God *delighteth to honour*. The Scriptures all along speak very *honourably* of David. He is said to be 'a man of God'. And that he 'walked before God in integrity of heart, and in uprightness'.<sup>3</sup> And God himself, when he sums up his character, does bear witness to him that upon the whole, 'David was one who kept his commandments, walked in his ways, did what was right in his eyes, and kept his statutes and his judgments.'<sup>4</sup>

The apostle Paul, in the [book of] Hebrews, counts David among those worthy elders who obtained a good report through faith and wrought righteousness. And Jesus Christ himself highly dignifies him, when he says, 'I am the root and offspring of David.'<sup>5</sup> As to his blemishes, no one ever said that we are to copy after him in these. His bright character is for our example. His falls are for our warning. ...<sup>6</sup> Upon the whole, David was a *child of God*; and who shall lay anything to God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. ... But indeed, according to your account of David he was, by nature, as all are, a child of the devil. Afterwards, in his youth, he was a child of God. Then upon the affair of Uriah, he was a child of the devil. Then when he obtained remission of sins again he was a child of God. Afterwards when he quibbled and bid his son take vengeance on Shimei, he was a child of the devil again. And I must leave it to you to determine whether after this he was at last a child of God or a child of the devil. Indeed I speak out of real concern upon my mind. These are things which I cannot account for. I should be obliged to you if you should write a line or two in answer to this, who remain with all due respect,

Yours in our common Lord,

Joseph Humphreys

Source: published transcription; *Weekly History*, No. 11, p. 4.

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<sup>1</sup>JW's diary records a private conversation with Joseph Humphreys at 4:30 p.m. on Apr. 9, after which JW preached on Philippians (*Works*, 19:457). It is unclear whether Humphreys is commenting on the private conversation or use of David as an illustration in the later sermon.

<sup>2</sup>See Thomas Morgan, *The Moral Philosopher* (London: s.n., 1737), 323–24.

<sup>3</sup>1 Kings 9:4.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. 1 Kings 3:14, 15:5, etc.

<sup>5</sup>Rev. 22:16.

<sup>6</sup>In this and the following case a long dash appears in the printed transcription, which was the typical way of indicating an elision.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Bristol]  
c. April 18, 1741

No English man or woman is like the Moravians!<sup>1</sup>

*Endorsement:* by CW, 'B[rother]. April 21, 1741 / When I inclined to ye Germans'.

*Source:* holograph: MARC, DDWes 3/4 (quoted by JW in his letter to CW of Apr. 21<sup>2</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup>In the early months of 1741 CW was drawn toward the Moravians (see his letter to JW of Feb. 28, above). JW feared that CW would join Westley Hall in aligning fully with the Moravians ['Five of us did still stand together a few months since. But two are gone to the right hand (poor Humphreys and Cennick); and two more to the left (Mr. Hall and you).']. JW's letter proved effective in giving CW pause, as CW's endorsement reflects.

<sup>2</sup>See *Works*, 26:55–57.

From Joseph Humphreys

Bristol  
Saturday [April 25, 1741]

Reverend Sir,

I would have been joined with you to all eternity if I could. My having continued with you so long as I have has, I believe, led me into a grievous temptation, which yet will work together for my good. Nevertheless, that I may simply follow the light which God has given me, I now think it my duty no longer to join with you, but openly to renounce your peculiar doctrines. I have begun to do it at London, and as the Lord shall enable me will proceed here.<sup>1</sup> I feel no bitterness in my spirit, but love you, pray for you, and respect you.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant, and unworthy brother,

J. H.

*Source:* published transcription; *The Weekly History*, No. 4, pp. 2–3.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In an entry for Apr. 24 of a journal letter, CW confirms that Humphreys had arrived in Bristol and ‘lost not time’ in trying to dissuade members of the society of Arminian and perfectionist views.

<sup>2</sup>Humphreys transcribes his letter to JW within a larger letter to a predestination sympathizer in London. Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:57–58.

From Joseph Humphreys

[p. 15]

Bristol  
May 7, 1741

Dear Sir,

I am obliged to you that you should give yourself the trouble of writing to me.<sup>1</sup> Though we may disagree in our sentiments at present, yet I cannot but still hope we shall each of us rejoice together in the eternal love of God.

Indeed, sir, nothing but the utmost obligation would have forced me to separate myself from you. I stood *by* you and *with* you as long as I could with a safe conscience.

As for the doctrine of election, I was from a child instructed in the belief of it. When I joined with you I did not deny it, but told you I desired not to meddle [p. 16] with the controversy either one way or another, especially since you renounced the doctrine of man's free will. Upon this we gave the right hand of fellowship to each other. Hence arose that grievous temptation which I hinted to you in my last. For by your renouncing of free will, and by your frequent insinuations that universal redemption might very consistently be maintained without ascribing anything of our salvation to our own power or will; I say this, together with my unwillingness to differ from or oppose you in the least (which arose from—which shall I say?—my love to you, or fear of you) had almost led me into your scheme.

Insomuch that I became very culpable in two things:

1. In preaching universal redemption myself, though at the same time I denied man's free will or natural power to turn himself.

2. In being criminally silent when *you* have dressed up election in the most horrible colour, and have unjustly and unfairly charged such consequences upon it which the maintainers of that doctrine utterly deny.

As for the doctrine of perfection, when first I asked you about it your sentiments appeared to me to be the same as you have constantly through several editions set forth in your *Sermon upon Salvation by Faith*.<sup>2</sup> But now you own that you hold a great deal other perfection than you have there described, even a *sinless perfection*. Accordingly, in consequence of this your doctrine, several now in Bristol and Kingswood [p. 17] have absolutely affirmed to me that they 'are without sin in thought, word, or deed'; that they 'neither commit sin, nor have sin'; that they 'are sanctified throughout in soul, body, and spirit, being wholly delivered both from the power and from the very inbeing of all sin'.

I most seriously think they are in a dreadful delusion. I verily believe, and am fully persuaded, that the most perfect will abhor themselves in dust and ashes, and that upon the account of their remain(ing<sup>3</sup>) sin, filth, and pollution. It is no perfection to be (free?) from the stirrings and strugglings of the old man in(side us.) If we have grace given us, habitually and (truly(?) to) subdue and overcome them, it is an invalu(able gift and) privilege. Which is the most glorio(us conqu)ror, or which comes off the most complete (and most per)fect man: he who has few or no enemies to (assault) him; or he who is continually assaulted all his (days,) from all quarters, and yet for the general tri(umphs) over them, going on still from conquering to co(nquering)? This is the case of a Christian, and in this course (not) only the Old but the New Testament saints const(antly) ran. I would have held with your definition of pe(r)fection if I could. I was willing to join with you (to) the utmost. But I dread being wise above what (is) written. I believe I never carried perfection to such (an) height as you have done. But I now believe that I (m) yself have carried it much too far. I therefore renoun(ce) even my own sentiments.

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<sup>1</sup>Humphreys is replying to JW's letter of Apr. 28, 1741 (*Works*, 25:61).

<sup>2</sup>Sermon 1, *Salvation by Faith*, *Works*, 1:117–30.

<sup>3</sup>The only known surviving copy of this published letter, in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, is badly cropped and otherwise defective. Most of the missing material has been reconstructed with good confidence.

‘He that is born of God does not commit sin’<sup>4</sup> is ⟨not⟩ to be interpreted literally and precisely ⟨as⟩ the words are expressed, but [as] ‘a regenerate man is habitually upri⟨ght⟩ in heart and life’. And strictly, *so far as he is born ⟨of⟩ God, or renewed, he cannot commit sin at all.* We are ⟨not⟩ renewed wholly at once. The promises which ⟨are⟩ [p. 18] made to believers contain all the fulness of God. But they are not received by the believer all at once. Indeed the moment that we truly believe, we have then a right and title to all. But all is not actually dispensed forth at once.

You say that the doctrines of perfection and uni⟨v⟩ersal redemption are not peculiar to you. I own that ⟨t⟩he former has been common to many, who in ages ⟨past⟩ have been puffed up with spiritual pride, and igno⟨rant⟩ of themselves; and the latter, namely universal ⟨redempti⟩on, you hold in common with every carnal man. ⟨In rejecting⟩ these things, I think I am taught of God. ⟨The darknes⟩s fairly beat off from both sides, then light ⟨shines.⟩ I trust I shall always bear my testi⟨mony agai⟩nst error, without meddling with the persons ⟨of those⟩ who hold it. May the Lord be my guide and ⟨lantern,⟩ or else I shall surely fall. If you suspect that ⟨I ever⟩ behave unseemly towards you, I hope you will ⟨rebuke⟩ me so much the more.

⟨Mr.⟩ [George] Whitefield is now at Gloucester; and I preach ⟨at the⟩ Bowling Green. I heard that you read Mr. ⟨Whi⟩tefield’s letter<sup>5</sup> publicly at Deptford in order to ⟨opp⟩ose him. I was sorry to hear it. I think ⟨I h⟩ave wrote all my mind at present, and remain, ⟨rev⟩erend and dear sir,

Yours with all due respect,

Joseph Humphreys

Eccles. 3:2, ‘⟨A⟩ time to plant, and a time to pluck up that ⟨whic⟩h is planted.’

1 Cor. 3:11–15, ‘⟨An⟩other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, [p. 19] which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest. For the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss. But *he himself shall be saved, yet so, as by fire.*’

Hymn on Election.

- 1 O let us thank and praise  
Jehovah’s name always;  
Join with solemn sound to bless  
Jesu’s Father, Jesu’s God,  
Who has blest us with all grace,  
Purchased by his own son’s blood.
  
- 2 O sing eternal love,  
Which springs from heav’n above;  
Us in Christ the Father chose,  
E’re the world’s foundations laid;  
Hence eternal life arose,  
Here the love of God’s display’d.

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<sup>4</sup>Cf. 1 John 3:9.

<sup>5</sup>Whitefield, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (Dec. 24, 1740).



- 3 O may our ev'ry voice  
Adore the Father's choice;  
We are chosen to be saints,  
Fore-ordain'd to bring forth fruit;  
Us electing love constrains;  
This the everlasting root.
- 4 This fountain which was seal'd  
In Christ is now reveal'd.  
Hid in God in ancient days,  
Now display'd to you and me [p. 20]  
Wrapt in love and lost in praise,  
Here the source of grace we see.
- 5 Now saints your heads lift up,  
For here's your ground of hope;  
Who are wash'd in Jesu's blood,  
Call'd to holiness of walk,  
Know th' eternal love of God,  
View your everlasting rock.
- 6 Sing of peculiar grace,  
Known to the chosen race,  
Who, great God, or what are we?  
Why are we distinguish'd so?  
*Father, so it pleases thee.*  
This the only cause we know.
- 7 Thy judgments thou hast shown,  
And word to us made known.  
Thus thou has not dealt with all;  
Multitudes in darkness lie;  
Deaf to Jesu's special call,  
Ignorant of God most high.
- 8 O praise free grace, from whence  
Springs all the difference;  
We by nature are the same,  
Enemies of God and Christ;  
Pluck'd as fire-b[r]ands from the flame,  
Now electing love be blest.
- 9 O that our tongues might be  
Fill'd with adoring thee,  
Abraham and David's God,  
Who in covenant art ours.  
Reconcil'd thro' Jesu's blood.  
Praise him all created pow'rs.

10 Praise God, from whom does flow  
All love to us below;  
Who has chose, redeem'd, and chang'd  
Us who were by nature lost.  
Ever praise with love unfeign'd,  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.<sup>6</sup>

*Source:* published transcription; Joseph Humphreys, *A Letter to the Members of the Religious Societies in London, Deptford, Greenwich, Burford, Bristol, and Kingswood; in testimony against the Errors of Universal Redemption and Sinless Perfection* (Bristol, Benjamin Hickey, 1741), 15–20.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>This hymn is apparently Humphreys's own composition.

<sup>7</sup>Slightly abridged version (and omitting hymn) published in *Works*, 26:62–63.

Joseph Humphreys to London Societies<sup>1</sup>

Bristol

May 20, 1741

[p. 3]

My Dear Friends,

‘Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you, (from)<sup>2</sup> God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.’<sup>3</sup>

I do not know that anything moves me to writ(e) you but love to your souls, and a sincere d(esire) to discharge my own conscience.

You know that in my unworthy labours amo(ng) you, I have very much inclined towards universal (re)demption, and sinless perfection. I therefore thi(nk it) my duty to declare my present sentiment concer(ning) each of these. For I *now* judge them to be pern(i)cious) and dangerous doctrines.

With regard to universal redemption, I still (hold) that Jesus Christ by his death and sufferin(g) effec)tually purchased a present temporal salvation (for every) individual man that is born into the world. (All) outward benefits which mankind enjoy, flow (from the) death of Christ. Hence also the inward (peace of) [p. 4] conscience proceeds. In this sense, Christ may be said (to) have tasted death for every man’.<sup>4</sup> But that he purchased *eternal redemption* for every man, or that (he) *so* tasted death for every man as to be a surety (for), or substitute *in the room of* every individual man, (is) a doctrine which I now utterly renounce.

I doubt not, my dear friends, but you will startle (at) what I say and begin to raise many objections.

‘If this be the case’, you may say, ‘then God only spares some men to aggravate their future misery. He blesses them with temporal blessings, but afterwards damns them to all eternity. What then are their present blessings worth?’

To this I answer, a truly humble mind would (nev)er make this objection. There can be no true (hum)ility without a sense of original sin. Original sin (is it)self a forfeiture of all blessings, both temporal and (spiri)tual. Unless we grant this, we make nothing of (ori)ginal sin. Now if we have absolutely forfeited all (bles)sings, God would not be unjust, were he to with(hold) all. Much less is he unjust if he favours us with (mani)fold temporal blessings, though at the same time he (with)olds from us all saving spiritual benefits. A (doub)t that rises against this doctrine is not truly humble, (nor) rightly acquainted with itself. As on one hand, (it is a)n exceeding bad sign for a sinner to fly in the (face) of God and say, ‘why may not all have eternal (life) as well as some?’ So on the other hand, it is (an exceed)ing good sign when we hear a poor sinner (cry o)ut, ‘I have absolutely forfeited all blessings. (It is) infinitely undeserved mercy that I, or anyone (am let out) of hell; and I will be thankful for this, [p. 5] even though I go to hell when I die.’ My brethren, let me beg of you to put it home to your consciences again and again whether this be *your* real temper of mind. For it is a thing of importance.

But you will say, ‘A man is damned for unbelief, (i.e.) for not believing that Christ died for him. Whereas if Christ did not actually die for him, he would then be damned for not believing a lie.’

I answer, true and saving faith is *a receiving of Christ as he is proposed in the gospel*. Unbelief is *the not receiving Christ as he is proposed in the gospel*. It is a mistake therefore to say that a man is

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<sup>1</sup>While not directly to JW, we deemed it worth including, in part because there is only one surviving copy of this letter, in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

<sup>2</sup>The outer edge of several pages of the only surviving copy are cropped. The text is recreated in (brackets) as much as possible, with questionable renderings marked by a question mark (?).

<sup>3</sup>2 Pet. 1:2.

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 2:9.

damned for not believing a lie. Upon this supposition faith would not be only a notion in the head, or a mere matter of assent; whereas faith is: *a living power within us; a grace wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, enabling us to embrace Christ, and the promises of the gospel, with a particular application to ourselves.* Now this power was never designed for all universally, but only for sin-sick sinners. 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'<sup>5</sup> 'The whole need no physician, but the sick.'<sup>6</sup> Now every individual man is not sick, in the sense our Saviour here means. Many live and die self-righteous persons, without ever truly feeling themselves poor sinners. These, as such, are never called to believe that Christ died for them. It is only they who feel themselves sick that are called to believe Christ died for them in particular.

'How then are the others damned for unbelief?' you will say. I answer, we are all born unbelievers. We are by nature, through the fall (of) Adam, concluded in a state of unbelief. Our [p. 6] natures are enmity against God and Christ. This itself is damnation. And hence we *will not* come unto Christ, that we might have life; or in other words, we will not receive Christ to be a saviour to us. Which thing itself is unbelief. And whoever is finally damned, is justly damned for and by reason of this. Thus our damnation is wholly of ourselves, as our salvation is wholly of God.

Again you will say, 'When a person has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, he would then have every individual man saved. And can we suppose God to be less loving than the creature?' I answer, we can form no right judgment of God's thoughts by our thoughts, or of his ways by our ways. I remember when I had the love of God shed abroad in my heart I began to think that surely no one could be damned at all, on any account whatever. For thinks I, if I had as much power as I have love and good will to men, I would not let one soul die an unbeliever, but I would powerfully change every man's nature and let every individual soul feel and enjoy the eternal love of God. Thinks I again, God has all the power, as well as love, and therefore certainly he will let no one soul be finally damned. Thus I measured God's ways by mine. And hence arose a grievous temptation which has followed me almost ever since, namely, a strong inclination to disbelieve the eternity of hell torments. For, from my having such a taste of divine love, I was tempted to run into the opinion that the whole creation would at last be swallowed up in the same (di)vine love. Now what wild extravagancy (are) we liable to run into if our judgments (be) guided and determined by *our feelings*. I mention [p. 7] this instance for this very purpose. And indeed this was one main reason why I renounced universal redemption, because I clearly saw that if I held it any longer I must also hold with *universal salvation*; namely, that all would be saved and no one damned at all. See the effects of forming schemes of our own and not keeping close to Scripture.

My dear friends, be not offended if, as a brother, I exhort every one of you narrowly to search the written Word, and especially those scriptures which you usually bring for universal redemption. Look to the context. Examine what goes before and what follows after. Consider the intention and design of the writer. Be impartial, and lay aside prejudice. Do nothing without solemn prayer. Do not suppose yourselves to be infallible. Give yourselves time to read those scriptures that treat particularly about election. And if you have entered into the controversy so far as to read books on one side of the question, then for the truth's sake be persuaded to read books on the other side also.

I acknowledge that in times past I have often exhorted you 'not to look into election'. For I told you 'There was a mystery in it. And that you had nothing to do with it, but to make your own calling and election sure.' I now believe this was a temptation, and to follow such advice would be making *ignorance the mother of devotion*. For how can we make our election sure unless in some sense we look into it. Namely, unless we know what election means, and what are the marks and evidences of it. I now therefore change my voice, and that for these reasons: 1) Otherwise I should not declare to you the whole coun(sel of) [p. 8] God. I verily believe election to be a Scripture doctrine, and were I to be silent any longer about it I should hide what God has revealed. 'O, you will say, election is a Scripture doctrine to be sure, but it is predestination and reprobation that you quarrel with.' Therefore 2) another main reason

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<sup>5</sup>Matt. 9:13 and parallels.

<sup>6</sup>Matt. 9:12 and parallels.

why I now open my mouth concerning election is this, because I am fully persuaded many of you do not really understand what election means. It has been represented unto you in a most horrible colour. My dear brethren, I speak what I know. And I am obliged in conscience to tell you that you have not had the thing set in a fair light before you, so as to render you capable of judging for yourselves. Therefore I exhort you to look into it. If you do not, the blame will henceforward lie upon yourselves. I have done my duty. 3) If you do not own election, you cannot give the whole glory of your salvation to God. For 4) upon the supposition of universal redemption, every individual man has a sufficient power to be saved. And if so, then it is certainly left to our choice and free-will whether we will improve this power or no. And according to our improvement or non-improvement of it, so we shall be saved or damned. So that our whole salvation depends entirely upon our own free-will, and no longer upon the free-grace of God. And though we may deny this in words, yet we hold it in fact. — And for these reasons, my brethren and sisters, I now utterly and openly renounce universal redemption, and declare for election. Or in other words, I maintain, that every soul who is finally saved was chosen in Christ before the foundation of <the> world; and every soul who is finally damned [p. 9] was left of God to perish in his *sins*, or was permitted to walk on in that way of death and damnation which he himself, through the enmity of his own nature, freely chose. This is the election and reprobation I now maintain. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

And now perhaps, some of you will say, 'If then I am elect, I may live as I will, and yet be saved.' By the same rule you may say that since faith alone is necessary to our justification, we may then live as we will, and yet be justified. *Only believe, and yours is heaven*. Therefore if we do but believe, we may live as we will, for we shall certainly go to heaven. — Now this is a very unfair way of arguing. For as all that are justified by faith alone will evidence this by their good fruits, so all that are elected or chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world will in the fulness of time certainly be sanctified in this life, and glorified in the next. Romans 8:30, 'Whom he did predestinate, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.' 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of th(e) truth.' All who are chosen to salvation are chosen no otherwise than through sanctification. They *mu(st)* be made holy. They who live and die unholy, we(re) never elected, nor shall they ever be saved. Holine(ss) is the consequence and fruit of our election. And the(re) is an absolute promise to all the elect. Psalm 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, <in> the beauties of holiness ....' Therefore, they who a(re) elect cannot live according to their own corrupt will(s,) for at the time of conversion their wills are changed, [p. 10] and thenceforward they walk in habitual holiness of heart and life.

And here perhaps a poor awakened sinner may say, 'If this be the case, that everyone who is elect is made holy, then I am sure that I am not elect, for I am not holy. I have an unclean heart, and if there be such a thing as election, I am persuaded I am a reprobate.'

To this I answer, 1) all the elect are by nature in the same state of wickedness as others, till the time that Christ is revealed in them. The apostle Paul before conversion was a blasphemer and a persecutor. Yet he was elect from all eternity (Gal. 1:15, compared with Eph. 1:4). Supposing therefore you were *outwardly wicked*, it is no absolute proof that therefore you are not elect. You have indeed then no evidence that you are, neither dare you peremptorily to conclude you are not.

But, 2) you that are supposed here to speak are an awakened sinner. You now feel the load of your inbred sin, which you utterly hate, and on the account of which <y>ou abhor yourself in dust and ashes. You cry out, under a sense of the uncleanness of your heart. <N>ow if this language comes really from your heart, it is <so> far from being a proof of your *reprobation* that it is <th>e good evidence of your *election*. You are now <w>eary and heavy laden. Christ is *yours*; the promises <be>long to *you*. If you feel yourself to be the chief <of> sinners, Christ certainly died for such. And the same <G>od who has wounded you, has promised to heal you. [p. 11]

Moreover, 3) if you have a true humbling sense of the wickedness and treachery of your own heart, it is a sign that even the work of sanctification is really begun in you. You may perhaps call yourself unholy and a child of the devil. But this is exceeding rash. You have no right to do so. You ought to own the work which the grace of God has begun in you. You are not to call yourself a reprobate because you feel sin in you. This is unthankfulness to God. And one day you will repent of it.

But, 4) for a farther answer of comfort and satisfaction to such as you, we may venture to say that all the elect saints now in heaven were once ready to conclude themselves reprobates, as you may do now. And yet, behold, they have overcome by the electing love of God, and by the redeeming blood of the Lamb. Why then should you despair! O, lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh. Do not say; 'if there be such a thing as election, you are sure to be damned'; but rather say, 'You must certainly perish if there be no such thing.'

For the present I think I have finished my testimony concerning election. May the Lord set it home to your hearts. I say no more, only beseech you to remember that the calling this doctrine 'the horrible decree', 'th(e) hook of Satan', 'the leaven of Calvin', 'the devil's whirlpool', 'the pavement to hell', etc., is no solid argument against it. Neither will these great swelling words of vanity ever excuse your neglect of searching int(o) the truth.

As to the doctrine of *sinless perfection*, I refer you [p. 12] to a letter of mine lately publish'd, on that subject.<sup>7</sup> I really believe, for any person to imagine himself to be free from the inbeing of sin is a most dangerous delusion. I think I was never fully in the notion of a sinless perfection. But whereas I have inclined towards it, I now think it my duty to exhort you no longer to look after *this imaginary perfection*, but labour rather to secure a well-grounded interest in Christ's perfect and complete righteousness.

I believe there are great degrees of holiness attainable. And I believe without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Our hearts must be changed and we must be made partakers of a divine nature, or else we shall never enjoy God. But, my friends, I will be free to tell you that the doctrine of *a new heart*, as well as other doctrines, has been also sadly and wretchedly explained to you. I hope you will take a hint from hence to examine into this matter. And in order to judge for yourselves, converse with some serious person who may inform you how a new heart is consistent with having remains of sin and corruption in us; or how sin may be *in* a converted man, and yet not have dominion *over* him.

My dear friends, indeed, indeed, you want your judgments to be better informed as to many things. I have been much among you. I know how it is with you. And I do not doubt but many of you will say that *universal redemption* and *sinless perfection* are the doctrines which you have been taught, and your souls have been profited under them, and why [p. 13] should you then pry into any new-fangled doctrines. I answer, so far as the truth is preached, so far God will own it. The preaching of justification by faith alone was food to my soul, and to many of yours, about a twelve month ago. I profited under it much. So that, can you boast of having received benefit? I more. And so long as Christ has been preached, so, in proportion, the word has been blessed. But all this does by no means prove that *universal redemption* and *sinless perfection* are truths. Neither are we to follow any men, any farther than they follow Christ. For this reason I myself have lately been obliged to act according to the dictates of my own conscience, in separating from those whom I as dearly loved, and as truly respected, as any of you can do now. And doubt not, but I had as much reason to receive everything that they said as any of you can now have. But God, I trust, has now enlightened me to discern between things that differ. I hope, ere long, you will be enlightened to see also.

I have had gre(at) reason, on many accounts, to thank God again an(d) again for being so wonderfully and graciously deliver(ed) out of the snare. My spirit has exceedingly rejoiced i(n) God my Saviour. I trust one day many of you w(ill) be brought out too. I doubt not but all Zion's child(ren) will be taught of the Lord, though at present some of y(ou) perhaps may be so bigotted as to be afraid to read t(his) my short epistle of love to your precious souls. Ho(w)ever, I excuse it.

I hope there are some true lovers of Jesus amo(ng) you. Though I am jealous over others, lest they should (be) carnal self-deceivers, building upon some other foundation, besides Jesus Christ. Be not angry with (me.) [p. 14]

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<sup>7</sup>Humphrey's note: 'My last letter to Mr. M. dated Apr. 27 in Lewis's weekly paper [*The Weekly History*, No. 4, pp. 2–3]. See also the letter subjoined [i.e., that above dated May 7, 1741], to the Rev. Mr. J[ohn] W[esley].'

I trust I have been faithful to you in some measure, and had I liberty to preach among you again, I trust I should be more faithful still. But the door being shut, I took this way of declaring myself to you. Perhaps many of you will hear me no more. If not, at least pray for me, as I hope I ever shall for you.

My dear brethren and sisters, farewell. I commend you all to God, and to the word of his grace.

I am, my dear friends,

Your unworthy brother and servant for Jesus' sake

Joseph Humphreys

*Source:* published transcription; Joseph Humphreys, *A Letter to the Members of the Religious Societies in London, Deptford, Greenwich, Burford, Bristol, and Kingswood; in testimony against the Errors of Universal Redemption and Sinless Perfection* (Bristol, Benjamin Hickey, 1741), 3–14.

From Emilia (Wesley) Harper

[Lincolnshire?]<sup>1</sup>

June 17, 1741

My Dear Brother,

I am very much obliged to you for yours by Jacky Ellison.<sup>2</sup> My earnest desire of holding a correspondence with you will not let me wait his return, which is both slow and uncertain, and hope this will find you at London.

'Is it fit *you* and *I* should quite forget each other?'<sup>3</sup> Alas that ever such a question should be asked! How light had all my troubles seemed when compared with the blessing of your safe return to England, had your love to me been the same it had been before your fatal voyage to Georgia, and more unlucky one to Germany! Yet still I find your love is not dead, and mine never decayed. And now let me in my turn ask why we ever should forget each other, why my not holding all your new doctrines (part of which I am a stranger to) should extinguish that mutual love we bore each other from our childhood. Your zeal for God's glory ought not to eat up natural affection. If I be not perfect as the Methodists, I am a firm member of the Church of England, and endeavour to practise my known duty. And as all our doings without charity are nothing worth, you ought not to judge me for not holding all you believe.

I am glad at heart you oppose Whitefield in his horrid doctrines of predestination, and wish you were as free from the Romish errors of auricular confession and bodily austerities on one hand, and the Quakerly fancies of absolute perfection, etc., on the other; but above all that you would not imitate those deluded people the French Prophets, in casting out devils—except you would be so good to cast the devil of poverty out of my pocket, a place he frequently haunts now sister Kezia is gone to heaven.<sup>4</sup> You certainly have it more in your power to make my life comfortable than formerly. I am worse than a widow,<sup>5</sup> and out of your many hundreds you might if you pleased spare so much as joined with my own endeavours might make my life comfortable and easy. 'Tis most sure I should with pleasure do so to you, were our cases changed. But perhaps it may not be so much in your power as I imagine. I would not wrong you, even in thought. Maybe the Methodists confine all charity to their own sect. Maybe you are accountable to the whole set of them for what you receive. If so you are blameless. I return you many thanks, however, for your letter, and believe you are a very holy Christian, though many of your followers are sad knaves.

I know not seemings, as Hamlet saith,<sup>6</sup> but am with great sincerity,

Your loving sister and friend,

Emilia Harper

Pray write again soon.

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<sup>1</sup>In late 1740 Emilia was contemplating moving from Gainsborough to York in search of employment, but she is almost certainly the 'sister' that JW visited in Hibaldstow, Lincolnshire on June 8, 1742 (see his *Journal*).

<sup>2</sup>JW's letter to Emilia is not known to survive. John Ellison Jr. likely carried it when making a trip from Bristol to Newcastle for JW.

<sup>3</sup>A question in JW's letter.

<sup>4</sup>Kezia Wesley died on Mar. 9, 1741.

<sup>5</sup>Emilia's husband Robert Harper was still alive, but had proven inept at holding a job and had depleted her limited resources.

<sup>6</sup>Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act. 1, Scene 2, line 77: 'I know not "seems".'



*Address:* 'To / The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at The Foundry near Upper / Morefields on Windmill Hill / London'.

*Postmark:* '19/IY'. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'June 17, 1741 / ad July 2'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDWF 6/11.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:63–64.

From J. L. De Leznot<sup>1</sup>

In Theobald's Court<sup>2</sup> by Red Lion Square [London]  
July 10, 1741

Doctor,<sup>3</sup>

Our chapel is ready for you and your friends, and according to your good intentions we hope we [may] have next Sunday morning the Divine Service in English by one doctor of your friends, and I will go by the Foundery Saturday night to give you the keys both of the chapel and pews.

Sunday last I did your precursor's office by preaching to a more numerous congregation than was there long time before, grounded on those words on the gospel of Luke 14:16, 'A certain man made a great supper and bade many ... and compels them to come in that his house may be filled.' To whom I then gave a short account of the reasons why we will have almost every Sunday morning the Divine Service in this chapel in English, without never preempting the Divine Service in French in the afternoon.

Thus my first design is to make myself able to call again (*gratis*) in our congregation a great many poor people of the islands, Guernsey and Jersey (drove out from this chapel by our predecessor, a minister dissenter and episcopal together, who, receiving almost nothing from the royal beneficence would have such poor people to pay [for] their places in the pews) whose misery and poverty is so great that being not able to frequent the other churches, languish in the streets and lanes of London in a prodigious ignorance of their Christian duties. I believe it pleased God to bless this first sermon. For the people were very much touched with, and afterwards wish me a good success in my undertaking to maintain our chapel in such a manner.

For my part, on the present view of our actions and design, my daily prayers are that God would keep you and your friends well disposed to help us, and many souls of our people to heaven, and then I am sure that if you continue, though it may be spoken in the world, the Spirit of God shall in good measure rest upon our congregations.

Therefore, if [it] is possible, I should be glad to agree with you to spend some times to speak together on the doctrines of predestination and real justification of the elect, etc., living faith, hope and charity, free-grace, the natural liberty and human power of the new possibility of the commandments of God, etc. Being in the time educated at Paris by Messieurs de Port Royal, called Jansenists, I think on all these matters as you. And you shall be surprised, and perhaps glad to hear me. Thus St. Augustine, Jansenius,<sup>4</sup> and [John] Calvin (and I will here add Mr. [Joseph] Humphreys) have erred in these doctrines. On such matters one must not reckon the passages of the doctors, but weigh their reasons.

But if I could not have that satisfaction to speak with you upon this account, that I don't speak English well enough, I will plainly write my sermons and send the manuscripts, and you will examine it in your opportunity.

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<sup>1</sup>De Leznot (the spelling in his signature) was the pastor of the Huguenot chapel on Great Hermitage Street in Wapping. JW accepted the offer made in this letter and began administering Communion there to his followers on Sundays starting on Aug. 2, 1741 (see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19:208). Nothing has been found about De Leznot beyond this letter, the entry in JW's *Journal*, and a listing in the *Proceedings* of the Huguenot Society of London 8 (1905–08), 53 of 'J. L. Delezenot' as pastor of a chapel in Swanfields from 1734 to 1735.

<sup>2</sup>This short street is now gone, replaced nearby by Harpur street; De Leznot spells 'Tibels'.

<sup>3</sup>De Leznot's Reformed practice is to address the 'teaching elder' as 'Doctor.' It is the equivalent in Church of England practice of 'Rev.'.

<sup>4</sup>Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) was a Dutch theologian who stood within and vigorously defended the Augustinian stream of the Roman Catholic Church. One of his close friends and allies was Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, Abbot of Saint-Cyran-en-Brenne Abbey. The theological centre of the Jansenist movement was the convent of Port-Royal Abbey, Paris.

I hope I will have the honour to see you tomorrow night about eight o'clock at your house. I am  
respectively, sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

J. L. De Leznot

*Endorsement:* 'Mr. Leznot Jul 10. 1741'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/222.

From Abraham Jones<sup>1</sup>

[London]  
August 10, 1741

Reverend and Highly Esteemed Sir,

Glory be to God for his great goodness, for sparing me so long in the outward profession of religion without the power, to let me see his great salvation through your preaching. I attended the field preaching at first, and not from curiosity; yet Mr. [Whitefield]'s preaching had little or no effect upon me. I used to say his discourses are irregular, yet at the same time I was ravished with the hymn sung before the sermon, and often thereby melted into tears of love and joy. But it pleased God to come nearer my heart, and draw me by a sermon you preached at Kennington from Psalm 40:15 [BCP].<sup>2</sup> I was then convinced I never was in that state. Another from you on 'the one thing needful',<sup>3</sup> which I used to think I had chosen because I was outwardly religious, had the same effect upon me. I then saw clearly that to be religious was to be renewed in the image of God. By the light my heavenly Father giveth me I now perceive, when I look back at these things, how he was then drawing me to my Saviour. For sometimes when I was under the word, which I constantly attended, especially when delivered by you, I have been in great joy and thought well of my state, that I had faith and forgiveness of sins. At other times I doubted of it, yet was deeply convinced of my vileness, and deserving nothing but God's wrath and eternal damnation. Yet I reasoned with some of our brethren that I might have forgiveness and not have that feeling sense of it. Lord how prone man is to justify himself! I wanted them to think me in a good state, which only discovered my pride.

Sometime after, I heard you at the barn at Deptford preach on this very subject,<sup>4</sup> which discourse took me all to pieces. I was quite unhinged. Now said I to those along with me, I shall from this time sit down in the lowest room, among those who are just awakened. Yet such was the stubbornness of my heart, it would not permit me to join with my brethren in singing hymns as we came home.

I used to say Mr. W. and Mr. N. are very credulous, to take you for saints as soon as any of you can say you have received such or such a *gift* and declare yourselves to be justified. Why here is such a talking about *gifts*? If I was to receive a gift, I should keep it to myself, without making such a declaration. But God afterwards showed me that herein I erred.

One time I argued with my brethren against being delivered from evil thoughts, but this the Lord was pleased to reveal to me the same night before our little company broke up. The words of our Lord came with power into my soul, even in a moment, by which I was convinced of the part of my mistake: 'Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good also.'<sup>5</sup> I immediately acknowledged the same, and shall never again have reason to doubt of that.

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<sup>1</sup>The identification in *Collection* is 'A. I.', but capital 'J' and 'I' were identical in printing at the time. This is clearly the Abraham Jones (c. 1699–1749) who writes JW again on Dec. 12, 1742, speaking of how he experienced assurance of salvation 'near two years' before—i.e., on Dec. 21, 1740. Jones appears in the Select Society at the Foundery from its initiation in 1743 onward (Foundery Band Lists. See JW's reflections on the event of his death in *Journal*, Dec. 24, 1749 (*Works*, 20:316–17).

<sup>2</sup>JW records preaching this sermon in his *Journal* on Sept. 2, 1739 (*Works*, 19:93). The sermon described the condition of one bound by their sins.

<sup>3</sup>JW's sermon on Luke 10:42; which he preached in Kennington Common on Sept. 23, 1739 (*Works*, 19:99).

<sup>4</sup>This was likely the first sermon JW records in his diary as preached at the barn near Deptford, on July 23, 1740 (*Works*, 19:427). His text was Rom. 3:21.

<sup>5</sup>Matt. 12:33.

Thus my heavenly Father led me on till the Sunday morning before Christmas day last,<sup>6</sup> when he was pleased to manifest himself further unto me, and make me feel, and experience in my heart, the forgiveness of my sins. I may truly say he found me when I sought him not, for I know not a time when I went to the Foundery with more indifference. I used commonly to be there before the service began, but then I well remember I had not any warm desires in me. Mr. [Joseph] Humphreys was at that time discoursing upon the love of God; *unexpectedly, in a moment, as quick as thought, I sensibly* felt my heart open. I received his love, with a *clear* sense of the pardon of my sins. My soul burned with this manifestation. It was overflowed with love, and tears of joy streamed from mine eyes. I felt myself inexpressibly changed. All unbelief was taken away, and my soul united unto God.

I was in such a delightful state that instead (as I purposed) of keeping this gift to myself, I now wanted the service to conclude, that I might tell those who feared God what he had done for my soul. The hymn at the conclusion added to my comfort, which was:

Now I have found the ground wherein,  
Sure my soul's anchor may remain.<sup>7</sup>

I returned home very joyful, declaring what the Lord had done for my soul.

I went in the forenoon to Whitechapel church,<sup>8</sup> where I met with an explication of what I had received. The whole service contributed to the confirmation of my faith. The psalm for the day began, 'O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name. Tell the people what things he hath done.'<sup>9</sup> Never was my heart more lifted up, never did I read these lines in this light before! 'O let your songs be of him, and praise him, and let your talking be of all his wondrous works!'<sup>10</sup> The collect of the day greatly concurred, 'Grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reprov'd.'<sup>11</sup> The epistle also made me reckon myself no more a 'stranger and foreigner, but a fellow citizen, with the saints of the household of God'.<sup>12</sup> The gospel also confirmed me in the words of St. Thomas, I said 'my Lord' and 'my God'.<sup>13</sup>

Thus good sir, I have given some account of the great things God has done for me, and what I have already attained. Glory be unto his name for what he hath bestowed upon me. But alas, since then I have oftener than once fallen into anger, which grieves his Spirit. I am not yet, but I earnestly desire to be delivered from inward sin. It appears exceeding sinful. I feel my own helplessness, neither do I trust in anything past. I often say,

Gifts alas, cannot suffice,  
And comforts all are vain;  
While one evil thought can rise,  
I am not born again:  
Still I am not as my Lord,

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<sup>6</sup>Dec. 21, 1740; JW and CW were both in Bristol.

<sup>7</sup>'Redemption Found', st. 1, *HSP* (1740), 91; JW's translation of a hymn by Johann Andreas Rothe.

<sup>8</sup>St. Mary Matfelon church, in the Whitechapel neighborhood of London.

<sup>9</sup>Ps. 105:1.

<sup>10</sup>Ps. 105.2.

<sup>11</sup>The Collect of St. Thomas, Dec. 21, BCP.

<sup>12</sup>Eph. 2:19.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. John 20:28.

Thy holy Will I do not prove.<sup>14</sup>

I know my Saviour is able to help me, and I firmly believe he will carry on the work he has begun in my soul. I desire to wait his time and manner till I have full redemption, till I arrive at the 'mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus',<sup>15</sup> till I am fully renewed in the image of God, till I am made a 'partaker of the divine nature',<sup>16</sup> till 'all old things are done away',<sup>17</sup> till I am 'so born of God' as 'not to commit sin'<sup>18</sup> in any measure, till I am 'sanctified wholly in spirit, soul, and body'.<sup>19</sup>

And may the God of glory preserve and bless your precious life long among us, and give you a double portion of his Spirit, that after you have been the happy instrument of bringing many, very many sons to glory, you may shine as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom of your Father for ever, is the prayer, reverend sir, of

The unworthy

A. J.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 99–103.

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<sup>14</sup>CW, 'A Prayer for Holiness', st. 4, *HSP* (1742), 219.

<sup>15</sup>Phil. 3:14.

<sup>16</sup>2 Pet. 1:4.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. 1 John 3:9.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. 1 Thess. 5:23.

From Susannah Designe

Bristol  
August 12,<sup>1</sup> 1741

Dear and Reverend Sir,

Having time and opportunity to write to you I am glad to embrace it, for love and duty constrains me as often as I can let you know the state of my soul. I find great outward trials and inward fightings, but in the strength of Jesus I still am conqueror over the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Although I find all evil tempers in me, yet I do abhor them. My own heart is the worst enemy I find to deal with, because it so often hath betrayed me to the great enemy of my soul. I find great self-loathing such as I never found before. Many times when I pray, I hate the very prayers I have made. Not that I want words to express but they seem so full of hypocrisy that I am ashamed to look up to the Lord. Yet when I do look to Jesus, wretched and miserable and of all creatures the most sinful, I find such an assurance in the blood of the Lamb that the greater sinner I find myself, the greater is my strength in Christ my friend. It seems to be further and further from that which is in Jesus. I seem more and more different from his image, and yet are my hopes and desires stronger and stronger to be like him in holiness of life and purity of heart. My heart is sore of sin but I am such a mystery to myself as I cannot express. But I believe you will better understand me than I do myself.

I have stronger convictions and self-condemnation in myself than I had before I knew my sins forgiven. And although my words and actions, as far as I know, do agree with the written law of God; yet something within me condemns me in all I do and say. And yet I find my soul at peace with the Lord. And then the enemy tells me I bless myself in the evil way. But my dear Saviour is full of love and tenderness and will not suffer me to deceive my own soul. Oh the grief that fills my heart when I see how my Saviour loves me and my ingratitude to him.

Dear sir, this condemnation did at first stagger me and the enemy strove to take away my shield, telling me I had forfeited my justification for there was no condemnation to one that had peace in Christ. And when I had asked of the Lord how these things could be, his blessed Spirit brought to my remembrance that I had heard you explain the second conviction of the soul and now I believe the man of sin is revealed in me. Oh may the Lord consume him by the breath of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming make an end of transgressions and bring in everlasting righteousness. I am Christ's prisoner. I wait for perfect liberty and full redemption in his blood.

Oh may I cease from teaching my Saviour. O Lord, direct my heart into thy love and into a patient waiting for thee. When I find my heart inflamed with the love of God and eager pantings after more and more of his blessed Spirit, I long to see Jesus and to be nearer unto him. I could die a thousand deaths if that could set me free. Then I fear I am setting Christ a time, and when I am more resigned seem willing to tarry the Lord's leisure and fear lest I should rest contented without Christ. I find I cannot trust to anything I have received. But dear Lord, give me a thankful heart for what thou hast already done for me. I know God is my gracious and tender Father, that Jesus loves and prays for me, and that his blessed Spirit guides and directs me. And yet I find and feel I may fall away and never enter into the rest of the people of God for I yet can sin. For the occasion of stumbling is yet in me and unless all sin is t[aken] out of my nature and the kingdom of heaven set up in my heart, I shall never enter into the kingdom of glory.

Oh that the time was come when I shall have my fruit unto holiness. O Lord, hasten the coming of thy kingdom in every waiting soul. O my dear Jesus, make thy time mine, let my will be lost in thine.

Your dear brother Mr. [Charles] Wesley is well.<sup>2</sup> He is a tender shepherd of his flock. May the Lord reward him a thousandfold.

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., 'August ye 26', contradicted by JW's endorsement, which must surely be correct, as he was in London on the 12th, but in Bristol on the 26th.

<sup>2</sup>CW was currently in Bristol.

My soul hath been greatly refreshed by a letter from my dear friend Mrs. Sarah Perrin.<sup>3</sup> Indeed she is one of my Father's dear children. She is near to me as my own soul, and daily increases in the knowledge and love of God. I find my love increase to her and all the children of God.

I conclude in the love of our dear Saviour,  
Your unworthy sister,

Susannah Designe

Sister Robinson<sup>4</sup> gives her duty to you, and returns you thanks for your letter.

Sister [Margaret] Summerell and sister [Mary] Taylor<sup>5</sup> grow in grace, and I find a closer union to my band than ever. I would not wilfully leave this glorious means for ten thousand worlds, for how can one be warm alone, and woe to him that is alone when he falleth. O Lord, make me a living member of thy mystical body!

Sir, I was informed our sister [Elizabeth] Ryan<sup>6</sup> is to leave the school in the Horse Fair,<sup>7</sup> and that you sent word for our sister Summerell to supply her place. She hath been told of it, and finding herself altogether incapable<sup>8</sup> of it, refused it. One of my sisters proposed it to me. I found it seemed to be convenient for me, and I should be glad to accept<sup>9</sup> the offer if you do approve of it, for my school is almost come to nothing because the parents of them is persecutors of this mad way, as they call it, and they have taken them almost all from me, except it is some that was in my debt, and they neither pay the weekly money nor make the other shorter. I commit it into the hands of my dear Lord and you, steadfastly believing that he will not suffer anything to happen to me for my hurt, neither will you direct me to anything but what you think will be for my good both of soul and body.

Sir, I should be glad to have a line or two from you if you have opportunity.

*Address:* 'To the / Revd Mr. John Wesley / att ye foundry in London / these'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'Su. Designe / Aug 12. 1741'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 13.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Perrin was not married; current practice was to refer to adult single women as Mrs.

<sup>4</sup>JW mentions a 'Mary Robinson' as active among the Bristol Methodists in Apr. 1739 (JW, *Works*, 19:387).

<sup>5</sup>See JW's endorsement of the letter from CW on Mar. 17, 1741, above.

<sup>6</sup>Orig., 'Ryant'.

<sup>7</sup>I.e., the school meeting in the New Room.

<sup>8</sup>Orig., 'uncable'.

<sup>9</sup>Orig., 'except'.

<sup>10</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:64–65.



From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London?<sup>1</sup>]  
[September 28, 1741]

Extract of a Letter from Bristol<sup>2</sup>

I am exceedingly afraid lest<sup>3</sup> predestination should be propagated among us in a more subtle and dangerous manner than has hitherto been attempted. Mr. [George] Whitefield preaches holiness very strongly, and free grace to all; yet at the same time he uses expressions which necessarily imply reprobation. He wraps it up in smoother language than before, in order to convey the poison more successfully. Our society on this account go to hear him without any scruple or dread. We have sufficiently seen the fatal effects of this devilish doctrine already, so that we cannot keep at too great a distance from it. For my part, by the grace of God, I never will be reconciled to reprobation, nor join with those who hold it. I wish there might be a *real and thorough* union betwixt us.

O thou eternal Phrygian!<sup>4</sup> I am too full to write or speak! Do you know the value of souls, precious immortal souls, yet trust them within the sound of predestination? Have not you had enough of it already! Have we [[gathered up our]] wreck [[to this day]]? To trust [[George Whitefield]] while the wounds he has made are<sup>5</sup> yet unclosed—this is outdoing your own outdoings. Stop the plague *just now*, or it will be too late. Send me word first post that you have warned our flock from going to hear The Other Gospel. O how are you outwitted? The subtle Scots (those sons of Zeruiah<sup>6</sup>) are too hard for you. I pity you and those few sheep in the wilderness who are left to the wolf. For mine, and your own, and theirs, and Christ[’s] sake—open your eyes, regard not fair speeches, renounce your credulity and [[George Whitefield]], till he renounces reprobation. ‘But that he does already, and preaches holiness, and free grace for all?’—And are you, can you be so easily caught! O that [[damnable]] virtue of credulity! Send me word, I say, by next post, that you have restrained the unwary, or I shall on the first preaching night renounce [[George Whitefield]] on the housetop.

P. S. When it was told the Grand Turk that all the princes of Christendom were entering into a confederacy against him he answered: ‘When these fingers are joined (holding them up) then will the Christians agree.’ So the world may say concerning ours and the predestinarians joining against them.

I have received a letter from Mr. [Richard] Hutchins of Lincoln College, with an order upon his brother<sup>7</sup> to pay you £12 (I think it is). You should send me your order to receive it.

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<sup>1</sup>JW arrived in Bristol on Sept. 22, 1741 to take over for CW, who soon left, probably for London.

<sup>2</sup>Whitefield had not preached in Bristol since May 1741, and in late September had been in Scotland for two months (where there were no Methodist societies yet). Thus this letter seems to have been written to CW from some months back, and something prompted CW to pass on this warning to his brother rather belatedly.

<sup>3</sup>Orig., ‘least’.

<sup>4</sup>The Phrygians (from a region near present Turkey) had proved fertile ground for Montanism, and from that came to be regarded as credulous.

<sup>5</sup>Orig., ‘is’.

<sup>6</sup>See 2 Sam. 3:18ff; the three sons are described for their dogged pursuit of their quarry.

<sup>7</sup>One brother was John Hutchins (c. 1701–65).

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr Wesley / at Mr Hooper's Maltster / Bristol'.

*Endorsements:* by JW, 'C[harles] Sept. 28, 1741 / a[nswere]d 30' and 'In a Panick about GW'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/13.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:65–66.

From Sarah Perrin<sup>1</sup>

[Bradford-on-Avon?]  
c. October 1741<sup>2</sup>

Much Esteemed Friend,<sup>3</sup>

I am unwilling to neglect this opportunity of letting thee hear from me, although I have little to say concerning myself.

I see the beauty of holiness and I long to attain to it, but alas I am slow of heart. I feel my unbelief keeps me from the glorious liberty of the children of God. Yet I have a full assurance the work of salvation is carrying on in my soul. And at the most barren times I cannot doubt but I shall witness full redemption into the blood of Jesus! I am much tempted to put the day afar off and give up my confidence, and to say how is [it] possible for me to attain so great salvation? But as I wait upon the Lord, I find my strength renewed in him, and I am fully convinced his grace is sufficient for me. O that my eye was continually looking up to Jesus! For when I keep close to him, he confirms me in my belief that it is his will I should be perfect. Indeed my friend, I meet with many interruptions in my way. But I long for that day to come which shall burn as an oven, that neither root nor branch of unrighteousness may remain in me. Fain would I give up my whole soul and body to the service of my God, that I may dwell in his house forever. O pray for me that I faint not! But that in due time I may reap that salvation which at present I steadfastly believe my Saviour has purchased for me.

Great peace do I enjoy, and at particular times my Lord communicates much of his love to me. He seems to deal with me as a parent with a sickly child. He discovers to me what is hurtful and suffers me not to feel his anger. But I yet feel the depth of ingratitude in me. For surely if I loved him as I ought, my heart would be filled with thanksgiving and my lips would continually speak of his praise.

I remember in my first letter to thee I observed, if thou couldst show me a religion more holy or more lovely than our own [Quaker] principles lead to, I would readily embrace it. So far I must confess, it has pleased God through thy ministry to give me a more perfect view of the glorious law of liberty than I had ever conceived before. Yet he has not in the least convinced me that any outward ordinance I have not yet complied with could be acceptable to him, but shows me my whole heart is what he requires of me. And if I may so say, I am more established in primitive Quakerism than I ever was in my life before. My heart is enlarged. My faith is increased. Often after hearing you my soul has been filled as with new wine. But I could not remain long turned upon me. And indeed at present these seem to be the greatest enemies I have to encounter with. O when shall I be able to say I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me?<sup>4</sup>

I can truly say all the enjoyments and friendships of this world appear as vanity in comparison of the love of God in Christ Jesus. Yet I fear I still love my own ease too well. And I know the fear of man is not overcome in me. But I trust my God will cleanse the temple of my heart from all idols, and take up his abode in me. For this great salvation my soul hungers and thirsts.

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<sup>1</sup>Sarah Perrin (1708–87) was a well-educated Quaker woman living in Bristol in 1740, where she met JW and CW. She was soon corresponding with both brothers whenever she or they were away from Bristol. This is the first known surviving letter to JW (though she mentions a prior letter within it). While the published transcription is signed only 'S. P.', the content of the letter makes the identity of the author certain.

<sup>2</sup>The next letter of Perrin to JW can be dated with some certainty as mid-November 1741 by her reference to his illness. If this letter was about two weeks earlier, JW would have been in Bristol. Her current 'barren' location was most likely Bradford-on-Avon, where she frequently visited her aunt Constant (Groom) Bailward (1686–1746) but bemoaned the lack of Methodist supporters.

<sup>3</sup>As a Quaker, Perrin's use of 'friend' in salutations and closings is more than just an indication of friendship.

<sup>4</sup>See Gal. 2:20.

You have provoked me to good works. And if I was never to hear from you more, if I am faithful to the gift received, I know I shall be a more living member in the church. For I can now declare to others what God has done for my soul.<sup>5</sup>

I cannot help desiring to see thee, or thy brother.<sup>6</sup> And I hope providence will permit me to hear one of you a few times before I go into Herefordshire.<sup>7</sup> And if thou hast leisure, I should take it as a favour to have a few lines from thee whilst I remain in this barren place. Friend C. will convey them to me.

May the great God of truth bless thee in all thy undertakings. Mayest thou dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty, is the sincere desire of

Thy real, though unworthy friend,

S. P.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 165–68.

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<sup>5</sup>As this suggests, Perrin began testifying to her experience in a broadening set of situations over the next few years.

<sup>6</sup>Orig., 'brothers'; almost certainly a mistake.

<sup>7</sup>Sarah's sister Mary had married Samuel Southall in 1741 and now resided in Leominster, Herefordshire. Sarah would be going to visit her.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Aberdeen  
October 10, 1741

Reverend and Dear Brother,

I have for a long time expected that you would have sent me an answer to my last. But I suppose that you are afraid to correspond with me, because I revealed your secret about the lot.<sup>1</sup> Though much may be said for my doing it, yet I am sorry now that any such thing dropped from my pen, and I humbly ask pardon. I find I love you as much as ever, and pray God, if it be his blessed will, that we may be all united together.

It hath been for some days upon my heart to write to you, and this morning I received a letter from brother [Howell] Harris telling me how he had conversed with you and your dear brother.<sup>2</sup> May God remove all obstacles that now prevent our union! Though I hold particular election, yet I offer Jesus freely to every individual soul. You may carry sanctification to what degrees you will, only I cannot agree that the in-being of sin is to be destroyed in this life.

O my dear brother, the Lord hath been much with me in Scotland. I every morning feel my fellowship with Christ, and he is pleased to give me all peace and joy in believing. In about three weeks I hope to be at Bristol. May all disputings cease, and each of us talk of nothing but Jesus, and him crucified! This is my resolution.

The Lord be with your spirit. My love to brother Charles [Wesley], and all that love the glorious Emmanuel. I am, without dissimulation,

Ever yours,

G. W.

*Source:* published transcription; Whitefield, *Works*, 1:331.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See George Whitefield to JW, Dec. 24, 1740, where he mentions JW drawing a 'lot' to decide whether to publish his sermon *Free Grace* or not.

<sup>2</sup>Howell Harris to George Whitefield, Oct. 1, 1741, National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #388.

<sup>3</sup>Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:66.

From Howell Harris

[Trevecka, Wales]  
[October 19, 1741<sup>1</sup>]

I was for some time much perplexed about 'perfection'. St. Paul applied this to himself, and to many others, in Philippians 3:15. It was in that chapter that I had the most satisfaction as to what is meant by perfection. I saw that believers are perfect in all respects in Christ, but imperfect as to degrees in themselves. The imperfections of such eminent men as Noah, Daniel, and Job are recorded in Scripture. St. Paul shows, in the above chapter, the mind that should be in all those whom he calls 'perfect', which is the same as he himself had (vv. 7–15). He, however, declares that he had attained perfection only in degrees, but that he was pressing towards it, 'forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before',<sup>2</sup> 'if by any means' says he 'I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead'<sup>3</sup>—things of which, in part, he was already made a partaker. I think that if anyone has any other perfection it would be very proper to ask him these questions: Has he seen in himself all the sin that he possibly can see? Does he know so much of the glorious perfections of God and love him to that degree that he cannot know nor love him more? Does he hate sin and grieve for it so much that he has no cause to lament that he cannot grieve and hate it more? Does he approach God with such awe and reverence, and with such a sense of his glory and majesty, and of his own nothingness as are becoming and suitable? If he cannot answer these and the like questions, let him not pretend to 'perfection' in such a sense as no saint in sacred writ, or any of the martyrs, ever pretended to. If he does not see any imperfection in himself, or that he does not fall short of God's glory in everything, I apprehend that he never had any true convictions of sin, nor ever saw the spirituality of the law of God.

Thus I have, my dear brother, sent you in the simplicity of my heart my thoughts, according to the light I have from the word of God and my own experience. Let us, according to the grace given, be diligent and watch over each other. And may we be willing always to give up or maintain anything as we find the word and experience condemn or justify it. That which we do not know, the Lord will teach us. Let us be always learning. I hope I write in love and that you will read it in the same spirit. I trust the Lord will incline your heart to write to me, in order to make things clearer. Let us communicate our knowledge to each other; and may the Lord kindly knit our hearts together in all things.

*Source:* published transcription; Morgan, *Howell Harris*, 87–88.

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<sup>1</sup>Date given in JW's response of Aug. 6, 1742; cf. *Works*, 26:85–86.

<sup>2</sup>Phil 3:13.

<sup>3</sup>Phil. 3:11.

From Howell Harris<sup>1</sup>

Trevecka [Wales]

October 24, 1741

Dear Brother Wesley,

Last night I came home and saw my dear mother,<sup>2</sup> who I hope is coming up out of the wilderness. I feel I can call any place my 'home' till I come to my father's house; and feel I am a stranger here and long to be where my head, my life, my rest, my strength, and my all is. Yesterday I met many of the dear lambs of my dear Lord, and by the abundance of sweetness we had together I had a sweet testimony that my Lord is bringing me to my native country again. I had from them much sweet news of some our dear Lord owns in an especial manner to publish the glad tidings, by giving them an amazing power. On hearing which, I felt my nature not pleased that I should lose that great power I once had and glad that it was given to another. That it was in answer to a prayer my dear Lord did work in me sometime since so that [he] would use any means to humble me. If he please to take my gifts and power to give it to others, so that I might see his work carried on anyway. But now when he was answering my prayers I found my carnal heart rebelling, till I had help to look to Jesus my physician, and then I was set free.

As I was also delivered from other bondage, arising from self, that I felt stirring in me on hearing of the uneasiness of some of our Baptist friends that are preaching and printing against infant baptism, and drawing some of our friends over to them. But I found soon that my heart did rise against them, and if bigotry stir them up to take the work in hand, yet the same in me against them. But the blood of Jesus, that justified me before God, has in it a cleansing virtue. So that from his wounds soon flowed to me love, tenderness, and pity to them, and to souls like to be hurt by such proceedings. Since I left them, I found the Lord with me much and discourse twice a day, and I believe many were convinced of the rest remaining for the children of God in the wounds of Jesus. One especially that exhorted and thought that morning to go about and oppose me. The Lord will defend his own cause.

O when will the time come that we shall agree? Till then may the Lord bless us to bear with one another. And before we can be united, we must be truly simple, and really humble and open to conviction, and willing to give up any expression, etc., that is not scriptural. And be made dead to our own names and characters, and sweetly inclined toward each other—everyone owning what has been amiss in our speech, expressions, and conduct towards each other. Else we can never agree. Satan, through the remainder of self in us, will rend us farther at a distance than ever. And everyone will be for the name of having drawn the other over, and that the other was wrong and not him. And the other again insist on the same. Which, if not seen and mourned over, and subdued by the blood of Christ on all sides, will make us stiff and [apt to] justify ourselves, but not to yield in the least to each other. And so it will be in vain to think of any union.

You heard the letter I wrote to London, to be read there in the society if they thought it fit.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>While his spelling is fairly good, Harris uses very little punctuation and almost no paragraph breaks. Combining this with frequent use of conjunctions, the letter reads as a series of long run-on sentences. This is why Morgan publishes only rewritten excerpts from Harris's letters. We retain all the words and flow of Harris's manuscript, while inserting paragraph breaks and more frequent punctuation.

<sup>2</sup>Susannah (Powell) Harris; his father, Howell Harris (1673–1730), was already deceased.

<sup>3</sup>Harris came to London about Aug. 1, 1741. He was there two months without speaking to JW (see his letter to GW dated Oct. 1, 1741). Then JW sent for Harris and explained his views of free will. While Harris differed from Wesley on this matter, he sought initially to play down the difference in public. This drew attacks from his fellow Calvinists. So on Oct. 14, 1741 Harris (now in Abergavenny) posted a letter (National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters #394) to Samuel Blackden in London containing a lengthy exposition of the differences between Calvinist and Wesleyans (though he suggested that the differences were more a matter of expression than of substance). Harris asked Blackden to show

Where I set down how near we agree in meaning, though we may differ in our way of expression, and how far we disagree. Blessed be our Lord, that gives us to talk together without heat! May he give us more and more of his Spirit. And then we will bear more and shall be the more able to understand one another too.

I hope we have in some measure drank of the same Spirit, and fight against the same enemies, and are bearers of the same crown and kingdom, travel the same narrow road, love the same Jesus, are clothed in the same glorious robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, and hunger after the same holiness, mourn and wait for the same liberty, and are to be soon before the same throne, employed in the same work of praise to all eternity. While then we are on the road, and meet with so many enemies, let us remember our Lord's last command: Love one another. And if we carry on really the same cause, let us not weaken one another's hands.

I know no reason why I am brought thus to interfere between my Lord's dear servants but because there is in me less qualifications than in others for such a work. But when the Lord speaks through an ass,<sup>4</sup> it can be clearer seen it is of the Lord. The union I feel in the Spirit, though we divide in judgment in some things, gives me freedom to tell all I now think and hear of you. I told you how strongly it was brought to me at London that you incline strongly toward the Church of Rome, and consequently as such I could not be united even in the heart to you, for I believe it is not the church. Then I wrote a letter to Abergavenny of what I have heard of you, with an order to let some of our brothers see it.<sup>5</sup> And this I did as I thought I was in duty bound and out of love to them, and not from any malice to your person, for that I felt none but a burden for you. But lest these erroneous doctrines of free will which you seem to hold should be propagated amongst us, and lest we should go from grace to works, from beginning in the Spirit to end in the flesh. A copy of which letter I have sent you, which when you will read you will not wonder I was divided from you. I know our dear Lord has given you love and meekness. Indeed [he] has given me to love you tenderly, and in that love [I] shall tell the working of my heart since I left you.

With relation to you, what many tell me of your being not open but cunning, I can no more receive than if you were charged with murder. I know that, though there may be thick clouds not taken away yet from the judgment of a Christian which the Spirit has undertaken to do gradually as he sees fit, yet he cannot live a moment easy after conviction in hypocrisy and appearing what he is not. God requireth truth in the inner parts. A sense of God's searching the heart, a sense of the last day and eternity, must be utterly taken off from us ere we can use double dealing and guile. So that I detested and opposed such that would entertain such an opinion of you, thinking you thereby a hypocrite. Which they said of some in Bristol going out, that I was coming to recant my errors and coming over to you. I said I was sure you had no hand in such sayings, for that I knew of nothing I am changed in. But that I received more light to see of liberty and of receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost as a Spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind to abide in us, freeing us from the spirit of bondage after justification. But I had declared in the Room in Bristol, and so in every conference I had, that I did not see in Scripture a promise of taking away the body of sin. And so I did not hold sinless perfection or such a state we need not fly to the imputed righteousness of Christ still, to stand in before the bar of God's justice. That as the treasure is still in an earthen vessel, there will be still an imperfection in all we do. So that we shall need continual washing in a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and we need still to grow. There will be still a perfection before us to be reached after, a more conformity to God, wanting more love to him, zeal for him, trust in him, awe before him, and joy in him, etc., etc. Even then, as it is by the will of another we came to the liberty and we receive the power of faith, so we stand by grace, or at his pleasure. If self

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the letter to John Cennick, so that he might read it to the society if he approved of it.

<sup>4</sup>See Num. 22:21–38.

<sup>5</sup>This letter does not appear to survive, unless Harris meant to say he wrote *from* Abergavenny, in which case it is the Oct. 14, 1741 letter mentioned previously.



should creep in and we should either forget to give him all the glory or should despise others, etc., God may send a thorn in the flesh to humble us. May suffer Peter to be carried away to dissemble for fear of the Jews. And may suffer Paul and Barnabas to have dissension for a time to let them see that they are kept in the liberty not by their own will or power, but by the power and will of another.

This the Lord has showed me from my first setting out, the necessity of outward and inward holiness—the living to God, having dominion over sin, feeling Christ destroying his<sup>6</sup> works in us and writing his law in our hearts, bringing our wills to a conformity to his will, washing away all our idols, circumcising our heart to love him with all our hearts, etc. Which I see is carried on gradually in the soul, as a babe grows to be a young man, till some instant of time I believe the Spirit comes with power, taking away the veil from his eyes, that kept him before from seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And taking away the stone from the flesh, giving him the victory over the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, so that he can say that the law of the Spirit of life has made him free from the law of sin and death. And that he now is crucified with Christ, and that it is no longer he that lives but Christ liveth in him. Because he acts from the principle of his love and aims at his glory, and walks in his will and Spirit, abiding in his wounds, looking still to him, under a sense of his own utter helplessness to keep himself a moment. Thus he walks in the light and sees all in a new light, making fresh discoveries in his road—more and more of the excellency of Christ. Eaten up with zeal for his glory, [he] bears much, hears his voice, follows him, being built on the rock, is not shaken by any winds, prays without ceasing, and rejoices evermore, having perfect love casting out all fear.

And till then, though he is in a state of grace when he first opens his heart to believe in Christ in all his offices, yet he is in great bondage and misery—groaning under the deliverance from the body of sin, labouring and heavy laden, mourning and seeking for rest, hungering and waiting to be filled, in deep distress, though he saw God forgiving all. Because he could not glorify God nor be a fruit to him, but forgot God and lost sight of Christ, and fell to his own spirit, etc. With a continual grief till Christ comes to set him free, by his power, from the power of sin; as he had before from the guilt of sin by his righteousness. And now he treads upon the lion's neck, going on from conquering and to conquer his old nature, being now subdued by the power of God, and through Christ's second coming to his temple with glory and power. So that I could call it another state, though it might (I believe) be called a growth and power of faith. Not as if we were in a state of damnation before, for the work is really begun when we are first apprehended. And one can be declared to be safe when he is sealed by the Spirit of promise as you said. But as for his conquering, before he was only fighting. Being freed from his enemies he serves God with fear, in holiness and righteousness, forgetting the which is behind he presses forward still.

Thus my dear brother I have endeavoured to tell you about the glorious liberty of the child of God which my Lord gives me often to feel for some time. And then it is withdrawn, I being yet afraid, and not as a little child, I fail to enter fully into this kingdom. But faithful is he that has promised who also will perform this on my soul. Some expression of yours comes to my mind into light, and which is really your mind I am at a loss [to know]. You know I write simply in love, as one brother to another. And not to dispute, but to know your mind and to let you know mine. For this must be precious, to have an union in our ministry together. Also I would be offending and giving you room to surmising and exceptions in preaching with you. So would you with us, and so we should not benefit the flock.

I would willingly<sup>7</sup> that you should know all this is in me. I told you, you know, how the Lord called me seven years ago.<sup>8</sup> And how after some time being under conviction, fearing every moment lest I shall fall, till at last I felt such power on me guiding me to give myself to God that I could not resist it. So

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<sup>6</sup>I.e., Satan's.

<sup>7</sup>I.e., I truly desire.

<sup>8</sup>Harris's conversion and the beginnings of his evangelistic ministry trace back to the spring of 1735. For a good secondary study that parallels his interaction with JW, see Geraint Tudur, *Howell Harris: From Conversion to Separation, 1735–1750* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000).

strongly and sweetly it made me—not forced—willing. So that I myself was willing, and I could not help it being so drawn by the cords of a man (Christ). And I can't recollect I felt the fear of falling away afterward. Near that time I had a sense in my heart that my sins were forgiven, and walked in that peace and joy for some time. Till the Lord did shed abroad his love in my heart by the Holy Ghost, so that my heart was broken (or rather was melted) to pieces and I felt I was all love, being now fully happy, feeling myself in God. And longed to be dissolved, to be with Christ, feeling the Spirit of adoption in my heart crying 'Abba, Father'. Being full, [I] could ask no more but to be so forever.

Some little time after that I felt some risings of anger when I felt somewhat saying in me I am fallen from grace. Which, by the terrible confusion it put me in, I believe it was from the devil. It made me to hate myself for sinning against such love that I could kill myself. Till a voice came to my heart [that] God was faithful and did not change, and with light to my soul which I had never known before. For I had never heard or read the difference between the law and the gospel, salvation by grace or works, having spent my time since I came from school in reading plays and vanity. Now showing though I had sinned, yet [it] should not put me out of God's favour, that my salvation and perseverance did not depend on my faithfulness but on his faithfulness. And then all my fear did vanish and I was like one built upon a rock. And when any darkness shall even so now come over me through some fall, I am helped to appeal to that word, 'God remembers his chosen', and I am at rest and peace.

And afterward [I] lived in faith and power, having left all I had before, and views of preferment, all company from the richest to the poorest, all pleasures of all kind. Having given all I had to the poor and fasting three days every week—drinking nothing but water, etc.,—now [I] exhort all that come in my way often, 'Try my faith by Abraham's faith. Try if whether I could leave my native country, and believe impossibilities, taking God at his word, and leave my Isaac.' Now all fear is cast out. [I] went about from house to house to exhort, and on Sundays reading to them, and there was great power. At first only going to visit the sick and reading at our own house, I fed on God from day to day. I did not know where I should have any clothes, etc., having lost all my friends—some pitying me, some exhorting me, some threatening me. And ministers preaching against me as a false prophet. And people despising me, pointing at me as I went along, young rakes threatening to kill me, telling all manner of lies of me. And yet notwithstanding all this I was so filled with the love of God that I could not contain myself.

Thus I continued for some time, till about this time six years ago my brother took me to Oxford and entered me at St. Mary's Hall.<sup>9</sup> But I was soon tired there and longed for my liberty. Which I soon had, having been under most grievous temptation tempted to believe there was no God. And I felt I could no more help myself than I could fly, and being filled with blasphemy against the Father, Son, and Spirit. But the Lord delivered me from all. Being come home, my brother<sup>10</sup> offered me to live with him. But God had such hold of me that I could not go. In the midst of all temptations of all sorts I was still kept exhorting all the way I went to flee from the wrath to come. Talking but little of Christ. Calling election the doctrine of the devil. And then when I railed against election many of the carnal clergy that were before my enemies began to love me on this account, which put me a little on the examination why they so love me.

But still I cried man—that man could turn himself or else my preaching was in vain. Till one man asked me how did I pray? Did not I often feel myself so dead and so lifeless that I could no more free myself from the bondage by any power in me than I could fly? Till some power should come from another. And I could not command that, but that it was given according to his pleasure, and not according to my will. And that I was obliged to cry, 'Lord, here I am before thee, condemned, blind, fast bound in chains of hardness and darkness. Unless thou of thine own sovereign will and pleasure wilt come and set me free, nothing in me moving thee, ...' I could not deny but this was all true. He asked, 'Did you then speak the truth to God when you said you could not more pray, believe, repent, love, change your heart,

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<sup>9</sup>Harris's older brother Joseph (1704–64), who had done well in London, helped him matriculate at St. Mary Hall, Oxford in Nov. 1735, but he stayed only a few days before returning home.

<sup>10</sup>His brother Thomas (1707–82) who had an estate in Breconshire.

or move him to love, than to fly to heaven?' I said 'Yes, to be sure'. 'Why then should now you tell lies enough to the people when you tell them they can turn and believe and repent, etc.?' Then my mouth was stopped so that I could not use such expressions. For my own experience condemned me within me, if I would tell them they could turn, etc. And now I saw how I was entangled in the devil's net by setting up my own wisdom and not submitting to the teachings of God. For my end was right then. It was, as I thought, to prevent laziness and spiritual sloth in them, which I thought should have place if I should tell them you are dead and fast bound of the devil and cannot make yourselves alive, the strong man keepeth his house and will not go till a stronger one, Christ Jesus, comes, etc. I was put to a stand that I dared not rail against election as I had done. But still the enmity against it was not removed [until] sometime after.

Now whenever almost I would open the Bible my eye would fix on John 6:44, 'No man can come to me except the Father draws him.' This seemed still to show me that our coming to Christ was owing to God's drawing and not our choosing him. And I was so adverse to such a thought that it was not in the man to come himself but that it was left to the Father's will, etc., that my pride did arraign the justice and wisdom of God, at least in writing it down if it was so, that it would encourage presumption in some to say they could not come till God did draw, and discourage others that would come. And such was the enmity of my heart against it that I wish[ed] for some way to expound it away. Shut I my eyes from the light. O how just had it been for God to damn me forever for fighting against him! Till at last the Lord gave me for a time what I desired, to believe a lie. It came to my thought suddenly: God draws all, but some will not come. And so I had got free, though this did not fully satisfy. Some what would come in if it was a gift given to all alike. What need here to mention it, if it did not include something particular in it?

But while I was thus dubious my eyes were suddenly fixed on John 6:37, 'All that the Father giveth to me shall' (or will) 'come to me. And all such as do come by the Father's giving to Christ are never cast away.' Then that word 'all' did so hedge me in that I was obliged either to deny the Scripture and my experience or own election, though it would now draw the world about my ears and make me ridiculous—to call back what I had said, etc., then being convinced I could not preach anywhere without mentioning those two texts. And then I saw the Scripture in a new light, being so fully convinced of the Lord, after so long an opposition, of the truth of election. I now believing, I did preach [it, but] without the consequences that my carnal reason did set on it, fearing to preach reprobation in the height. Till I meet again some of the general texts: 'Who will that no man should perish but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved.'<sup>11</sup> This seemed to contradict many of my expressions, and I did not know what to do and how to reconcile this to the other texts, and so was confounded. But not shaken, for that I could not be, as having learned of God that. And reading in Ezekial, 'As I live saith the Lord I will not the death of a sinner,'<sup>12</sup> convinced me again that our damnation is not in God's will, but in our willing and choosing it.

Then did I see the absolute necessity of denying my wisdom, before I could be taught of God. As well as denying our righteousness, before we are justified of God. I was obliged to stop my mouth as a fool before God, to adore and admire what I could not more comprehend than I could the Trinity. So that from thence I ever believed from my heart that our salvation was all of God, and our damnation was all of ourselves. But how to understand the consistency of these two it appeared to me to be touching the forbidden fruit to attempt. Then I could as cordially use all the general and particular texts without mental reserve; as I could use the texts to prove three persons, and the others to prove but one God. And I could never find one by defending the one point, unless he would be willing to be a fool and own he could not comprehend it, but would pretend to show the consistency. But he must utterly or wholly set man's

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<sup>11</sup>1 Tim. 2:4.

<sup>12</sup>Ezek. 33:11.

damnation all and entirely as in your *Dialogue*,<sup>13</sup> or set all his salvation in the man's free will and utterly reject Jesus Christ; and set up the covenant of works instead of the covenant of grace; and set it plainly of merit, and so give the creature to boast in that he was better than another. That when such an one would come to heaven we may thank Christ for meriting the pardon of his sin, but himself for receiving it, and for making good use of his grace, which if those in hell had done they might have been saved too. And so what made him to differ was not grace but works. And his being saved is not owing to God's free sovereign will and pleasure in choosing him when there was no difference, and giving him a will to receive him and overcoming the obstinacy in his will, and keeping him faithful to the end; but he charged God on the general call and made himself to differ by making better of it than others, and by keeping himself faithful. And here man is set to build on the sand of his own doing, choosing, and faithfulness, and God is robbed of his glory.

And this is a terrible black in the eyes of all that have experienced grace, who have all in them wrought tenderness: that God had them in their blood and made them live forever, when he might have them to suffer forever, that he might have all the glory, as reprobation is. Nay, blacker than reprobation, which I find many hold, if God made a decree to damn all not unconditionally but on the foresight of their rebellion against him in paradise. And this everyone that saw sees his nature is, that in all justice he could do it, that we deserve to be damned eternally for our nature. And till we see this we do not rightly know ourselves and are really in an unawakened state. And as God did not in justice or of debt owed, but out of his own will and pleasure, so he need not force us to sin actually when we grow up. Nor give the common mercies in order to ripen us for hell. For sin would grow as naturally from our natures as the fruit from the tree, and we ourselves turn all his mercies to our own destruction, everything being cursed when we fell. Lo the nature we have sends us farther and farther from God—whether health, learning, riches, strength, praise, wisdom, etc.,—which are all mercies. All puff us with pride, etc., till we are effectually called. Had he called us to judgment from the womb without washing us in the blood of the Lamb and changing our natures, everyone that has known his nature as David sees that God's pure eyes could not behold such a lump of sin with pleasure. And then was under no greater obligation to find a saviour than he was to the devils; he might have left us as he left them.

This you know, you and all are convinced of: when first we know original sin and see the fall in our hearts and see what we deserved, then when we feel our nature the same as others that go on to all riots[?] and we are saved, we cannot help crying, 'Who made me to differ? O why me, Lord, and not another? Why am not I now in hell? And why not among heathens that know nothing of Christ? Or why did not God damn me as well as the Sodomites, or Cora, or Judas? Was not the same sin in me as in them? And would not it grow to the same pitch, did not he restrain it by inward and outward means?' Or when we see others dead and unawakened, others waiting[?] to be reformed under the power of sin persecuting the ways of God, we must cry, 'Why am not I in their place and they in mine? Lord, this I own to thy sovereign grace. Thou lovest me when I was where they are.' And so bow down to worship distinguishing electing love makes me to differ from others.

I may not thank myself for improving the common offer of good. This is so terrible in the eyes of all as are enlightened that they had rather take in reprobation and all, rather than rob God of the glory of his grace that made them to differ. And this so frightens them from anything as seems to border on free will. Because they feel daily if they were left over, after justification, to their own will they would sell God and heaven and all for sin. And so they see as it was God that made them first willing, so it is he must keep them willing still. While the other side sees how terrible it is that God made many creatures to be damned, forced Adam to fall, and that now the sinner is forced by God; [these would] see rather such in free will and all its consequences—conditional justification, and falling from it again, setting up two justifications, the one free and the other conditional, as if they will be faithful, etc., etc. And the first justification is nothing—that we go from grace to works, from building on Christ to on ourselves, from

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<sup>13</sup>JW had recently published *A Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and His Friend*; see *Works*, 13:229–38.

trusting in the faithfulness that is in him to keep us to on our own faithfulness. Not considering that we are not a moment faithful but while he keeps us so. Nor will we as much as think of God, look up one moment, but he works this in us. And so by taking in our own wisdom to set out, here our own damnation is on ourselves. We set our salvation on ourselves, wholly on our own faithfulness, and if so Christ would have died in vain. And so on the other side he takes our own wisdom to give the glory of our salvation all to God we set our damnation on him.

But staying our wisdom (which we must do, else those things will be hid from us and revealed unto babes), Scripture and the experience of all as are lost will prove plainly that their damnation is just. That they suffer for their sins justly. And that they were not compelled to it, but they loved it and chose it, and shut their eyes against the light, saying in their hearts 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' So again the Scripture and the experience of all the saints [about] election; or that it was God as loved and chose them and made them to differ, makes them willing to choose good and keeps them faithful so that they will cry 'Lord I would never have come to heaven had it not been thou didst begin, and carry on, and finish the whole work in my soul.'

And here we may see a free unconditional election, or a predestination to life—God loves them freely, and out of that love gave them faith and perseverance, Christ and all the promises, for no other reason but because it so pleased him. And a conditional predestination to misery—on not original sin only (which he might in justice have done), but on actual sins against the law and gospel. And on this belief I can from the bottom of my heart call all to Christ. Christ is willing to receive everyone as is willing to receive him in his three offices, and the rest will be damned for not submitting to him. It is so decreed 'he that believeth not shall be damned'. And if anyone on this calls and cries feelingly, 'I am damned! I would believe but I cannot!' then I will encourage such an one to weigh that he is welcome. As you may see in the letter I sent to London about our differences, which I showed you and you said you agreed to all its substance but some expressions in it.

Thus I see a possibility of coming together for sweet union, if the Lord will make us little children and to deny our own wisdom. Else it is impossible to agree with God or with each other really in our hearts. Thus my dear brother I have wrote to you my whole heart, that assures to me that if God should bring us together (as I feel he has wrought in me sincere longing for it), our union may be sweet. And I believe we ought to tell each other what God has done for our souls. For it is in seeing we are born of the same seed, and we come to see it by opening our hearts to each other. We come to know one another in the Lord and love one another in that love which the Holy Ghost has shed abroad in our hearts.

But when I told you how I was brought to liberty, and how I walked in the light, abiding in Christ's love, kept very simple, having full dominion over sin and power of the devil, not knowing what fear was, having no thought for the morrow nor minding what anyone should think of me, doing all things for God, I forgot to tell you how I fell from this liberty (though not from God) I having, and was entangled again under the yoke of bandage. [It was] by conversing with an old professor who said that all I had experienced was the work of the devil, that he puffs up young converts with the thought that God loves you more than others. And that poison made a further entrance by reading the same thoughts in that carnal book [John] Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*. And this was the thought that was almost continual in my heart on seeing my old companions. Still my soul would be so melted down, so that I did not know what to do for God, seeing he had called me as one out of hundreds, one out of so many thousand. I felt I was unwilling to believe that this was all the work of the devil. But a word that I had read in [Jeremy] Taylor's *Rule of Holy Living*, that [if] we did not give up our judgment of such as are older than we it is our pride, that ensnared me. Believing from that which I look for truth that it was my duty to believe him, I gave up all my confidence and fell to unbelief and darkness and reasoning under the power of sin, to my own spirit of pride again. Lust, slavish fear, and also to doubts. But still there was somewhat kept hold secretly. Now when any would ask 'How is it with your soul?' my cry was like the rest of such as I converse with was, 'I am up and down! I have great cause to doubt.'

And so I passed for an humble Christian. Till the Lord sent brother [George] Whitefield about two years and a half ago, and the first question he asked me was 'Do you know that your sins are forgiven you?' And the question attacked me, having never heard the like question afore. I could not say they

were, being in great bondage under the law, and said they were not, for my past experiences that demand a witness in my heart. He was in the full testimony of assurance, just where I had been the first year. Then I began a hearing him how he knew his sins to be forgiven, being filled of love in the Holy Ghost and power, crying in his deep 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.' I do long for the former times and to see how I had fallen under bondage. Then I began to groan for liberty, using one means after another to bring me out of myself to Christ. I have had much benefit in reading [Thomas] Shepherd's [*The Sincere Convert* 1664]. Long before that was made a means to stir me up from resting on my prayers and frames. And a word that brother Whitefield said was of great use to me and conveyed much light to my soul. Talking on in company, he said as yet he is only working for life, and not from life. There came such a conviction to show the difference between the man under the law and under grace, the first doing all good in order to have life and the other doing all good out of gratitude because he had life. The one being full of self-love and fear of being damned, the other from faith works by love, being good fruit grows from a good tree. The one the law is principle, the other the gospel [is] principle. Very deep convictions also some brought to me from reading that excellent book [John] Cotton, [*Treatise on the Covenant of Grace* 1671], which providence set in my hand, which I hope was made of everlasting use to my soul. I opened to where it spoke of a faith of our own making, where I began to be more deeply convinced more than ever of the difficulty of believing, and of the terrible sin of unbelief, and the false rest we rest upon before we come to build on the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ and so strengthen ourselves in the grace which is in him.

I have no time to enlarge otherwise. I had many things to add. You see I have simply opened my heart to you, and I hope I have wrote as a brother. And oh let me have an answer, and disappoint the expectations of all who are still insinuating that you are not what you seem to be but that you have respect to me and that you give others of the society that I do agree entirely in sinless perfection, etc. You know what I said in every conversation I had with my dear brother, and here you see my thoughts more clearly. I thought it my duty to let brother [John] Cennick see this and he [is] the only person that has. The reprobation you mention in the *Dialogue* and free will I equally detest. To put our damnation on God and to put our salvation on ourselves in whole or in part I think is equally terrible. To me the first is all on man from first to last, and [the] last [is] all on God from first to last—it begins and ends in him. Those that are saved can say it was all owing to God's will in choosing them and making them willing, and to his faithfulness in keeping them to the end to persevere. And the rest will see it was all owing to their own obstinacy and final stubbornness that they are damned. That was the fountain whence all their misery did flow.

The Lord help us to love one another. I am  
Yours in our dear Lord,

H. Harris

I have no time to read this over, therefore correct what is amiss.

*Source:* Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #399.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>A brief (much polished) excerpt published in Morgan, *Howell Harris*, 89–91.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase, Middlesex]

October 24, 1741

Wisdom is justified in her children. Your answer to the former part of mine has quite silenced me on that subject.<sup>1</sup> But I believe your brother's journal will clear up my meaning most fully to you, for I should labour very much to have as few snares as possible in *his* way. Since you left us the still ones are not without their attacks. I fear much more for him than myself, as the consequences of the one would be nothing in respect to the other. They have by one of their agents pressed me very much to see [August Gottlieb] Spangenberg, but I have taken no sort of notice, as if I had [not] received it.

I comfort myself very much that you will approve a step with respect to them your brother and I have taken, no less than his declaring open war with them. He seemed under some difficulty about it at first, till he had free liberty given him to use my name as the instrument in God's hand that had delivered him from them.<sup>2</sup> I rejoiced much at it, hoping it might be a means of working my deliverance from them by these continual attempts every three weeks or month.

I have desired him to enclose to them yours on *Christian Perfection*.<sup>3</sup> The doctrine therein contained I hope to live and die by. It is absolutely the most complete thing I know. God has helped your infirmity. His Spirit was with you of a truth. You cannot guess how I in spirit rejoice over it. Your brother is also to give his reasons for quite separating, and I am to have a copy to keep by me of the letter he sends them. I have great faith God will not let him fall. He will surely have mercy on him, and not on him only, for many will fall with him. I fret he would make me stagger through his fall. But I would fly him far as pole from pole, for I *will* be found in mine obedience. Could I suppose mortal secured[?] by the power or faculties given to them as men, I should despise all their attacks they could use. His natural parts [and] judgment, together with the improvement they have received, are so far above the very highest of *all* them that I should imagine nothing but frenzy had seized him. But when I consider him with so many advocates for the flesh about him, having the form of angels of light, my flesh trembles for fear of him, and I should have no comfort did I not know assuredly that He that is for him, is greater than he that is against him.

When you receive his journal you will rejoice much when you come to Thursday, Oct. 15.<sup>4</sup> I think you must have felt our happiness. It was more than I can express. We set out this day sevennight<sup>5</sup> for Donington. I won't allow you to call me 'still' because I spoke so strongly against boasting. I can desire nothing at present but that my name may be cast out from among men, that you and your brother might think on me as you would do on no one else! With the contempt due to my weakness, folly, and pride, I am sure God will reward you ten thousand times [for] your labour of love to my soul. But everything will rise in judgment against me. I am sure of your prayer. You are continually borne<sup>6</sup> upon my heart to God, as well as the flock on whom the Holy Ghost has made you overseer.

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<sup>1</sup>Neither of these letters is known to survive; but it is clear that part of their concern was with CW's attraction to the Moravians.

<sup>2</sup>Since CW was in Bristol (and Wales) from early Apr. through late Sept. 1741, while Lady Huntingdon was in London, she is likely referring to CW's struggle with stillness in the early months of 1741.

<sup>3</sup>JW's 1741 sermon *Christian Perfection*; see *Works*, 2:97–121.

<sup>4</sup>Unfortunately the journal letter to which Lady Huntingdon is alluding is not known to survive, and CW did not include Oct. 1741 in his MS Journal.

<sup>5</sup>I.e., a week from today.

<sup>6</sup>Orig., 'boar'.

Your brother has got me Gell.<sup>7</sup> I am most extremely happy with it. You shall hear from me as soon as I get to Donington, and have heard how your little flock goes on in that neighbourhood.

No address or postage information.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L Hun. / Oct 24, 1741'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 1.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Robert Gell, *An Essay towards the Amendment of the English Translation of the Bible* (London: R. Norton, 1659). Gell had an essay of Christian Perfection in the appendix that the Wesley brothers prized.

<sup>8</sup>A polished transcription was published in *MM* 21 (1798): 489–90; and a somewhat abridged transcription was published in *Works*, 26:67–68.



From Sarah Perrin

[Leominster, Herefordshire?<sup>1</sup>]  
c. November 15, 1741

Indeed my good friend, I want much to hear of thy recovery,<sup>2</sup> and was in hopes I should have had a line from thee. My desires for thy welfare are strong, although I have not wrote to thee. The work in me goes on but slowly, yet my Lord doth not withhold his comforts. But I dare not judge of my state from what I feel of his comforts only, but from what I overcome also.

Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is continued to me, and I much long to be filled with the fulness of his love. At times since I have been in this place my soul hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, and I have had a witness in myself that I am where his providence has placed me. Yet I must confess I have not so frequently feasted in his presence as when I had the privilege of hearing you. But I believe he never will forsake me. He is a friend which sticketh closer than a brother. And I am often made to think if I was in a dungeon or desert I should be happy in the enjoyment of him. If he was to take his Spirit from me, and all temporal joys were mine, I know I should be wretched without him whom my soul loveth.

I fully and constantly find nothing without holiness can make me happy, and nothing with it can make me miserable! I feel no unholy desire in me. But I often beg that my heart may be searched as with a candle, that I may not deceive myself or others.

When I am writing to others, I mostly feel such divine comfort and heavenly joy break in upon my soul that I cannot forbear confessing how good my Lord is to me. But when this fervency of spirit is abated, I am ready to reflect upon myself and say perhaps I shall make my friends think I have attained to more than I really have. I would fain be without guile. I often wish I could discover my heart as it is. 'Lord, show me the depth of evil that is in me,' is my sincere cry. The things of this world give me no delight. At times I seem as one who has nothing to do with them, and I long to get home, that I may enjoy my Beloved without intermission. For it seems to me as if the end of my days would be a time of great rejoicing. And yet, when I consider how many have tasted of the good word of life, and longed as I do to dwell with Jesus, and have nevertheless forsook him, it fills me with strong desires that he would speedily finish his work and take me to himself. But I know this is wrong. I ought to have no desire but that his will may be fulfilled in me. Surely it is his will that I should be without carefulness. Therefore I trust he will preserve me from the cares of this world, and in his own time prepare my soul for his abode. It seems to me as if he was emptying me, in order to fill me with the riches of his love. But alas, self is still alive! I feel and abhor it. For I know I cannot enter into Canaan until this grand enemy is slain. When I think on what I once was, a great change seems to be wrought in me. But when I compare what I am with what I ought to be, I find the work is but begun! I am filled with admiration at the goodness of God to me. Of all his servants, I seem to do the least for his glory. And yet his banner over me is *love!*<sup>3</sup> O that I may be faithful! If works were to justify us, where must I appear? Lord, thou knowest none can love thee but those who desire to serve thee. And thou acceptest of the little mite which is offered up in pure love to thee. And if I abide in thee, thou wilt purge me, that I may bring forth fruit to thy praise.

I often think if it was possible for an unregenerate soul to feel the happiness our Master bestows on his followers, surely they would forsake all and follow him, and no longer seek happiness in the pleasures or profits of this world, but confess no bliss comparable to the *love of Jesus!*

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<sup>1</sup>Perrin is clearly not in Bristol. She may still be in Bradford-on-Avon, but her prior letter had spoken of going to Herefordshire, where she would be visiting her sister Mary (Perrin) Southall.

<sup>2</sup>JW was laid up in Bristol for the first half of Nov. 1741 by an illness.

<sup>3</sup>See Song of Sol. 2:4.

I have been constrained (since I have been in this place) to vindicate your doctrines. I sincerely wish that all who hear you would do you the justice not to condemn what they do not understand.  
In the love and fellowship of the Holy Ghost, my soul tenderly salutes thee. I remain  
Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 168–71.

From Sarah Perrin

[Leominster, Herefordshire<sup>1</sup>]  
c. December 1741

Esteemed Friend,

Remaining under a living sense of the good received by thy ministry obliges me to think it my duty to let thee hear from me.

I still keep the promised land in sight, but move slowly towards it. I would gladly be found entire—lacking nothing. I find a longing desire in my heart to be made a ‘partaker of the divine nature’.<sup>2</sup> The enemy of my soul does not make war against me by stirring up any of my passions, but by striving to lull me asleep, that he may rob me of mine inheritance, by causing me to rest short of the promise. But I firmly believe that nothing will prevail with me, to leave off wrestling, till I receive the blessing.

I long to know the will of my heavenly Father more perfectly, that all my time may be spent to his glory. The profits and pleasures of this world appear in my eyes altogether lighter than vanity. I think I may safely say my treasure is in heaven. My affections are not set on things below. I am sure the strongest desire of my soul is that Jesus would make his abode with me, and fulfill his will in me. I feel no other desire at present, as to my temporal affairs, but that providence may order them most for my *spiritual advantage*. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.<sup>3</sup> I have found a great change in the fruit of my imagination since I first heard you, which encourages me to hope I shall witness the thoughts of my heart to be good continually. When this blessed change comes, I shall be at rest. For ‘Lord, thou knowest my desire is to awake with thy likeness.’<sup>4</sup> Hasten the time, I beseech thee, for nothing can satisfy me but thy having full dominion over me! O quicken me with thy Spirit, that I may call upon thee.’ I know it must be my corruptions which hinder me from constantly enjoying my God. O may I receive faith, to overcome all things! Our Saviour bids us ‘be of good cheer, he has overcome the world’.<sup>5</sup> And I believe all that follow him shall obtain the victory. I know my Lord often breaks bread to my hungry soul, and hands forth to me the wine of the kingdom.<sup>6</sup> He himself creates in my heart a grateful remembrance of his love to me, by pouring into my soul *thanksgiving* and praise.

O how sweet, how glorious it is, when we open the door of our hearts and the *Lord of life* comes and sups with us! It is impossible for me to tell thee how unworthy I see myself of every blessing I enjoy, yet feel such assurances of love, such divine consolation, as causes my eyes often to overflow with tears of joy! How full of blessings does my past life appear to me now! Every bitter cup I have drunk, I plainly see was a healthy potion to my soul! I felt the drawings of my *Father's love* from my very infancy! His Holy Spirit was striving with me. And when I rebelled, he brought me back and baptized me in the water of affliction, and then sealed his pardoning love to me. In my latter days he has brought me acquainted with his choicest servants, increased my faith by them, and given me a promise of dwelling in the ‘land which floweth with milk and honey’.<sup>7</sup>

Yet am I still ungrateful to this best of benefactors! I know I do not love him as I ought, nor serve him as I desire. I find great reluctance in reproving sin. Yet it grieves me when I behold it. I would fain

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<sup>1</sup>Perrin's description of meeting together with a group of members of the Church of England is repeated in a letter to CW on Dec. 1, 1741 noted as from Leominster.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. 2 Pet. 1:4.

<sup>3</sup>See Ps. 27:4.

<sup>4</sup>See Ps. 17:15.

<sup>5</sup>John 16:33.

<sup>6</sup>A typical Quaker description of ‘spiritual’ communion.

<sup>7</sup>Exod. 3:8.

persuade others (by being holy in all manner of conversation) to seek after the good which I enjoy. O may I thus attain to be a preacher of righteousness! I have often wished my heart were laid open for all the world to behold it, for I am sure they would see my affections are not set upon it, nor anything in it.

I know every deed and every thought must be brought to light. And therefore I admire at people's being so very much against confessing their faults one to another. I believe those who keep strictly to truth, in telling their experiences, do much good to others, whether they are seeking the Lord or otherwise. And I can therefore say I have felt great comfort in telling others how the Lord deals with me.

I believe many of your hearers would find it more profitable for their own souls were they to wait upon the Lord before the service begins; and 'to feel after him' all the time, 'if haply they may find him'.<sup>8</sup> O may the Lord preserve us from running into any extreme, and give us a right judgment in all things.

I have several times been with some of the Church of England, who meet together to discourse about the things of God. I should be glad to know what books thou wouldst advise seeking souls to read, for it seems to me that they know not how to make a right choice for themselves. I have found comfort in conversing with them. I hope a true *gospel minister* will soon be sent unto them.

I meet with some who are seeking after holiness. One young man, of our people,<sup>9</sup> was convinced of his need of it by thee, and I hope we shall encourage one another to go on.

I believe thou hast reason for not letting me hear from thee. But I do not think it is to prevent my writing to thee, and therefore take this freedom. I can truly say I hold no man's person in admiration. But I know it is the will of my Father that I should highly esteem those in love whom he has made instruments of good to me. For which reason, it would be a refreshing to me to hear of thy welfare. I am sure it is my fervent desire that the people over whom the Lord has made you overseers may become 'a church without wrinkle or spot',<sup>10</sup> that the desire of thy soul may be satisfied. In the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, I remain

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 171–75.

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<sup>8</sup>Acts 17:27.

<sup>9</sup>I.e., a Quaker.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Eph. 5:27.

From Sarah Perrin

[Leominster, Herefordshire]  
c. December 1741

Dear Friend,

Thy letter I received,<sup>1</sup> and have long thought to answer it. At times my soul has been full of love, but I have not had opportunity to write to thee at those seasons. Yet I cannot refrain telling thee I still retain a lively gratitude, a sincere thankfulness to the Almighty, for bringing me acquainted with you. And I earnestly desire that I may not be a forgetful hearer. I hope it has not only been a blessing to my own soul but has diffused itself to others also. I find a constant desire to improve, not bury, the one talent committed to me. Not that I may receive any praise; no verily, I know I gain the contempt of the world by spending my time with poor sinners. For I already hear that I say and do things that I never thought of. Yet I earnestly desire I may be employed by the Lord's people, if but as a hewer of stone, or a drawer of water. For I plainly perceive no member in his church is to stand idle. No vessel in his house is to be useless. I desire no extraordinary gifts to glorify my Father. All my wish is that he would glorify himself by me, in the way and manner he thinks best. There is no blessing I so constantly and fervently desire as lowliness of heart. Pride is the strongest hold the enemy of my soul has in me. I abhor it most of all sin, yet I oftener feel it stir in me than any other evil whatever. But I know if I continue looking unto Jesus I shall be more than conqueror.

Several of our friends have agreed to meet together, on purpose to declare our experiences freely to each other. Last third day<sup>2</sup> I felt a great reluctance to go, hearing a papist and several strangers were to be there on my account. My heart was very heavy, because I thought I should have nothing to say to them. I besought the Lord and he comforted me. And blessed be his holy name, he gave me power to declare fully and simply his dealings with me, and I have cause to believe his blessing attended it. I went home rejoicing.

The next evening I went to a society of Churchmen,<sup>3</sup> which is kept at a shoemaker's house. They read and prayed, and then concluded with singing. When they had done, I read a letter of Susanna Designe's to them, and gave them a sermon on perfection.<sup>4</sup> Some of them are very loving to me, but others are bigoted against the Quakers and (I believe) think I have some design upon them. But I can truly say I have no party to set up. I have no desire to promote anything amongst them besides holiness. Poor creatures, they are ignorant as yet. But the Lord does not despise the day of small things.<sup>5</sup>

At times I have full assurance given me that I shall be made whole. The day of my redemption seems to draw near. At other times the happy day seems to be far off.

I grow stronger, for I feel my own weakness every day! All sin appears exceeding sinful to me. I often think what manner of person I ought to be in all holy conversation.<sup>6</sup> O that all your hearers may be heartily concerned to bring forth fruit to the glory of God! For I am sure, unless we do, our condemnation will be greater than theirs who despise us!

I find an entire freedom when I am writing to thy brother or thee. An unspeakable blessing it is to me that my God has removed all *party religion* far from me. I cannot cry up what God *has* done, in opposition to what he is doing. So long as we truly love our head, Christ Jesus, I am sure we shall love his

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<sup>1</sup>None of the obviously numerous letters of JW and CW to Perrin are known to survive. She appears to have destroyed them all.

<sup>2</sup>The Quaker designation for Tuesday.

<sup>3</sup>I.e., members of the Church of England.

<sup>4</sup>JW's 1741 sermon *Christian Perfection*; see *Works*, 2:97–121.

<sup>5</sup>See Zech. 4:10.

<sup>6</sup>See 2 Pet. 3:11.

members, suppose our judgment be not convinced of the truth of every opinion they hold.

I think I may say if I ever heard the gospel preached in my life, I did it lately by a poor man who came to visit us. He earnestly pressed us all to die to sin and live unto righteousness. O that the Lord would raise up more such plain, honest teachers of a noble *catholic spirit!* Then should we *prosper*.

I have this day tasted how good the Lord is. He has refreshed me with his presence. But oh my friend, it is impossible for me to tell thee how much I long fully to enjoy him. If thy business will admit, I should be glad to hear from thee. In the love of our dear Lord Jesus, I remain,

Thy friend,

S. P.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 175–78.

From Elizabeth Baddiley<sup>1</sup>

Bristol  
December 31, 1741

Reverend Sir,

Out of the abundance of my heart I now write. My burden is more than I can bear. My spirit is full [of] bitterness and distraction. I cannot bear the indignation of the Lord, though I have sinned against him. I am perplexed on every side, without hope and without God in the world. I think I am forsaken and abandoned, both of God and of man. I do not meet my band. The reason is this, time after time being told I had not a spark of sincerity in me, which was the truth though I could not bear it thus far. For it stopped my mouth that I could not speak my mind. Then I was charged with not ever being open, which was false. Then one told me that she did not care to meet with me. This is the real reason which made me leave them. As to my own thoughts about it, is this, that they was sincere and I was not, and therefore God would not suffer me [to] stay with them. I can now say my nearest friend is become a stranger. O may I cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and turn to the living God. I know I deserve infinitely more than this. I often judge of the long suffering of God by man, which makes me cast off all hope of salvation and despair of the mercy of God which I have so long abused. I am weary of hearing the word, for I think everyone is spoke to but me. I think the blackness of my state is never pictured out. My wound is never searched. Therefore no hopes of a cure. Dear sir, I desire your prayers for me that God would speak peace to my soul, that I turn not again. I desire you to answer this letter [at] the first opportunity, if it is but two lines.

Now may the Lord strengthen you to fight of faith and to lay hold on eternal life. Dear sir, I am,  
Your unhappy friend,

Eliz. Baddiley

Betty Thomas gives her duty to you, and we both join in love to brother [Thomas] Richards.

*Address:* 'For / the Rev Mr John Wesley / these'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'S[ister] Baddily Dec. 31. 1741'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, WCB, D5/69/1.

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<sup>1</sup>This may be the daughter of George and Elizabeth (Collins) Baddiley of London; if so, she was currently assisting JW at Kingswood (see JW, diary, Mar. 4, 1741, *Works*, 19:453). Her spelling is fairly good, but she uses no punctuation.

From Susannah Designe

Bristol  
December 31, 1741

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I am glad of this opportunity to let you know the distress of my soul. I have been, almost ever since you left Bristol, in such hardness of heart as I never felt before. I have scarce any more sense or feeling of the love of God than a stone. I am an outside show of religion but how long I shall keep it I know not. I seem as if I am falling from every thing that is good. I have no taste for heavenly things and sometimes I cannot find I have any desire to be saved.

I cannot express what I feel, the tears that now flow from my eyes seem to come from my heart. I am ready to tell the stocks and stones I am a hypocrite. If I could be thankful for anything, I would thank my Lord for making me dead to my darling sin—the desire of praise, to be thought well of, though it be by the children of God. I can find no happiness in anything. It is the hour and power of darkness. I am miserable. Sometime I would hope I am miserable because I find myself unholy, but I dare hardly harbour so good a thought of myself. Yet I know the Lord is with me and his power over me, because I am kept from outward sin. And what seemeth a mystery to me, when I am out among worldly people I find a greater power to reprove gainsayers than ever I had. And [I] cannot forbear, where I see any marks of restraining grace, admonishing them to believe in Christ, telling them of his great love and readiness to save them. Though at the same time I do not find any of the love of God in my heart. Yet I would not have one soul keep from Jesus though he seems now to be far from me. Yet I cannot help often crying with great eagerness, ‘My Lord and my God, doubtless thou art my Father, though I be ignorant of thee.’

I have a secret hope in the power, mercies, and love of Christ, which is as the anchor of my soul and keeps it from sinking in the many waters. I do not find any dread or horror in myself of God’s displeasure. Neither can I doubt but I am his child and he loves me. The cup which my Father hath given [me,] shall [I] not drink it? Yet can I say, ‘Lord, I am in thy hand, do with me what thou wilt, only suffer me not to perish at the last.’ Surely there is hope in the end and my expectation shall not be cut off. Oh that I may see the felicity of thy chosen ones and rejoice.

I am grieved I am of so little use in promoting the glory of God and the good of my fellow creatures. Yet I know if I could, through the power of God, convert and bring a whole nation to the truth, it would not bring me one hair’s breadth nearer heaven. It is not good works [which] will change the heart, it is the almighty power of God. I fear I am an unprofitable servant. I find no fruits but dead works. I fear I look too much to my own heart and not enough to Christ. But what shall I say? I am blind. I know nothing. I can do nothing. I am nothing but sin. I seem almost stupid. Sometimes I can hardly give a reasonable answer to any question that is ever so deliberately asked me. Great peevishness attends. It is a burden to me but I find no way to escape. Oh Lord I am in distress, undertake for me in the midst of my trouble. If I could believe I was in the fiery furnace, my sufferings would be nothing, for then I know my Lord would bring me forth as gold tried in the fire. It is nothing to suffer any affliction, either of body or mind, if there is but a small glimpse of Jesus.

But I cannot see him with me whose form is as the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> I grieve that I can grieve no more. All the comforts I once had, all the manifestations of the love of God, seem as though they had never been. What by grace I once have been doth nought avail me now. Sometimes a thought returneth backward to think upon the sweet communion I oft have had with Jesus. But it brings no food for my soul. I cannot dwell upon it scarce a moment. It gives me pain and sorrow of heart and forces me to cry, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Oh my Father, hast thou not got a blessing left for me? Bless me, even me, O my Father.’

One thing I find very remarkable in all my darkness, when I meet my bands I neither want words to speak nor power to pray for them. The Lord, for that time, gives me light and discernment, and

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<sup>1</sup>See Dan. 3:25.



afterwards I am shut up [in] the same darkness. And when I come in secret to the Lord, I am as a beast before him.

I seem not to have one dram of sincerity in me. In me dwelleth no good thing.<sup>2</sup> I could wish sometimes I could believe the work of God going on in my soul, but I fear that thought would deceive me. I am ready to hope my Lord is stripping me naked before him, that he may clothe me with himself. Oh that he might empty me of everything and fill me with his love. When I find my soul restless like Noah's dove and can take no happiness in no person nor thing, I can say surely it is the Lord's doing, to embitter every creature good that I may be happy in him alone.

Dear sir, pray for me that the Lord will be [pleased] to show me the state of my soul and make me in earnest. Oh that he may be glorified in my salvation, not in my destruction. Your dear brother is well and fights the Lord's battles.<sup>3</sup> May he [God] strengthen you both more and more and grant you may not run in vain, neither labour in vain. I earnestly desire all my brethren and sisters at London, as well as Bristol, may press forward and improve the talents committed to their charge, for surely the Lord hath been very gracious unto us. Blessed be his holy name for giving us to hear his gospel in simplicity.

Blessed be the Lord, my little girl is very much awakened. She often cries out in bitterness of soul 'I have offended my Lord, oh what shall I do to be saved?'

Dear sir, I desire if you can possibly to send me a line or two by brother Walldin. It may be [that] the Lord may bless it to my soul.

I remain

Your unworthy and afflicted sister,

Susannah Designe

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 13.

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<sup>2</sup>See Rom. 7:18.

<sup>3</sup>CW was currently in Bristol.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]  
January 8, 1742

Have confidence towards God. What is lacking in your faith he will give it unto me for you. I dare not say I wish I could bear the cross for you. Neither would I but at these times it feels most heavy to you, for I can rejoice it will abound to your account. But if one member suffers, every member does. Do not, my dear friend, think of a year hence. We may by that time all have received our crown of rejoicing. I feel now as if you might depend upon me to lighten the burden, but do not. I dare not say I even mean well—so sure am I that no good thing dwells in me. But I do and will commit it daily into God's hands, who will hear his children's cry and will help them.

As to what you say of our friend,<sup>1</sup> I find myself utterly incapable of saying anything, for I feel *now* in respect to him what I ever do on his making any mention of you but what just suits with my sentiments about you. He was here on Friday,<sup>2</sup> to the society, and take up this money(?). He read me a bit in your letter. As I remember, these were the words 'I wish your frequent journeys ... do not weaken your hands.'<sup>3</sup> Upon hearing of which I resolved to beg you to speak more fully on this head to me, as they should be cut short, nay for good (oh, that is a hard saying) if I thought one soul was a single moment neglected on this account.

Then I earnestly beg your whole heart on this particular. The day you left this place<sup>4</sup> it was mentioned that Mrs. Ra[w]lins<sup>5</sup> would come to see me. I have reckoned with some impatience upon this visit, which has never happened till last Tuesday. Since which time I have had no peace till I had told you my whole heart about her. Possibly your long experience of her may make the short one with me of no value; nay, extirpate every secret persuasion or inducement to your friendship! I need not tell you how much I wish it may not. But I *would* seek the honour that cometh of God only. I received her with open arms, expecting much light and heat from such an instrument. We fed and then did join with our absent friends. And I then expressed such pleasure in being present in spirit at Bristol and London, saying I was much lifted up by all your prayers. She seemed a stranger to this sort of sensibility. I made her sit by me and for two hours and more she talked. I said but little, neither could I. She has soon spoiled me of all my comfort.

Must I say it—this time most of it however, she talked nothing but monstrous blasphemy. O never never was my spirit so grieved. I found her full of the creature. I saw neither praise nor glory given to God in her, or by her. She is exalted above measure, but not from the abundance of revelations but from the abundance of pride. I at first started and I was will to believe my weak faith a poor detriment into spiritual things made me thus slow to hear. But a very short time convinced me to the contrary. It was daggers to my soul. I saw her neither allowing honour to God or a gift to either minister or people. She and only she was bliss in his favour. After many more profane things, not fit for a creature to utter, I still longed to think more favourably of her. I then endeavoured to find out by her discourse some means of

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<sup>1</sup>George Whitefield, who had arrived in Bristol in late Dec. 1741, about a week after JW had left Bristol for London.

<sup>2</sup>Whitefield spent at least two weeks in Bristol, and apparently rode over to Bath on Friday, Jan. 1, 1742.

<sup>3</sup>This letter is not known to survive.

<sup>4</sup>JW had visited Bath Dec. 11–12, 1741 (*Journal, Works*, 19:240–41).

<sup>5</sup>Mrs. Rawlins had been the initial head Mistress of the school for poor children that the Wesley brothers set up in Bristol, near the Horsefair. This letter may explain why she disappears for records after 1743.

the divine providence wherein his honour might have been advanced, or some good to man hoped for from these extraordinary (and indeed most marvellous) relations. But oh, no. Not one single ray of either could be deduced from the whole, or any part of her conversation. All prejudice in her favour was now removed and I beheld the enemy of souls had her enclosed in her own fat, speaking and blaspheming proud things. I could not help trembling to think the direful consequences such an one may bring to the gospel. I am sure it is such as these stop it, and are stumbling blocks to thousands that would be brought to the way.

I do not wonder at it. I will receive none of these things but from you or your brother. Less authority I cannot approve. I believe God means the husbandmen shall be first partakers of the fruits, and I am sure all order must break when the flock shall begin to judge for the shepherds. My dear friend, can you bear this from me? I know my eye is single to God. And I know you are so just to one as to believe I do not wish to believe this. But I am convinced I should have had no peace, had not I mentioned my sentiments of her to you. The dread of such a state has learned me such a lesson of humility that I desire no comfort, no nothing, but to lie in the dust. You will have your brother's opinion, whom I own I never expected would have bore a word about her to be said, and therefore had wrote this to you, assuming[?] you will hear how[?] I found him upon telling him the whole guile of my opinion. Do let me hear soon from you and how you are in your bodily health. Your friend at B[ath]<sup>6</sup> is the most improved and brought forward in the grace of God I ever saw any soul in three months. Do not forget me in your prayers. I hope you feel mine. May God lead you in all truth and peace.

No mailing information (enclosed in next letter).

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'Jan. 8. / 1742 / a[nswere]d 14'.

*Source:* holograph; WWEP Archive holds photocopy [Baker notes as in MARC; not in current catalogue].

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<sup>6</sup>Likely Frances ('Fanny') Cowper; see letter of Feb. 19, 1742 below.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]  
January 9, 1742

The enclosed<sup>1</sup> you will appoint the fate of. I feel myself much unconcerned about it. The good that I would, that do I not.<sup>2</sup> My whole heart has not one single grain, this moment, of thirst after approbation. I feel alone with God. He fills the whole void. I see all mortals under my feet. I have not one wish, one will, one desire but in him. He has set my feet in a large room. All but God's children seems as so many machines appointed for uses that I have nothing to do with.

I have wondered and stood amazed at God should make conquest of that within<sup>3</sup> me by love. I now am well assured they are always the most vile.<sup>4</sup> Others are<sup>5</sup> conquered by less gifts and graces, but what must that evil heart be that nothing but the *love of God*<sup>6</sup> can subdue.<sup>7</sup> I am brought to less than nothing, broken to pieces as the potter's vessel. O may you thus be subjected! May these tears be your meat and drink night and day. I long to leap into the flames to get rid of my sinful flesh, and that every atom of those ashes might be separate, that neither time, place, or person should say God's Spirit had ever been so clothed.<sup>8</sup> May this same spirit dwell in you, protect and guide you, to love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. Fear not, be strong and he will establish you.

Adieu most faithful friend.

I have been much refreshed in prayer <...><sup>9</sup> which I have used for them and wit< .. last> time you were here.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L. Hu. Jan. 9. 1742 / a[nswere]d 14'.

*Source:* holograph, MARC, MA 1977/504/2/102.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Her note of Jan. 8, immediately above.

<sup>2</sup>See Rom. 7:19. This line at top of manuscript does not appear in *MM*.

<sup>3</sup>*MM* renders 'that God should make a conquest of all within'.

<sup>4</sup>*MM* omits this sentence.

<sup>5</sup>*MM* changes 'are' to 'may be'.

<sup>6</sup>Emphasis indicated by writing in large letters.

<sup>7</sup>*MM* reads 'conquer' instead of 'subdue'.

<sup>8</sup>*MM* reduces the last phrase to 'person should stay God's Spirit'.

<sup>9</sup>A corner of the page is cut away, which would contain about two words each line.

<sup>10</sup>A revised transcription of this letter (which placed as its first half a later letter of Apr. 19, 1742) was published in *MM* 21 (1798): 490–91.

From Elizabeth Holmes<sup>1</sup>

Oxford  
January 20, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Blessed be the Lord. He brought me safe to Oxford a Friday morning, where I was greatly rejoiced to find my mother seeking Christ, I hope in good earnest. I believe she is convinced of sin and groans to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. May the Lord carry on and perfect the work he has begun in our souls and turn the heart of my father who is greatly stirred up to persecute us.

In the afternoon I went to see Mrs. Hitchman.<sup>2</sup> She is very lame and weak in body but I hope resigned to the Lord's will. From thence I went to Mr. Mears's, who was all rejoiced to hear from you. Mrs. Compton<sup>3</sup> has been sick of a fever very lately. I hope her sickness has been to the glory of God. I asked after Mrs. Plat and they told me she died in a glorious state so there is no doubt but she is entered into the joy of her Lord.<sup>4</sup>

Sunday night my mother and I went to the society. The room was full of people and Mr. Mears<sup>5</sup> read your sermon on *The Almost Christian*<sup>6</sup> and your letter.<sup>7</sup> Mr. Evans<sup>8</sup> spoke very heartily and told Mr. Mears he hoped to be present with them much more than he has been lately. Mrs. Compton told she had not seen so many people together for this four months past. Surely it was the hand of the Lord brought them together that they might be strengthened and encouraged by your letter not to forsake the assembling themselves together.

I could not see Debby Marcham<sup>9</sup> till Monday and then she was so busy in a place that she had but just time to speak to me. But I hope to see her again before I come away. Mrs. Compton, Patty Tussin, Debby Marcham and my mother desire me to give their love and duty to you dear sir.

I find my soul is in heaviness, under clouds and darkness. But this I know, Jesus and the crown of everlasting life is before me. Oh that I may not stop short of the promise. Sometimes I fear my deceitful

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<sup>1</sup>It is possible, but seems unlikely, that this is the Elizabeth Holmes (1712–85) who lived with her husband John (d. Mar. 13, 1742) in Smith House, Lightcliffe, near Halifax, Yorkshire. After John's death (who had sided with the Moravians) that Elizabeth attached herself firmly to the Wesleyan Methodists. More likely may be the Elizabeth Holmes who was a member of a band for single women at the Foundery in 1742.

<sup>2</sup>JW's diary records visits to Mr. and Mrs. Hitchman in Oxford in June 1741 (see *Works*, 19:465–66).

<sup>3</sup>Holmes spells 'Compen'. JW records Mrs. Compton's conversion in *Journal*, Mar. 3, 1739, *Works*, 19:35.

<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Plat, the teacher JW enlisted in 1731 to teach a small group of poor children in Oxford, and supported over the following years, experienced an 'evangelical' conversion under CW's early preaching in Oxford, on Aug. 31, 1738 (see *CW MS Journal*); cf. JW, *Journal*, Dec. 11, 1739, *Works*, 19:127.

<sup>5</sup>Holmes spells 'Meers'. James Mears (1708–83) and his wife Elizabeth (Wesson) Mears (1701–83) were hosting Methodist gatherings at their home in Church Street, St. Ebbes by 1738. She was converted by JW in Mar. 1739; cf. JW to George Whitefield, Mar. 16, 1739, *Works*, 25:606–07.

<sup>6</sup>JW, Sermon 2, *The Almost Christian*, *Works*, 1:131–41.

<sup>7</sup>This letter is not known to survive.

<sup>8</sup>William Evans (d. 1753), lived near St. Giles church in Oxford. There are nearly two dozen references to him in JW's diaries between Nov. 28, 1738 and July 24, 1741 (*Works*, 19:363–468).

<sup>9</sup>JW's diary records meeting with Deborah Marcham in Oxford on July 5, 1741 (*Works*, 19:466).

heart will never hold out. But God is greater than my heart and I hope he will make me more than a conqueror in his love. I desire to cry unto the Lamb of God until he has taken away all my sins. I long to be filled with that mind which was in Christ.

Dear sir, I hope you will remember me in your prayers. Indeed I am the weakest and wickedest of all my Father's children. Surely I ought to pray and weep and love much because I have much forgiven. My mother presses me very much to stay at Oxford. I know not what to do but I hope the Lord will give me to act according to his will in all things. I thought to have been at London next Tuesday but because I am not very well in body, my friends have persuaded me to stay one week longer. My heart is more at London than at Oxford and I hope, God willing, to set out from Oxford next Monday sennight.

May the Lord direct and bless you and crown your labours with abundant success. May he make you an instrument of turning many more unto righteousness, that at last you may shine as the stars forever and ever, amen, is the prayer of, dear sir,

Your poor weak and unworthy child in the Lord,

Elizabeth Holmes

*Address:* 'To the Revd. / Mr John Wesley / at the foundery / near upper Moorfields / London'.

*Postmarks:* '21/IA' and 'OXFORD'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'Eliz Holmes / Jan. 21. 1742'.<sup>10</sup>

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 13.

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<sup>10</sup>Also written on the address side are the following names, in JW's hand: 'Margaret Williams, wid.; Mary Pearse, wid.; Dinah Reed, m[arried]; James Johnson, wid., soldier, Haymarket, Windmill Str.'

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]

January 31, 1741/2

I had a letter this day from home<sup>1</sup> that my horses will set out for this place as tomorrow, and will (I believe) be here February the third. Mr. Jones<sup>2</sup> would tell you how much we all want to see you, but this I quite submit to our Lord's wise direction. If it is best it will happen; if not, his blessed will be done and his name be glorified.

I never mentioned to you that I have seen [Thomas] Maxfield. He is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favour that I know. He has raised from the stones one to set among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. How is God's power shown in weakness! You can have no idea what an attachment I have to him. He is highly favoured of the Lord. Indeed the first time I made him expound (expecting but little from him), I set over against him and thought what a power of God must be with him to make me give any attention to him. But before he had got over one-fourth, anyone that had seen me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is very extraordinary. To deal plainly I could either talk or write for an hour about him.

The society goes on well here. I ⟨shall,⟩ if the Lord permit, make B—<sup>3</sup> in ⟨my⟩ way home Monday the eighth. And live assured of the most faithful and sincere friendship of

Your unworthy sister in Christ Jesus.

Commend me to Mr. [Robert] Jones. Hurry him down, or I shan't see him. I know you will love Mr. Hodges.<sup>4</sup> He will make a most sweet soul.

*Address:* 'For The Revd Mr Wessley / at The Foundry // near uper Moorfiels London'.

*Postmarks:* 'BATH', '2/FE'. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L. Hu. Jany 31, 1742 / of b Maxd. I come'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 2.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Donington Park, Leicestershire.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Jones (1706–42) of Fonmon Castle, Glamorgan, Wales had been converted to the Methodist cause in 1741 and was repeatedly in the Bath/Bristol area assisting the work until his death in June (see JW, *Journal*, Sept. 21, 1741, *Works*, 19:227; and Dec. 18, 1742, 19:242).

<sup>3</sup>Apparently Bristol, which JW reached on Sunday, Feb. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Apparently Rev. John Hodges, of Wenvoe.

<sup>5</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:73–74.

From Anne (Williams) Dutton<sup>1</sup>

[p. 3]

[Great Gransden, Huntingdonshire]  
c. February 13,<sup>2</sup> 1742

Reverend Sir,

You have had the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, in the doctrines of God's eternal electing love, particular redemption, special vocation, and final perseverance shine *round about you*. But I fear, to this moment, it hath not shined *into your heart*. You have had the *means* of light, but no *light* communicated by the means. But still in the darkness of your own mind, you resist and oppose the light.

The dear Mr. [George] Whitefield's *Letter* in answer to your sermon entitled *Free Grace*,<sup>3</sup> was doubtless wrote in *the Spirit of Christ*, is full of *gospel-truth*, and was a *warning* from God to you to cease your opposition thereto. But I hear that you neither received *it* nor the *truth* [p. 4] therein in *love*, but still make as *fierce and fiercer* opposition than ever. This, sir, I am very sorry for.

Glad should I have been if you had borne witness to that part of the truth of the gospel which you see—viz., that the justification of a sinner before God must be not by his own works but by the obedience of Christ alone—and upon this foot exhorted sinners to believe on him for salvation, and meekly waited upon God for further teaching before you spake evil of the things you know not. Then might there have been more hope that God would reveal even these unto you; for 'the meek he will teach his way'.<sup>4</sup> But at present there is but small hope of you concerning this thing. Sad will it be if God should say of you, 'He will not *see*; let him be *blind*.'

It has been thought by some that a bitter prejudice against election is a mark of the non-elect. I dare not fix it upon you as such. But indeed sir, it is no ordinary case to see a believer in Christ show such heart-enmity against that grace which alone can save him. By nature we are all *haters of God* and enemies of his sovereignty. And there is no one thing in which the enmity of the carnal mind against God appears more than in the opposition it makes to his sovereignty.

O corrupt nature is presently in a rage if it hears that God of the same lump has made one [p. 5] vessel to honour and another to dishonour. That he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. That salvation is not of works, 'not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy'.<sup>5</sup> Instantly it flies in his face with a 'Why doth he then find fault? For who hath resisted his will?'

But when once the soul is humbled by grace, it is in some good measure reconciled to the sovereignty of God, and will say to such vile thoughts which may spring up in its own mind, or proceed from the mouth of others, 'Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour.'<sup>6</sup>

In this chapter sir, Romans 9, the salvation of a remnant in and by Christ, unto endless glory, is laid upon its proper foundation; and with this I shall begin—to wit: absolute, unconditional election, election of grace, without works. The apostle here asserts, That a 'remnant', both of Jews and Gentiles,

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<sup>1</sup>As reflected in the title of this published letter, it was not a response to a letter of JW to Anne Dutton, but her detailed response to the criticism of unconditional election in JW's *Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and His Friend* (1741) and CW's *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741).

<sup>2</sup>Advertised in *Weekly History*, Feb. 4, 1742, as coming next week.

<sup>3</sup>See Whitefield to JW, Dec. 24, 1740.

<sup>4</sup>Ps. 25:9.

<sup>5</sup>Rom. 9:16.

<sup>6</sup>Rom. 9:20–21.



shall be *saved* (vv. 25–29). ‘As he saith also in Hosea, “I will call them ‘my people’, which were not my people; and her ‘beloved’, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto [p. 6] them, ‘Ye are not my people’, there shall they be called the children of the living God.” Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” [...] And as Esaias said, “Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a remnant, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah”.’ Hence it is plain that a remnant, and but a remnant, both of Jews and Gentiles, shall be saved. Except the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we had all, even all nations of men, been as Sodom and been made like unto Gomorrah, who suffered the vengeance of eternal fire.

And as this remnant which shall be saved are *God’s chosen* scattered abroad all the world over, so the original *cause* of their salvation is his *electing love*. As [Rom. 9] vv. 6ff, ‘Not as though the word of God had taken none effect. For they are not all Israel that are of Israel. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. But “In Isaac shall thy seed be called”. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, “At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.” And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God [p. 7] according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth), it was said unto her, “The elder shall serve the younger”. As it is written, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated”.’

Thus the apostle leads us to the original *cause* of that difference of *state*, both here and hereafter, which is and shall be between the *people of God* and the *rest*, as it lies in his *electing love* to his own, in his *everlasting choice* of them in Christ unto eternal life, merely from the sovereign pleasure of his own *will* towards them, and not from their *foreseen works*, even *faith* itself. Thus he loved Jacob, when he hated Esau. And in vain is it, sir, to say, *Objection*: This is no proof that God elected some to eternal life and rejected others, for this text plainly relates not to their persons but their posterities. As in your *Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend*,<sup>7</sup> page 6.

I answer: It was the pleasure of God to pitch upon the *persons* of Jacob and Esau first and principally, and upon their *posterities* secondarily, to be *types* of his eternal *election* of some to everlasting life and *rejection* of others. And that Jacob’s person was one of God’s chosen, that was interested in his everlasting love and an heir of eternal glory, is manifest by the scripture account we have of him. And that the person of Esau was not a vessel of wrath is what I think cannot be proved. But to pass that. [p. 8]

It was the pleasure of God to choose the seed, the posterity of Jacob, the nation of Israel, to be his peculiar people, in distinction from all the world beside. And to them he gave the land of promise. And though the *election* of that nation as such, and their *privileges* thereupon, were but external and temporary; yet by and under these was the *eternal election* of that remnant which shall be saved out of all nations, and their *heavenly inheritance*, in the great promise of eternal life, *typed out*. And many there were of the nation of Israel that were God’s *elect*, his peculiar people, in a very distinguishing manner from the whole body of that nation as such, that really belonged to the *eternal election of his grace* and were *heirs of his promise in Christ through the gospel*. As is evident by the many famous instances of their *faith* which stand upon record in the sacred Scriptures. But the unbelieving, carnal Jews, partaking with *them* of the external and temporary privileges of the nation as such, boasted themselves of being God’s ‘peculiar People’, his ‘children’, the ‘seed of Abraham’, the ‘heirs of promise’, etc. This our Lord abundantly confuted in his ministry amongst them; as John 8:34, etc.

He tells them that they who were the children of God, the seed of Abraham, the heirs of promise, were only such that had *true faith* in Him the great *messiah*, both before and after his coming in the flesh.

And the [p. 9] apostle in this (Rom. 9), having expressed his earnest desire after the conversion of these his kinsmen according to the flesh and mentioned their external privileges which were common to

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<sup>7</sup>JW, *A Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and His Friend*; see *Works*, 13:229–38.

the whole nation as God's chosen people, he obviates an objection that the carnal Jews might make, upon the greatest part of them rejecting of Christ and being cast off by God: That then God had cast away his chosen people, that he was unfaithful to his promise made to Abraham, that his word was of no effect. No, says the apostle, not so. 'Not as though the word of God had taken none effect. For they are not all Israel that are of Israel' (9:6). It is as if he should say, 'God has an Israel *in* Israel, a *spiritual* Israel in *literal* Israel, a people *among* that people, a *remnant* according to the election of his grace, *Chosen unto eternal life* among that *chosen nation* which were so *externally privileged*. And *these* he hath not cast away. He hath not been *unfaithful*, nor hath his word of promise to Abraham and his seed, the children and heirs intended therein, taken *none effect*.' Thus it appears that God's election of a remnant to eternal life was *couched under* and *typed out* by his election of the nation of *Israel* unto external and temporal privileges, and that some of that nation were of that elect remnant.

And this he further proves in the following verses, by showing how the line of election [p. 10] ran in the seed of Abraham, in Isaac and not in Ishmael, in the children of the *promise* and not in the children of the *flesh*. And again in Jacob and not in Esau. And to show the *freeness* and *sovereignty* of electing grace he observes, 'That (in the type) it was said unto her (Rebecca), "The elder shall serve the younger".' And 'that before the children were yet born, or had done either good or evil'. This is on purpose brought in to prove that *election* is of *grace* and not of *works*, or that it is *absolute* and unconditional. For, saith he, this was said unto her that the purpose of God according to *election* might stand, not of *works* but of *him* that calleth. That is, that chooseth, calleth, and saveth whom he will, from his mere, sovereign good pleasure, without respect had to their works. And this he confirms by a text out of Malachi 1:2–3, 'I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord. Yet I loved Jacob and I hated Esau.'

God's people here seemed to be faithless about his *love*, or at least sunk into a fit of unbelief about its glorious *fruits*. And therefore to recover and strengthen their *faith* herein, the Lord puts them in mind of what he had said and done for them. *I have loved you, saith the Lord*. And to show the infinite freeness of his love towards them, and of all the [p. 11] wondrous grace he had bestowed upon them, he puts the question to them, a question that could not be answered in the negative: 'Was not Esau Jacob's brother?' He sets their thoughts on work about it, as if he should say, 'Was there any *difference* between these two brothers, when both lay in the same womb and had done neither good nor evil? Did not Esau stand as fair to be the object of *my love* as Jacob? Might I not as well have chosen Esau and rejected Jacob?' And then, taking it for granted, he replies: 'Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau.' Oh this wondrous 'yet'! How doth he hereby lead their faith up to the *springhead*, the original source of all his loving kindness towards them, as it lay in his *everlasting love*! And how doth he hereby commend and set it off in its *distinguishing glory*, as it was a free, sovereign act of the good pleasure of his will towards them, in that it put such an amazing *difference* between two objects that were equally in the same state! Oh this, 'Yet I loved Jacob!' How often has God's free, distinguishing love herein, to *me*, that was no better by nature than others, melted my soul down! And doubtless it had a blessed effect upon the Lord's people to whom it was first spoken, to strengthen their *faith* in his love and raise their *admiration* at its free, distinguishing nature, That Jacob and they his *posterity*, the true Israelites, should be *chosen* and *loved of God* with an everlasting [p. 12] love; while Esau and his *posterity* were *rejected* and the people of his wrath, against whom he has indignation forever! And thus the apostle applies this text, or brings it for a proof of God's eternal election of some and rejection of others. As it is written, says he, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.' And doubtless it was a sufficient proof hereof.

And that he doth so apply it, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, the elect and the rest among them, is evident by the succeeding verses. For [in] ver. 14 he anticipates an objection that might be made by the adversaries of God's free grace, whether Jews or Gentiles, against the righteousness of God—that upon supposition of God's choosing some to everlasting life, and leaving others to perish that were in the same state with them, that then he was *unrighteous*. What shall we say then? saith the apostle, 'Is there unrighteousness with God?' And he first answers it with 'God forbid', and then proceeds to show his *sovereignty*, in the designation, declaration, and dispensation of his mercy. 'For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.'

So then (saith he) 'it is not of him that willeth', (what is this it? salvation, eternal life, to which some were chosen) 'nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy'.

For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, 'Even for this same purpose have I raised [p. 13] thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth' (vv. 15–17). Upon which he concludes, 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardneth' (v. 18). Then again he supposes another cavil brought in by the enemies of God's sovereignty, in the dispensation of his wrath and mercy: 'Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he then find fault? For who hath resisted his will?' (v. 19). It is as if this person should say, 'Why then did he find fault with Pharaoh, or doth he find fault with unbelieving, impenitent *sinner*s, on account of their sins, for which he punisheth them with wrath; if that wrath and destruction of God's name, as mercy and salvation were to others? For who hath resisted his *will*? Who is any otherwise than God will have him be? Are not the most hardened wretches, that die in their sins and perish for ever, just such as God will have them be?' Now sir, who is this caviller most like, a *predestinarian* or an *universalian*? And to whom doth the cavil most properly belong? But it is observable that as the cavil of this caviller is against the sovereign pleasure of God's *will*, so that being blinded by a bitter prejudice against God's *secret will* presently lays the destruction of those that perish at *God's door*, and is not able to cast one look to his *revealed will*, [p. 14] which would have answered his cavil, and given him a good reason why the judge of all, as the supreme lawgiver, finds fault with those that break his law and inflicts punishment upon them for the same with the highest equity. But instead of looking to the *breach* of God's revealed will as the cause of men's destruction, he riseth up in the darkness and rebellion of his spirit against his secret will with a 'Why doth he then find fault?' For who hath resisted his will? To which the apostle answers, 'Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory? Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles' (vv. 20ff). Thus the apostle brings up the matter he had been discoursing on, the election of some and rejection of others, instances whereof he had given in Jacob and Esau, unto its proper issue: the eternal salvation of the *chosen* and the destruction of the *rest*. The one he styles vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and the other vessels of [p. 15] mercy prepared unto glory. 'Even us' (says he) 'whom he hath called, not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles.' And he resolves the cause of the election of the chosen and rejection of the rest, which issues in such a difference of state, into God's *sovereign will*.

How then sir can you think that by God's *loving of Jacob* and *hating of Esau* is not meant his choosing of the one to everlasting life and leaving of the other to perish eternally? And that absolute unconditional election cannot be found in Holy Writ? As *Dialogue*, pp. 6–7. Nor is this of Romans 9 the only place in Holy Writ where absolute, unconditional election is to be found. For chap. 12:5–6 the apostle asserts the same thing. 'Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.' And thus, Ephesians 1:3–5 he says, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.'

From hence, sir, I would observe that

1. God did [p. 16] *actually elect* or choose his people in Christ, unto salvation (and not, as you say, *decree* to elect or choose all that should believe) before the foundation of the world. According as he *hath* chosen.

2. That this his election was *personal*, of the individual persons. He hath chosen us.

3. That it was *absolute* and *unconditional*, without respect had to their works, or faith foreseen. He hath chosen us that we *should* be holy and without blame before him in love. Not

that he foresaw we *would* be so previous to his choice of us, but that we *should* be so as a necessary consequence thereupon.

And 4. That God's choosing his people to eternal life was merely a *sovereign act* from the good pleasure of his will, according to the good pleasure of his *will*.

*Election* from hence appears to have been the *foundation* which God laid for the *salvation* of a certain number of mankind. It was the foundation of the special *relation* to himself, as his adopted children, and of that vast *inheritance* which was settled upon them in Christ, as such, before the foundation of the world. It was *antecedent* to their being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings (and so faith among the rest), with a grace and all glory, in the settlement before time began. And from hence all spiritual blessings are *secured* to the chosen of God, and shall be *communicated* to them through time and to eternity, to the endless praise of his glorious grace, which most radiantly shines herein. [p. 17]

It has been the judgement of some great men of God that *election* was out of the *pure mass*; or that when the whole race of mankind lay before God in his vast mind from eternity in the lump of creatureship, that then he set his heart upon a certain number of them in Christ, and chose them for himself, to the praise of his grace or to be unto his own praise, in a peculiar manner from the rest. And for proof they bring the election of *Christ*—that as the *head* was chosen *pure*, so were the *members*. And the election of *angels*, who must be chosen *pure* since they never *fell*. And to this they apply Romans 9:11 ff, and think *that* to be an emblem of this. It was said unto Rebecca, 'before the children were yet born, or had done any good or evil, the elder shall serve the younger.' And also verse 21, 'Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?' Not of broken pots, to mend some and dash others to pieces; but of the same lump of unfashioned clay, to make some vessels to a more noble and others to a more ignoble use. And these take reprobation, in its first and primary consideration, to be no more than a mere *negative*, or God's *not* choosing of the rest, which was the natural and necessary consequent of election. So that election, according to them, was God's choosing of some in Christ, as an head of grace, unto eternal glory; and reprobation, his [p. 18] leaving of others just where he found them—viz., in the pure state of creatureship. Or, that the one was God's setting apart some for a sacred use, to be his children by brace, to the peculiar glory of his great name; and of others, for a common use, as his creatures, to the common and general display thereof. Thus Mr. Bunyan says, 'Election was neither an act of mercy, nor reprobation of justice. But both of mere sovereignty.'<sup>8</sup> Because, as he took it, neither the one did presuppose the creature miserable, nor the other, guilty. And so these, when the reprobates are styled vessels of dishonour, and said to be hated, take it in a comparative and not in a positive sense. That they were set apart as creatures for a lower end than the vessels of honour, and accordingly less loved. This they take to be election and reprobation, in their first and primary consideration.

And that then—the more to display the infinite glory of the divine being, in a way of special grace and mercy to the elected; and of common goodness and forbearance to the rejected; and also for the abuse of the same, of strict justice and righteous wrath towards them—the fall was permissively *decreed*, or *permitted* in God's *decree*. And that hereupon, when all mankind were foreviewed by God as equally guilty of Adam's first sin, and in the guilt, filth, and power of their own personal depravity of nature and actual transgressions being [p. 19] all lost and utterly undone, that then those who were ordained for the highest display of the divine glory, as the adopted children of God, in the everlasting enjoyment of him as the God of grace, were appointed to obtain salvation through Christ crucified, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. And that then, and not till then, those who as creatures were ordained for the more inferior display of the divine glory in their creation and preservation were, for their abuse of common mercies and especially for their contempt of Christ and the gospel, in their final impenitence and unbelief, appointed unto wrath, or made vessels of wrath—as others, vessels of mercy. This is the judgment of some. And that neither the decree of election, nor of reprobation, in the full latitude thereof,

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<sup>8</sup>This appears to be a summary rather than a quotation; and appears to contradict John Bunyan's stance in *Reprobation Asserted*, Ch. 6.

was complete without the secondary consideration which belongs to each. And they think this justifiable from God's Word, in that the elected and rejected are first styled 'vessels of honour' and of 'dishonour', and then 'vessels of mercy' and 'vessels of wrath'.

Others there are, sir, that think election was out of the *corrupt mass*. That the creation of all men, for the glory of God, was first ordained, and the fall permitted for the further and more various display thereof. And that when God foreviewed all men under the ruins of the fall, utterly undone, he then by a [p. 20] sovereign act of his free grace and rich mercy did choose a certain number of miserable men unto eternal life, through his Son's death and all the appointed means to that end. And that then likewise the sovereign Lord of all did leave the rest to perish in that state of sin and misery which they had brought upon themselves, and righteously bind them over to eternal vengeance, or appoint them to that wrath which all their sins, foreviewed, had deserved.

Now sir, which of these you will like best, I know not. Both agree in this, that *election* is a *sovereign act* of God's good pleasure towards his chosen, without any *foreseen goodness* in them. And likewise, that *reprobation* is a *sovereign act* of God's most holy, righteous will *leaving the rest* in the same common condition from whence he *took his chosen*. And in this also both are agreed, that *reprobation*, as considered *an appointing unto wrath*, was only on account of *sin foreviewed*. But to pass on, election, absolute, unconditional election, is most certainly *a doctrine of the Bible*. And I think may appear so to be from the texts fore-quoted. And therefore well would it have been for you, sir, if you had been more sparing in saying, 'It is a doctrine from *hell*, of *devils*, and an *horrible decree*.' For great is your guilt herein. You seem in this to be as great an enemy to the freeness and [p. 21] sovereignty of salvation-grace, if not a greater, than ever rose up. And though from the enmity of your carnal mind you make opposition to it as long as you may, yet you must be saved by this grace at last, or perish forever. Is it not hard then, for you to kick against the pricks? To blaspheme that grace by which alone you can be saved? And such blasphemies are uttered against it in your sermon of *Free Grace*<sup>9</sup> that makes one shudder, that I think were never before heard, and that one could not hear worse if one descended into the bottomless pit, where enmity and rage are at the utmost height. Sure I am that you have greatly sinned in this. And if ever you come to heaven, you'll admire the unsearchable riches of that grace which brought you thither, that have been such as exceeding great sinner against it! Oh sir, there is nothing can save you from the opposition you make to God's free grace, but its own infinite, eternal, absolute and unchangeable nature! If your help is not here, you are gone forever! If your *salvation* don't stand (the thing itself I mean, not your hope of it, for at present your hope may be falsely placed; but if your salvation don't stand) upon God's *absolute grace without you*, but upon your *own inherent goodness*—your *own will*—there is no salvation for you. For it is not of him that willeth.

Are you willing to be saved by Jesus Christ? How came you by your willingness? Was it of [p. 22] yourself or of God? If you say, 'Of God; he gave me a power to will, and so he has given every man if he'll exert it.' I reply: Then your willing to be saved is of God remotely, but not immediately. It was yourself, by exerting the power given you of God in common with all that made yourself to differ from the disobedient, and makes salvation yours while they perish. God did no more for you than he did for them. They might have believed unto life if they would. You had no more power given you of God than they. But it was your own exertion of the power given you, your own mere motion in willing to be saved, that put the difference. Then no thanks to the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth for your salvation, but to your own arm, to that abominable idol, proud *self*.

Oh sir, if salvation was of him that *willeth*, it would be of *works*. And by that law, *boasting* cannot be excluded. A saved soul would then have no reason to praise God's *distinguishing grace* in his salvation, but his own *distinguishing mind* that made it his. God did no more for his salvation than for the damned in hell. It was *himself*, his *own will*, his *own legs* that brought him in heaven. And he might as well have run into hell, for anything *God* did to the contrary. God did as much for those in *hell*, for their salvation, as for him in *heaven*. It was nothing but his *own will* that made him happy. [p. 23] Then is not

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<sup>9</sup>JW, *Free Grace* (Bristol: Farley, 1739); cf. *Works*, 3:544–61.

the *man*, his *own will*, his *own goodness*, his *own saviour*? But as self, and self-goodness, are not the *saviour of God's providing*, the *rock*, the *foundation* he has laid in *Zion*; whoever ventures *here*, if he had a thousand souls, he'd lose them. The salvation of God in Christ is *to him that willeth*, because it's promised to believers. But it is not *of him that willeth*, as if the creature's will were from itself, or that by any worth of efficacy thereof, salvation was made sure to it. Salvation is *to him that willeth*, that willeth to be saved in *God's way*. But it is not *of his will* therein. It is not his *will*, his *faith*, as an *act* of his, that saves him. But the *object* that his faith lays hold of. His faith is not the *cause* of his salvation, but the *means* of receiving it. And it is such a means too that is given him by God's special grace, and wrought in him by his almighty power. And so his salvation to faith, and through it, being all of God, is not of *him that willeth*. No, though he will to be saved in *God's way*. Much less is salvation of him that willeth to be saved in his *own way*, by his *own will*. God has promised it to no such person, nor can such an one by his own arm obtain it. But all that obtain salvation must be saved by God's eternal, free, sovereign grace, and not by their own free-will.

But further, sir, as to your *Dialogue*, etc. [p. 24] If there are any expressions recited therein by any that hold the doctrine of predestination that are not so apt and unexceptionable as might be wished, this is no argument against the truth of it. If it is a doctrine of God's Word, as most certainly it is and can never be razed out of the Bible, well would it have been if you had humbly sought God for more light and apter expressions to set forth this sacred truth by. No person that holds any doctrine is obliged to defend all the unsuitable expressions that may be dropped by any concerning it. If he proves and defends his doctrine from the Word of God, it is sufficient. And thus the doctrine of predestination, or of God's predestinating persons to life and death, has been defended and is defensible.

As God's ordaining a certain number of men in Christ unto eternal life, the end, salvation, is not to be considered without his decreeing the means to that end—viz., sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. So neither is his fore-appointing the rest unto wrath to be considered without his decree of the means to this end—viz., sin, final impenitency, and unbelief. As has been already hinted, no man was fore-ordained to damnation merely as a *creature* but as a *sinner*, a *sinner foreviewed*. So that his ordination to punishment must needs be *righteous*, it being upon a fault deserving of the same. [p. 25]

It is true the decree of God is conversant about sin. Sin could never have come into the world if God had not decreed it. It is said of that great, that particular sin, of killing the prince of life, that 'Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, to do whatever God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done' (Acts 4:27–28). Which will justify the expression that *God decreed sin*. Yet is not God hereby 'the author of sin'? He is the author of his own *decree* concerning it, but not of the *action* decreed. The decree of sin is permissive, not *effective*. It puts no *evil* into the will of the creature, it doth not in the least *bias* or *incline* it to evil. This is contrary to the holiness of God's nature, who is light without darkness, who cannot be tempted with evil nor tempteth any man. But the decree of sin only leaves the creature to *the freedom of its own will*, having a power in itself to refuse it, and a liableness to choose it if preventing grace was not constantly bestowed, which God was in no wise obliged to give. God set man up at first upon his own legs, and bid him stand upright. And he was in no wise obliged to prevent his fall, by future auxiliary supplies, because he had then a fulness of power in himself to stand if he would. Sin could never have entered into him but by his *own act* in opening the doors to it. And as [p. 26] the decree of God did not *influence* the will of man to the action of sin, but merely *leave it* to its own freedom, so Adam (and all men in him) sinned as *freely* as if there had been no *decree of God* passed concerning it. As Herod and Pontius Pilate, etc., acted as *freely* in crucifying our Lord as if God had not *determined it*. They did not do it in the *view* of God's decree, nor under any *bias of will* therefrom, but from their own *inclination*, under the *influence* of the devil. And so it was not God but *they* that were the authors of this wicked action. It was *their hands* that perpetrated the horrid crime, and the *wicked* exceedingly they were herein. Whence it is justly charged upon them (Acts 2:23).

Now as this was the case of all men in the fall, as they were all foreviewed sinners, guilty, filthy, and deserving of death, would it have been an unrighteous thing in God to have appointed them *all* to eternal wrath, as he did the angels that sinned? Or was it an unrighteous thing that God should appoint

*any* to wrath, when all had deserved it? If he would be gracious to a *few*, in appointing them to salvation merely from his own good pleasure, and not from any foreseen goodness in them or motive from them, and to bring them to salvation, resolve to do all for them who could do nothing at all for themselves in this regard—might not the sovereign Lord of his creatures, and of his [p. 27] own grace too, do what he would with his own? Are any saved? It is God, not they, his free-grace and not their free-will, that is the cause of their salvation. Are they damned? It is themselves, their own sin, and not God and his decree, that is the cause of their damnation. And where now are the *horrors* of God's *decree of predestination*, either to life or death? Since the one is his *free-gift* and the other the just wages of sin?

But to come to particular redemption. This follows upon election, and is commensurate with it. God having chosen a remnant in Christ unto eternal life. They were chosen to *life* as considered sinners, through his *death* as the means to that end. The holiness and justice of God's nature, and his sacred truth in his righteous law, made death necessary to the sinner. And God, having from his great love resolved to save a certain number of fallen men, his infinite wisdom and grace found for them a ransom. He found for them his own Son, to die for them that they might live. He substituted him in their room. He called him to bear their sin, to be made their curse, to endure their hell, to obey and suffer, to live and die, and rise again for them. To deliver them from going down to the pit, and bring them up to that life and glory unto which they were ordained. And God the Son, in the covenant-capacity of mediator, engaged for them to be and do whatever [p. 28] the Father called him to for their salvation. He engaged for them, as their surety in the everlasting covenant, the covenant of redemption between his Father and him, to take their nature and law-place, their sin and wrath upon himself; to obey, die, and rise for them in their stead; to save them from sin mystically in himself, by his own infinite merit, and personally in themselves by his Holy Spirit; and hereupon, to bring them all safe to glory and present them faultless before his Father's face with a 'Here am I, and the children which God hath given me'. Thus sweetly, in infinite grace, the good Shepherd engaged to save the sheep which his father gave him. As Judah engaged for Benjamin, to his father Jacob: 'I will be surety for him. Of my hand shalt thou require him. If I bring him not again unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever' (Gen. 53:9).

If all men that sinned had been ordained unto life, Christ must have been substituted in their stead, and died for them all in their room. But as many of them were left under their own sin, and appointed to bear that wrath which their sin deserved, there was no need that Christ should bear their sin and endure that wrath which was due to them for it. And had he done so, it would have been impossible that any one of them should perish. For such is the strict justice and faithfulness of God that he will [p. 29] not, cannot charge sin upon Christ and the sinner too. The Father called for Christ's single bond, and Christ gave it, to pay all the debt of all the sinners that ever shall be saved. Their names were not entered into the bond with his, but he stood alone, as their sponsor in the engagement. The Father would trust none of them for satisfaction to his justice, but took the single word, the single bond of his own mighty Son for the payment of all that vast, that amazing sum they owed him. And therefore when the day of payment came, it was a righteous thing with God legally to charge all the guilt of all those guilty ones for whom the Son of God was to die a sacrifice upon him the innocent, the spotless Lamb, and to demand and take satisfaction at his hands because he had engaged for them.

And when this was done, it would not be a righteous thing with God to charge their sins again upon them, nor to exact the debt of suffering due the same from them the principal debtors, which had been once fully paid for them by their surety Christ. No, such is the justice and faithfulness of God that Christ's full payment must needs be the sinner's full discharge for whom it was given. Those for whom the Son of God was sacrificed, he must needs be to them the Passover lamb. His death must be their life. The destroying [p. 30] angel, avenging justice, armed with the law curse, cannot smite one soul that is under the blood of Christ. No, 'When I see the blood says the Lord, I will pass over you.'<sup>10</sup> And blessed be God, he has done it, forever done it. He will do it, forever do it, for every soul for whom the blood of Christ was shed, and to whom it shall be applied.

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<sup>10</sup>Exod. 12:13.

And as it would not have been a righteous thing to Christ if God the Father had charged the sins of any other sinners upon him and took satisfaction for them, than those for whom he engaged; so neither, had he done it, would it be a righteous thing either to him or them to charge the debt again, when full satisfaction had been given. How can it be consistent with the justice of God to punish those sinners in hell for ever for the non-payment of that in their own persons which was paid for them long since by the Saviour in their stead? This, sir, is an unanswerable argument against universal redemption. And as great an universalist as you are, *you* grant the thing: that satisfaction for sin cannot be demanded and taken twice. Though you are far from granting the just consequence thereof, that therefore universal redemption cannot be true. In your *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love*, you assert universal redemption in the strongest terms—but contradictory enough to it, in one place say, [p. 31]

This last, and every sin of mine,  
Did he not in his body bear?  
Was it not purged with blood divine?  
Behold the bond hangs cancell'd there!  
'Tis nailed to the accursed wood,  
'Tis blotted out with Jesu's blood.

The sin on him which was not laid,  
For which he hath not satisfied,  
Punish it, Father, on my head,  
Here let it with thy wrath abide:  
But if he paid my utmost pain,  
Thou canst not ask the debt again.<sup>11</sup>

Now sir, if it be as you say in the verse before these that Christ was made an offering, a perfect one, for all the sins of all mankind—that he resigned his precious life for all, and paid for all a bleeding ransom—how can God the Father let the sin of any one sinner, with his wrath for it, abide for ever on the sinner's head, for whom the Saviour has satisfied? If Christ did bear the sinner's utmost pain, how is it possible that God the Father should ask the debt again? You yourself, sir, say he cannot: 'Thou canst not ask the debt again.'

Then sir, by your own concessions you are brought into this dilemma. You must either grant that Christ did *not* bear the sins of all men, die and satisfy for them, or that if he *did*, all men shall infallibly be saved. And [p. 32] from hence you must grant either that general redemption, the redemption of all, is *not true*, or that particular destruction, the destruction of any, is *false*; since, as the truth is, and as you grant, that God cannot ask the debt again of the sinner for whom the Saviour paid it. Now sir, which way will you take? Will you come out into the consistent light of truth or abide still in the darkness and error of your own spirit, which has such insuperable difficulties attending it? When I say, 'Will you come out into the light?', I don't think that you have power in yourself to come out at your own pleasure, from your own mere motion. No, such is the darkness of our mind under sin's and Satan's influence that it holds us fast, as in a close dungeon. If God by an all-efficacious voice don't call us out of darkness into his marvellous light (in after illuminations as well as the first); if Christ doth not say by an authoritative voice to the prisoners, 'Go forth!', to them that are in darkness 'Show yourselves!'; and if the Holy Spirit, from the Father and the Son, by his almighty energy don't command the light to shine out of darkness, if he don't open the prison doors and bring us out into the glorious liberty and light of truth, under its own glorious rays shining in upon our minds; we shall still abide in the darkness and error of our [p. 33] own spirits. Thus there must be much done for us by God Father, Son, and Spirit to bring us out of darkness, total darkness, into the light of life at first; and to bring us out of partial darkness, into every further

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<sup>11</sup>CW, *Hymns of God's Everlasting Love* (1741, Hymn 8, sts. 3–4, p. 17.



degree of light afterwards. And yet exhortations are not in vain. We ought to exhort, to call, to invite one another to come out of darkness. And God often blesseth the exhortation, and works thereby upon us according to our rational nature. And so we come out of darkness into light not against our will, not by a force put upon the faculty, but by a sweet power that dischargeth the faculty of its darkness and bondage and sets it free to choose the light, while the excellency thereof is displayed before it. It is an irresistible power that brings us out, else should we never come forth at all. And yet we are not constrained so to do against our will, but our will is sweetly allured hereto from the highest reason. And so we come forth freely into the light of truth, when once it is self-evident to our minds. It is our own act and deed, though under God's influence. It is *we* that come, and God that brings us. And by the way, may not this serve to answer that query how sinners can sincerely, and without mockery, be commanded of God, and thereupon exhorted by men, to believe on Christ [p. 34] for life, if they have no power in and of themselves to do what is required?

The command speaks the sense of the law, the Creator's right and the creature's duty, but doth not suppose any power in itself to do what God commands. But the thing commanded being rational, God will have it laid before his rational creature, for his rational powers to act rationally towards it. While the soul, having sinned away that natural strength it had in Adam, and being at present devoid of super natural strength from Christ, has no power in itself to do what God commands, but the contrary. And if ever it doth what God requires it must be by power superinduced from on high. And yet, commanded and exhorted so to do, it must be. God will have it so, often blesseth the exhortation, and worketh upon its rational powers by it. But to return from these digressions.

Will you now, sir, be for *particular* redemption or for *general*? If you say for the latter, I must leave you to the Lord, who openeth the eyes of the blind; and oh that he would open yours to see the former, which is a truth that shines as clear as the sun! If against it you object: Particular redemption cannot be true because in God's Word redemption is expressed in general terms—it is said that 'Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world' [p. 35] (1 John 2:2), that 'he gave himself a ransom for all' (1 Tim. 2:6), and that 'he tasted death for every man' (Heb. 2:9), I answer:

*Ans.* Redemption, in God's Word, is not *always* expressed in general terms. And that it is *ever* so expressed doth not prove, the general redemption of all men, but the particular redemption of some men out of all; or, that there are some men redeemed out of every nation and kingdom, all the world over.

When the redemption of sinners is spoken of *properly*, it is restrained to some and not extended to all. Thus it is said, 'The Son of man came—to give his life a ransom for many' (Matt. 20:28). For *many*, not for *all*. And that Jesus died, 'not for the nation of the Jews only, but also that he might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad' (John 11:52). It was for the *children of God* that Jesus died, not for those only among the nation of the Jews (for there were some among that nation that were not the children of God, as saith the apostle, 'Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children'<sup>12</sup>), but those also that were scattered abroad among all the Gentile nations upon the face of the earth. It was for the children of God that Jesus died, that were scattered abroad among all nations, and not for every individual person of those nations among whom they were scattered. And thus Jesus himself says, 'I am the good [p. 36] shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and lay down my life for the sheep' (John 10:14–15). It was for the *sheep*, not for the *goats* that Christ laid down his life. It was for the sheep which his Father gave him to be redeemed by him, and finally saved; and not for the goats, that shall perish everlastingly. As the Father *knew* Christ to be a responsible person, that was infinitely able and faithful to fulfil all his engagements to save the sheep, and trusting him hereupon saved all the Old Testament saints before he had made the payment of their debts. So Christ knew the Father, that he was infinitely able and faithful to fulfil his engagement to give him his seed, the travail of his soul, and hereupon he trusted the Father with the mighty price of his blood, which he paid at the appointed time for that innumerable multitude of souls which were to be saved from the beginning of the New Testament dispensation to the

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<sup>12</sup>Rom. 9:7.

final consummation of all things. He knew the Father would give him the purchase of his blood, every soul for whom he died. That he would not suffer him to pour out his soul unto death in vain, to be at such a vast expense in laying down his life for the sheep, and when it was done let them perish. 'As the Father knoweth me', saith he, even 'so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.'<sup>13</sup> I trust him with my [p. 37] blood, that he will give me every individual soul for whom it was shed. That upon my dying for them, I shall have them all to live with me in glory for ever. Thus it was for his sheep, and none but those, that the good shepherd laid down his life. And to mention no more, it was for the many sons which shall be brought to glory that the captain of their salvation died; or (as a captain of their salvation, to bring them to glory) was made 'perfect through sufferings' (Heb. 2:10). Christ by his death was perfectly accomplished as the captain of salvation, to bring all those *sons to glory* for whom he died. As their being brought thither was the very *design* of his death, so this, notwithstanding all opposition, shall be the blessed *fruit* of it.

O what a vain thing it is to talk of Christ's dying for those who are not brought to glory, but sink into everlasting misery with the devils! And what a dishonour doth it cast upon the captain of salvation, as if he was not mighty to save? Christ is such a glorious leader that none under the banner of his dying love, can possibly fall short of endless life! This captain of salvation went into the field of battle to fight single-handed with all the powers of darkness, to rescue all those which his Father gave him to be brought to glory, out of the hands of all their enemies. He won the victory, took the spoil, trampled down the powers of [p. 38] darkness, led captivity captive, triumphing over them in it. He in his mighty love, by the merit of his death, and the power of his resurrection, brought away his ransomed ones from out of their enemies' hands, with amazing triumph! He had them all mystically in himself when he rose, and carried them up to heaven with him, and there they sit in him!

They were raised up together with him, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ. They don't all yet sit with him *personally* in heaven. But they all, even all those for whom he died, rose, and ascended, sit together *mystically* in him, as their representative. Thus the captain of salvation brought his ransomed ones from hell to heaven, from hell in desert, unto heaven in possession, mystically in himself. And who or what shall pluck them from God's right hand? Who shall separate them from the love of God in Christ? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's *elect*?<sup>14</sup> It is God that justifies. Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them. And as our mighty Lord, the captain of salvation, brought his ransomed ones to glory *mystically* in himself, will he not also bring them thither *personally*, seeing he is able to save them to the uttermost and ever liveth to make intercession for them till the last soul is brought in? [p. 39] What shall *hinder* Christ's redeemed from being saved? Was not his *sacrifice* sufficient to expiate all their guilt? Yes verily, 'for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified'.<sup>15</sup> He so *perfected* them that were sanctified in his death, that he left not a spot of sin upon them. And he did it *forever*. He did not perfect them by his death and then leave them to become imperfect again, to become guilty and filthy and die in their sins afterwards. No, as he bore all the sins of all those for whom he died, even all the sins that ever they were or should be guilty of, their original and actual sin, even all their actual sins from their birth to their death. So by his one great sacrifice he expiated all their guilt, he put away all their sin, and forever made an end of it! So that the way to heaven is clear in this regard for all Christ's redeemed. What then shall *hinder* their coming thither? Is it because he is not *able* to bring them thither? Because they will not suffer him so to do? No, no! 'Their Redeemer is *strong*, he will throughly plead their cause.'<sup>16</sup> He hath given them a right to endless life, by the infinite merit of his own death, and he'll save them to the enjoyment of it by the power of his life for them at

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<sup>13</sup>John 10:15.

<sup>14</sup>See Rom. 8:33–34.

<sup>15</sup>Heb. 10:14.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Jer. 50:34.

God's right hand—maugre all opposition, in spite of all their enemies. His boundless love, in which he once died for them, to give them a *right* to glory, is still as great [p. 40] towards them now as ever, to give them the *enjoyment* of it. And having *engaged* so to do, both his love and faithfulness employ his power on their side. And he hath an *arm* like God, yea the arm of *God*, the omnipotence of *Jehovah!* Who then can *withstand* him? Who shall *hinder* his ransomed ones from possessing the glory purchased for them by his blood? Shall *Satan* hinder? No, he'll *bind* him at pleasure and cast him out of their souls. Shall *sin*, their own unwillingness to be saved by him, hinder? No. 'They shall be willing in the day of his power.'<sup>17</sup>

Shall the *world* hinder? No, he has *overcome the world* for them, and will *overcome it* in and by them. They shall be more than *conquerors* over all their enemies, through him that has *loved* them. 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against them.'<sup>18</sup> 'Iniquity shall not be their ruin.'<sup>19</sup> The powers and principalities of this world, with all their frowns and smiles, nor whatever else they meet with in the world, either 'present or to come, shall be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus'.<sup>20</sup> So thoroughly will their *strong Redeemer* plead their cause that he'll save them from the oppression of all their foes! Thus surely will the 'captain of their salvation',<sup>21</sup> clear the way of every enemy and bring them up triumphantly through all, under the banner of his dying love, unto endless glory with him. How *mighty* then is the *Redeemer*, how *glorious* the *leader*, which God [p. 41] hath given to his people! But to return. Thus it is evident that when the redemption of sinners is spoken of *properly*, it is restrained to some, to many, to the children of God, to the sheep of Christ, to the sons to be brought to glory; and is not extended to all men. And when it is mentioned in general terms, the universality of the terms doth not in the least contradict the speciality of redemption. For whenever it's mentioned in general terms, as 'for all men', 'for the whole world', etc., it is *spoken figuratively*, a part being put for the whole, and ought so to be understood.

The word 'all', and 'all men', are not always to be understood of every individual of the kind, nor of the persons assembled together. As is manifest from Luke 8:45: 'And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all (or every man, as it is in some translations) denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?' Here now was an 'all of men' that denied; and yet, besides these, a Peter and they that were with him that said, 'Master, the multitude throng thee ....' The universal term is used, and yet but a part implied. So for the word 'world', whether applied to persons or places, a part is often put for the whole. As John 12:19: 'The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, [p. 42] the world is gone after him.' Here was the 'world' that went after Christ, and besides it the 'Pharisees that said among themselves ....' And so small a part is put for the whole here that it seems there were no more intended than the multitude then at Jerusalem that followed our Lord. And so, when 'all the world', and 'the whole world' is spoken of, it is sometimes to be understood only of a part of it. As Luke 2:1, 'And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.' By 'all the world' here, there can be no more intended than those parts of it that were under the Roman government. This taxation extended to no other persons than those under their jurisdiction. Thus a part is put for the whole, where 'the whole world' is spoken of. Romans 1:8, 'First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.' Here is the 'whole world', distinct from Rome, from the saints there whose faith was spoken of in it. But one text more may be sufficient as to this. The apostle Paul, writing to the Colossians, says of the gospel, 'Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you since the day ye heard of it

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<sup>17</sup>Ps. 110:3.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Matt. 16:18.

<sup>19</sup>Ezek. 18:30.

<sup>20</sup>Rom. 8:38–39.

<sup>21</sup>Heb. 2:10.

and knew the grace of God in truth' (Col. 1:6). There never was such a day yet wherein the gospel of Christ was universally spread over every nation [p. 43] under heaven. Nor such a time wherein it brought forth fruit in all the world, in every individual person thereof, as it did in the Colossians. And therefore 'all the world' here, must be put for a part of it. And had it not been so, there would have been no room to distinguish between the Colossians and all the world; nor to have said the like of them as of it, that the gospel brought forth fruit in them, as it did also in all the world.

And thus the texts objected against particular redemption, which express it in general terms, are to be understood in a limited sense and opened by their context. As, 1 John 2:2, 'And he is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' If by 'the whole world' here, as above, every individual person thereof was intended, there would have been no room for the apostle John to have distinguished himself and the saints he wrote to from it—to have said, 'He is the propitiation for our *sins*, and not for ours *only* but *also* for the sins of the whole world.' 'The whole world' here manifestly stands distinguished from those saints of whom the apostle speaks, and they from it, and the same thing is said of it as of them: that Christ died for the sins of the whole world, as he did for their sins. Whence it's evident that by 'the whole world' here, every individual of mankind is not intended. No, [p. 44] it was the elect of God among the Gentiles, and those only, that were intended. The apostle John wrote to the converted Jews. And by the word 'world' here, he points out the elect of God among the Gentiles. He calls them the 'world', in contradistinction to the nation of the Jews. And the 'whole world', because God had a remnant of his chosen, for whom Christ died, in every nation under heaven. And so the sense is: He is the propitiation for our sins (i.e., for ours, the chosen of God among the Jews) and not for ours only, but for theirs also that are his chosen among the Gentiles, all the world over. And in this sense the word 'world' is very frequently to be taken in the New Testament. An instance of this we have Romans 11:12, 'Now if the fall of them (the Jews) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the gentiles, how much more their fulness?' The Gentiles are here called the world, in contradistinction from the Jews. So also, ver. 15. 'If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?'

The reason is this: God, under the Old Testament dispensation, chose the nation of the Jews to be his peculiar people. Unto them 'pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises' (Rom. 9:4). The Israelitish nation was the [p. 45] only church of God in that day. To them his sacred oracles were committed. There his true worship was maintained, and his glorious presence enjoyed, both in the tabernacle and temple, while all the nations round about them were left under gross darkness and idolatry. Hence the distinction sprang between the Jews and Gentiles, the people of God and the nations, the church of God and the world.

And herein the Jewish nation were typical (as almost all things therein were, under the Old Testament) of God's chosen out of every nation, gathered together in his gospel church, privileged with the purity of his word and ordinances, and the enjoyment of himself therein. While the whole world round about them (whether nominal Christians or not) lieth in wickedness, in superstition and idolatry, are strangers to God and enemies to him and his people.

And before the gospel dispensation entered, the Jews looked upon the Gentiles to be no better than *dogs*, that had no right to share with them in the privileges of God's children. Whence that expression of our Lord to the Canaanitish woman, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs.'<sup>22</sup> He spoke to her in the Jews' language and for the trial of her faith according to that apprehension they had of the Gentiles, and that judgment they passed concerning them. [p. 46]

And thus, upon the resurrection of our Lord, when the apostles by his commission were to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'.<sup>23</sup> They speak to the Jews, concerning the Gentiles, according to the apprehension they might have of themselves, as if they were separated from the people of God. They tell the Jews that the Saviour and his salvation were not only for *them* but for the

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<sup>22</sup>Matt. 15:26 and parallels.

<sup>23</sup>Mark 16:15.

*world*—the *whole world*, for the Gentiles in every nation under heaven. And thus they told the Gentiles. Thus the gospel light arose upon the poor Gentiles that sat in darkness, that the Saviour and his salvation were not for the Jews only, but for the *world* also. That God had given his Son to be a light to the Gentiles, to be his salvation to the end of the earth. And that therefore Gentile-sinners, from the ends of the earth, were called to believe in the Saviour, to look to him for their own salvation. Thus the mystery, which in other ages was not made known, began to be opened to all men: That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, and of the same body, and partakers with them of God's promise in Christ by the gospel.

And thus the apostle John is to be understood when, speaking of Christ, he says, 'And he is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole [p. 47] world'<sup>24</sup>—viz., that Christ died and satisfied for the sins of Jew and Gentile; not for the sins of every individual person among either, but for all the sins of all God's chosen among both. For Jew and Gentile being thus distinguished into 'the people of God' and 'the world', it was for *some* of both that he died. Whence his death is said to be for *all*—for the nation of the Jews and for the world, promiscuously. It was for the people, the nation of the Jews, that Jesus died, according to John 11:50–51. But it was not for every individual of them. No, many of them were broken off from their church-state and privileges. Having no other than a visible, typical relation to God, they were cast away when the gospel dispensation entered. Wherein none but those that have a secret, real relation to God, by his own choice of them in Christ and by vital faith in him, have any right to be church-members, and to enjoy church-privileges. But, as says the apostle, 'Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew' (Rom. 11:1–2). No verily. Those whom God *foreknew* in his eternal love, and choice of them in his dear Son, from his mere good pleasure and not for their foreseen goodness, he did not cast away. They, under the influence of electing-grace, and in the virtue of Christ's dying for them, were enabled to believe in Jesus, were secured to him, and enjoyed the [p. 48] privileges of the gospel-church-state. While the rest being righteously left to the freedom of their own will, and so to the power of unbelief, were broken off. As vv. 4–5, 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men that have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.' 'What then? saith the apostle. Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for (i.e., salvation), but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded' (v. 7). Thus a *remnant* of the Jews were styled 'God's people' (as v. 2) and it was for this remnant, this elect remnant, among that nation that Jesus died. And this remnant it is that bears the name of the nation (John 11:51). And so likewise, it was a *remnant* of the Gentiles, 'the children of God' among them that were scattered abroad all the world over, for whom the Redeemer gave his life (as v. 52). And this remnant it is that is styled 'the world' (Rom. 11:15). If the casting away of them (of the Jews) be the reconciling of 'the world'—and *the whole world* in this 1 John 2:2, 'He is the propitiation ... for the sins of the whole world.'

And thus I come to the second scripture objected against particular redemption, 1 Timothy 2:6, 'Who gave himself a ransom for all.' As I have shown that the word 'all' is in many places to be taken figuratively, for a part, [p. 49] and not properly, for every individual of the kind unto which it is applied, I need add no more as to that. For so it is to be taken here, as is manifest by the context. 'I exhort therefore' (says the apostle) 'that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men' (v. 1). That is, for all ranks and degrees of men, for men of every station and circumstance of life. And therefore (v. 2) he gives an instance or two for the rest, 'for kings and for all in authority'. And the reasons why supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks are to be made for all men he gives (vv. 3–4), 'For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved.' The performance of these duties is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, because he will have all men to be saved. And therefore the saints should perform them, to please the Lord. And should do this with an eye to his will, to subserve his good pleasure, who will have all men to be saved. So that the 'all' for whom Christ gave himself a ransom (v. 6) are the 'all men' he will have to

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<sup>24</sup>1 John 2:2.

be *saved* and to come to the knowledge of the truth. And these must needs be some of all, the elect-remnant among all, because it is them only that are and shall be saved. It is these only that he *will* have to be saved, the rest perish. It is not said he *would* have [p. 50] all men to be saved, but they would *not* and so they fall short of salvation; but he *will* have all men to be saved. And his will is absolute, and effective of the things willed. 'He is God, and there is none like him, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. Saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure', Isaiah 46:10. 'And he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doth thou?'<sup>25</sup> And therefore the 'all men' that he 'will have to be saved' can be no other than the *elect* among all. Because it is none but they that shall be finally saved. And these are the 'all' for whom Christ gave himself a ransom.

Indeed it is the revealed will of God, that the gospel should be preached in all nations, and that it is the duty of all men where it comes to look unto Christ for salvation. But it is no part of his will, either secret or revealed, that all men—every individual of them—shall be saved. It's manifest that this is not his *secret* will, because all are not saved. And it is as evident that this is not his *revealed* will, because all do not believe. It is the revealed will of God in the gospel that those who believe on his Son shall be saved. But concerning those that believe not, it is there declared that they are condemned already, and that his wrath [p. 51] abideth upon them. So that the 'all men' that God will have to be saved, must be his elect among all.

And hence supplications, etc., are to be made for all men in general. But so far as these respect their eternal salvation, this ought to be done with an eye to the elect among all. The saints don't know who are elect, and who not, until electing grace breaks up in the hearts of the vessels of mercy, converting them unto faith in Christ. And therefore they are to pray for all men promiscuously, that God would send the gospel into all the dark corners of the earth, and convert all sorts of sinners unto faith in Christ. Because God will have some of all ranks and degrees of men, 'all men' to be saved, even all of that 'all' for whom Christ gave himself a ransom.

And thus as to Hebrews 2:9, 'That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man'; though Christ's death is here expressed in the general term, yet it is to be understood in a limited sense, and explained by the context. It was for *every man* that shall be *saved*, that Christ tasted death, and not for every *individual* of the *humankind*. It was for every of those *sons*, those many sons, which shall be brought to glory, as v. 10. For every [one] of those who are *sanctified* (by the offering of the body of Jesus once for all), for those who he is not ashamed to call them 'brethren' (v. 11). And for every [one] of the 'children' which God hath given him (as v. 13). These [p. 52] are the men that are to be understood, by the 'every man' (v. 9) for whom Christ tasted death. For of every man in the world, it cannot be said that Christ tasted death for them—i.e., that he bore their sins, died in their stead, and made satisfaction to divine justice for them.

Indeed there is a large sense in which, as I humbly conceive, it may be said that Christ died for all men, for every individual—viz., that he paying the price of his blood for God's chosen, did thereby not only purchase them but all things for their sakes; and so the natural lives and temporal mercies of the non-elect, in subserviency to God's glory and the good of his people. Thus our dear Lord may be said to have bought the *field*, the *world*, but it is for the *treasure*, the *elect*, hid in it that he paid the price of his blood. Although hereupon God the Father gave all things into his hands. It is hence, because of Christ's dying for his people, that the frame of nature is preserved, that the world don't fly in pieces, that the non-elect are not instantly sent down to hell but that their lives are maintained, and all common mercies afforded, in order to the production and salvation of the elect. Thus God the Father hath given him power over all flesh, all power in heaven and in earth, that he should give eternal life to as many as he hath given him. And thus he may be said to be the Saviour of all men. But with respect to bearing sin, curse, [p. 53] and wrath, and making satisfaction to justice, it was only for the *elect*. It was only for them that have, do, and shall believe on him to the saving of the soul that he tasted death, even for every man of these. Thus much

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<sup>25</sup>Dan. 4:35.

as to the texts objected against particular redemption.

And the truth hereof may further appear from the song of the redeemed to the Redeemer, who to the praise of redeeming grace confess the specialty of redemption, Revelation 5:9–10, 'And they sung an new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. And hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.' It is observable that they don't say here, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation', but *us out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation*. O, redeeming grace took *some* out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation—while others of the same kindred, tongue, people, and nation were left—the more to commend its distinguishing riches towards the redeemed, and to endear their hearts to the Redeemer! And if you and I, sir, are brought to heaven, we shall admire and adore that grace that took *us*, that brought *us* to glory, while *others* of our relations and countrymen were righteously left to perish! [p. 54] And we shall join the song, and proclaim the Lamb worthy to have all the glory of our salvation, who was slain and has redeemed us to God out of the kindred and nation to which we related! And this redemption that is here said to be out of every kindred, etc., is redemption by *price*, and not by power. Thou hast redeemed us by thy *blood* out of every kindred, etc. It's redemption by *price* that is spoken of, although redemption by *power* be implied, as consequent hereupon. It's a special redemption by price, that was effective of redemption by power, and effectually made the redeemed kings and priests unto God. But thus much as to particular redemption.

And from hence let us come to special vocation. And as particular redemption follows upon personal *election*, so special vocation upon particular redemption. As all those whom God the Father chose in Christ unto eternal life were given to him to be redeemed by him, so all Christ's redeemed were, by God's eternal purpose, to be called by his grace. Those whom God *predestinated* to life through his Son's death, them he also *called*. These he calls out of darkness into his marvellous light, into fellowship with his Son, and unto his eternal kingdom and glory by him.

The general call of the gospel is of *sinners* as such, unto faith in Jesus, in that Jesus who once died for sinners without the gates of [p. 55] Jerusalem. And it extends itself unto all where the gospel comes. The gospel is glad tidings of salvation for sinners through the crucified Saviour. And this salvation is proclaimed herein as infinitely free for the chief of sinners, and all are invited and commanded to come and partake of it freely. Not because it is provided for sinners *universally*, but because it is proclaimed for sinners *indefinitely*. And hence it becomes every sinner's duty where the gospel comes to look to Christ the great Saviour and trust in him for his own salvation. And great is his encouragement so to do, since all that look to Christ alone for salvation shall be saved, and none of them that trust in him shall ever be confounded.

The general *call* of the gospel is not of sinners as *elect*, or as *redeemed* sinners, to believe their *interest* in God's *electing* love and Christ's redeeming grace, but of sinners as *ruined* and *undone*, as under *sin*, *curse*, *wrath*, and *death*, to look out of themselves for life and salvation—to that Jesus who once died for sinners that they might live, and is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, that believe in his name, that submit to his righteousness, and trust in his blood for the forgiveness of their sins and the whole of their *justification* before God. The gospel declares that all things are ready, a full salvation prepared in Christ for the chief of sinners, that doth every way answer all their miseries and [p. 56] wants, and is infinitely enough to fill all their desires. And sinners, as such, are invited to come and partake of this great salvation freely, even without money and without price. Sinners are not called to believe that they *are* partakers of the salvation that is in Christ, but to believe in him, to come to him, and to depend upon him that they may be partakers thereof. No man is called of God at first, or in his first act of faith, to believe his *interest* in the blood and righteousness of Christ, but to *submit* thereto, and *trust* therein for life and salvation. And then, upon his first act of faith, a second is called for, a believing his interest in salvation, or that he shall be *saved*, because the Lord has said, 'Look unto me, and be ye

saved';<sup>26</sup> and 'He that believeth ... shall be saved'.<sup>27</sup> But until a man has put forth the first act of faith, or is made willing to be saved by the blood and righteousness of Christ alone, without the deeds of the law, he is not called to believe his *interest* in God's salvation. And so sinners in general, being called by the gospel to 'believe in Christ', are not called to believe a *lie*, though he did not die for sinners universally (as *Dialogue*, p. 7), but are called to believe the *truth* that Christ died for sinners, and that there is a fulness of salvation in him for the very chief of them. And hereupon they are called to look to and trust in him for their salvation, and have a promise given for their encouragement, that [p. 57] if they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ they shall be saved. And as every poor sinner that comes under the sound of the gospel, and obeys the call thereof, has the word of a God that cannot lie for it, that he shall be saved. So on the other hand, everyone that makes light of the gospel-call, rejects it and is disobedient, if he continues so to do, must die in his sins and perish forever, for 'he that believeth not, shall be damned'.<sup>28</sup> And the justice of God will brightly shine in the eternal damnation of all those who wilfully refuse this great salvation, proclaimed for their acceptance in the gracious gospel.

And God's thus calling poor sinners by the gospel to look to his dear Son for salvation, and to come to him for life, doth not in the least suppose any natural *power* or *freedom of will* in the fallen creature to obey the call. Nor yet is God *illusory* or *insincere* herein. The call, as has been hinted, speaks the sense of the law (or of what the eternal law of God makes in duty of all men under the gospel), the Creator's right and the creature's duty. And doubtless it is a most righteous thing with God, to require all sinners, under the gospel, to look alone for salvation unto the great and only Saviour which it reveals. While God proclaims his Son to be his salvation to the ends of the earth, it is the Creator's due that the ends of the earth should look unto him as such. The very revelation of the Saviour as for sinners [p. 58] indefinitely brings on together with it, naturally and necessarily, their duty of looking to and trusting in him as such—especially since for this end he is made known, or revealed in the gospel, for the obedience of faith. It cannot be otherwise, in the very nature of things, but that faith in Christ should be due to God, in all his persons, from all sinners, under the gospel-revelation of a Saviour. Nor can it be otherwise than the equitable duty of the rational creature, his reasonable service, while he hears the Saviour proclaimed and is commanded to look to him as such, that he obey the divine command and look unto Christ for his own salvation. But though God is sincere in the call, speaks the mind of his law and the creature's duty under the gospel, yet doth it not imply a sufficiency of strength in the fallen creature for the performance of it. The equity of the requirement will be sufficient to justify God in the condemnation of the sinner that is disobedient, and to leave him without excuse.

Especially since, as I conceive, though all unbelievers under the gospel will be condemned at the last day for their *unbelief*, yet the formal cause of their condemnation will not be this, that they *could not* believe, but that they *would not*. They would not come to Christ for life, and therefore will most righteously be condemned to death. They would not that Christ should reign over them and must therefore, as his enemies, be slain [p. 59] before his face. That 'no man can come to Christ, without the Father draws him',<sup>29</sup> or that no man can believe, without the working of God's power, even the exceeding greatness thereof which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, is a certain truth of the glorious gospel. But no man will be condemned under the consideration of his *inability* but of his *obstinacy* and actual rebellion, slighting the call of the gospel, hating the light and rising up in opposition against the Lord Jesus, the only Saviour of God's providing. No man will have any cause to say, nor will say at the last day, 'I am condemned for my unbelief because I *could not* believe. I *would* have believed, but *could not*'; but 'I am condemned, and justly too, for my *refusing* to believe in the Lord Jesus, when earnestly invited, and righteously required so to do'. O *this*, that light is come into the world, and men

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<sup>26</sup>Isa. 45:22.

<sup>27</sup>Mark 16:16.

<sup>28</sup>Mark 16:16.

<sup>29</sup>John 6:44.



have loved darkness rather than light, *this* will be the condemnation! And herein, and hereby, the justice of God will conspicuously shine in the condemnation of all unbelievers, and their destruction appear to have been of themselves, in that great day when he judgeth the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. O what a righteous thing it will appear to be in the great God, to say concerning those who have been invited to partake of gospel-provisions, that have made excuses, and went [p. 60] their way, 'They shall not taste of my Supper'!

But though the *general call* of the gospel is sufficient to leave those who refuse it *without excuse*, yet is it not sufficient in and of itself, by reason of man's weakness and wickedness, *to bring in one soul to Christ*. No, there must be a *compelling power*, an *almightiness of grace* put forth therein, to bring in all those who fill the Lord's house, who come in to Christ by faith. The general call of the gospel is the same to *all*. But the righteous Sovereign of heaven and earth leaves *some* under it to the freedom of their own *will* to act concerning it just as they please—who refuse the call, and perish from under it. He invites, they make excuses, and he takes them at their word. He calls, and they refuse. And therefore he will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. While for *others*, from peculiar favours, he slays the *enmity* of their will, sets the faculty *free* to choose life, sweetly *allures* it and brings them in, to partake of all the grace they are called to. And this he does for all those, and for none but those, who are his chosen, for whom Jesus died.

*Special vocation*, then, is God's calling his chosen, his redeemed ones, out of nature's darkness, into his marvellous light. It is a call *in* a call, an *efficacious* call that effects the thing called for. As when, in the first creation, God said, 'Let there be light', and [p. 61] there was light. Or as Christ called Lazarus out of his grave, and he that was dead came forth. It is such an all-powerful call that makes the dead in sin hear the voice of the Son of God and live. The general call of the gospel unto faith in Christ is a mere *external* thing, that doth nothing inwardly upon the souls of the persons called, but leaves them just where they were, in darkness, blindness, and opposition. But the *special call*, or the voice of God to his chosen in the *general call*, is an *inward*, all-efficacious thing, that brings them out of darkness *into* light. Christ says in the *general call* to all sinners, to the ends of the earth, 'Look upon me and be ye saved.'<sup>30</sup> Many hear the words and regard them not. But Christ speaks to his chosen, to his redeemed ones herein, in the day of his power, by such an efficacious voice that forms the eye of truth in their souls, that gives them a spiritual ability and a gracious inclination to look to him for salvation, and enables them actually to do, unto their everlasting salvation by him. They are naturally as deaf to the voice of Christ, and as unwilling to be saved by him, as the rest. But when he calleth his own sheep by name, he makes them to hear his voice and follow him with the greatest freedom of will, as their own shepherd, who only hath to, and will give eternal life unto them. This *special call* unto faith in Christ is proper to [p. 62] them, and only them, whom God predestinated to life through his Son's death. For 'whom he did predestinate, them he also called' (Rom. 8:30). This *call* springs out of the grace of election and redemption, and is subservient thereto. This *special call* of God's chosen, of Christ's redeemed, is a *call* according to God's 'purpose' (v. 28)—his purpose of grace. Yea, his *gift* of grace to them in Christ before the world began. And therefore the apostle says, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began' (2 Tim. 1:9).

All grace was purposed for, and given to, or settled upon God's chosen in Christ in his everlasting covenant, before time commenced. And so this grace among the rest, of *special effectual vocation*. Who hath 'saved us', saith the apostle, saved us in his everlasting covenant unto 'calling'. And 'called' us, in the day of his power upon our hearts, unto salvation, according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. So that the first and principal reason why any obey the *call* of the gospel lies not in their own inherent goodness, the tractableness of their own will, by which they make themselves to differ from the disobedient, but in the purpose, the grace, the good pleasure of God's will towards them in Christ, before the [p. 63] world was, and the special operation of his power

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<sup>30</sup>Isa. 45:22.

upon their hearts in time. The *general call* of the gospel, as has been hinted, leaves persons in the present darkness of sin and Satan, and to perish in the darkness of eternal death. But God by this *special call* delivers his chosen from the power of darkness and translates them into the kingdom of his dear Son. He brings them out of the darkness of sin and death into the light of life, into the light of grace here, and eternal glory hereafter, both which are marvellous. He calls them into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, into fellowship with him in his person and benefits, in his grace and glory. He calls them out of the darkness of sin, in its guilt, filth, and power, into the light of pardoning, cleansing, subduing grace. Into that grace which slays the power of sin here, and will destroy the being of it out of their nature hereafter. He calls them out of the darkness of Satan's influence, into the light of the glorious teachings of his own Holy Spirit. And out of the darkness of death in the threatening, into the light of life in the promise. Into a right to life, and into the enjoyment of it too, partial and initial in this world, and complete and total in the world to come. Thus God's chosen, and Christ's redeemed, are effectually called, or called by his special grace, unto faith in Christ and unto his eternal glory by [p. 64] him.

And from special vocation springs *final perseverance*. Those whom God hath *called* unto faith in Christ, and *justified* them through it, them he hath also *glorified*.<sup>31</sup> He did not call them out of darkness into light, out of death into life, to leave them to be again swallowed up of darkness and death. No, those whom God hath called into the fellowship of his Son, and unto his eternal kingdom and glory, his faithfulness is engaged to bring them safe to it. His calling is without repentance. He never repents what he hath done for them in this regard. Nor doth he leave them to themselves, to get to heaven as they can. But he that hath begun the good work in their souls, will perform it until the day of Christ (Phil. 1:6). He that hath sanctified them in part, will sanctify them wholly, and preserve their 'whole spirit, soul, and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth them, who also will do it' (1 Thess. 5:23–24). He has given them his Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of grace and consolation, to abide with them for ever (John 14:16). To preserve them from defection in grace, and seduction by false teachers (1 John 2:27). Even from such defection and seduction that is inconsistent with their continuance in a state of salvation, and in the fundamental doctrines of faith. Their life of grace is more properly Christ's life than theirs. It is Christ's living in them, and [p. 65] they can never die so long as Christ lives. 'I am crucified with Christ', says the apostle, 'nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' (Gal. 2:20). Christ by his Holy Spirit, having taken possession of their souls, abides there forever as the life, the eternal life of the new creature, or that principle of grace created in the hearts of the *called* of God. 'He that believeth on me', saith our Lord, 'as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive' (John 7:38–39). And 'whosoever' (saith he) 'drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst. But the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life' (ibid, 4:14). Thus is the life of grace, in God's *called* ones, secured and increased until it springs up into the life of glory. Christ has prayed for them that their faith might not fail, and lives in them to preserve it. And by virtue hereof, the principle or habit thereof in their souls shall be constantly maintained, and the act and exercise thereof recovered and increased after decays (Luke 22:32). The *called* of God may fall foully, but not finally. They may fall so low for a time that both themselves and others may think they are quite lost and will rise no more, but everlasting arms being underneath them, they shall be raised again unto the fresh [p. 66] exercise of faith and all holy obedience. The Lord will bring them to look again upon him that they have pierced, and to mourn for all their iniquities. He will restore their souls, and with weeping, and with supplications will he lead them in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. As at first they believe through grace, so through the same grace they are, and shall be, kept believing, or believe on, unto the saving of their souls (Acts 28:27; Heb. 10:39). When Christ, from his boundless love and that covenant-necessity he is under, brings in, *calls*, his other sheep into his fold, the church, when he makes them hear his voice and follow him, he engages for them to give unto them eternal life, and that they shall never perish, nor any pluck them out of his hands (John 10:16, 27–28). Against these, who are called to lay the

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<sup>31</sup>See Rom. 8:30.

whole stress of their salvation upon him the Rock of Ages, the foundation lain in Sion, he that is truth itself hath said, 'The gates of hell shall not prevail' (Matt. 14:18).

If it should be said, *objection*, there are many that draw back unto perdition; and therefore the final perseverance of believers, or such that are once in a state of grace, cannot be a truth, I answer:

*Ans.* It is possible that persons may profess to be effectually *called* and yet they may not be so in reality. They may deceive themselves and others. They may profess faith in Christ, true [p. 67] living faith, and have it not. And so not having faith of the right kind, that unites the soul to Christ and is of an abiding nature, but a common, historical, temporary faith, in time of temptation they fall away from that faith they once made a profession of, and draw back unto perdition. And doubtless there are many such, as the constant experience of the church in all ages doth manifest. But this is no argument against the final perseverance of the saints, of those who are *called* by special grace. Nor ought it to fill them with fears, lest they also should fall away. If those who professed to have true faith and had it not, have left their first faith, this is no argument that those who have it shall fall from theirs too. If those who seemed to have what they had not, have been mistaken about it, and others about them mistaken, this is no argument that those who have true faith may not know it, and that they shall never fall away. There was a Judas among the apostles, that never had true faith in Christ, nor love to him, but was not discovered until the Searcher of hearts made him manifest, and by his transgression he fell away. And thus likewise, Simon the sorcerer professed faith in Christ, and was thereupon baptized, and it was not known but that he was a true believer, until by his offering the apostles money for the gift of the Holy Ghost, it was discovered that his heart was not right in the sight of God. Whereupon [p. 68] Peter said unto him, 'I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity' (Acts 8:13ff.). The man was an unbeliever, an unchanged, unconverted man before, notwithstanding his fair profession of faith in Christ. But it was not known, it was not perceived that he was in the gall of bitterness, until the iniquity of his heart thus broke out. And thus when Hymeneus and Philetus erred concerning the truth, and overthrew the faith of some, 'Nevertheless' (saith the apostle Paul) 'the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his' (2 Tim. 2:17ff.).

It is as if the apostle should say, 'Though some have erred from the truth, and departed from the faith, yet God has lost none of *his*. The foundation of God *standeth sure* in *electing*, *redeeming*, and *calling* grace, and the Lord knoweth them that are his. Others may appear to *men*, for a while, to be his, and afterwards fall away. But those whom the *Lord* knoweth (discerneth, approveth, and preserveth) to be *his* shall never fall away, but abide in a state of grace until they enter into the state of glory. The foundation of his grace towards them *standeth sure*, and his knowledge of them as his own *seals it*. By virtue whereof they are, and shall be preserved safe unto his heavenly kingdom.'

And thus says the Apostle John, 'They went out from us, but they were not of us. [p. 69] For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. But they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us' (1 John 2:19). Thus persons may be among the number of professing believers, and yet not of the number of real believers under that profession. And when they go out from them, make shipwreck of faith, and draw back unto perdition, it is thereby made manifest that they never were really before God what they appeared to be before men. Since all that are true believers, that are effectually called by grace, do doubtless continue with them and persevere in faith, until they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls.

If it should be further said, *objection*, if persons once in a state of grace were forever secured from final falling away, then may they live as they list, and cast off all care about holiness. And then are all exhortations in the Word unto abiding in the faith, and all the warnings against departing from it, in vain. I answer:

*Ans.* Those that are called unto *faith in Christ*, and salvation by him, are called unto *holiness*. And that faith which the Holy Ghost has wrought in the souls of those effectually called by grace, is *living faith*, that is *productive of good works*. Good works, holiness of heart and life, are such natural fruits of this faith that hereby it can only be known [p. 70] by men. If any profess faith in Christ, and bring forth no fruit unto holiness, it is a certain evidence that their faith is a dead faith, that they are not called by grace and in a state of salvation. For the faith of God's called ones, who shall persevere in grace unto

eternal glory, takes in the love of God to them, and works by love unto him again. The love of Christ constrains them to live unto him who died for them and rose again. Their faith is an heart and life-purifying faith. They cannot sin, live a course of sin, because they are born of God, having a living principle of faith abiding in them which is productive of holiness and causeth them, from the hope of salvation by Christ, to purify themselves even as he is pure. Nor are exhortations to constancy in the faith, nor warnings against unbelief, in *vain* to these. For, under a divine blessing, they are part of the means of the saints' preservation from sin, and perseverance in grace unto glory. It is a most certain truth that 'whosoever believeth in Christ, shall not perish but have everlasting life' (John 3:16). That the soul, upon its first act of faith, is passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation (*ibid*, 5:24). And yet it is as great a truth that none but them that abide in Christ by faith, that 'endure to the end, shall be saved' (Matt. 24:13).

The reason is this, that God, who has made the believer's [p. 71] perseverance unto life necessary as the *end*, has likewise made his abiding in faith and holiness necessary as the *means* to that end. And what God has joined together, let no man put asunder. And thus, exhortations to constancy in faith and holiness, and warnings against apostacy therefrom, may fitly be given to those whose final perseverance therein is secured. Just as in the case of Paul's dangerous voyage, wherein the angel of God stood by him and said, 'Fear not Paul, for thou must be brought before Caesar. And lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.' Upon which he says to them, 'Wherefore sir, be of good cheer. For I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me' (Acts 28:24–25). And again, in their distress and extremity, 'I pray you' (says he) 'to take some meat, for this is for your health. For there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you' (v. 34). Here now was a full assurance of their lives given them from God, that there should be no loss of any man's life among them. And yet when some of them in their fear and distress were about to flee out of the ship, 'Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved' (v. 31). So closely were the end and the means, the salvation of their lives and their continuance with Paul in the ship, connected together. In vain was it for any to go about to save their lives any other way than that which God had appointed. [p. 72] Or in vain would it have been for any to have argued thus: 'If God has given assurance of our lives, that we shall not die, it's no matter whether we abide in the ship or not, for God's word cannot be broken.' 'For', says Paul, 'Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' And so in like manner, in vain is it in any to say, 'If believers are put into such a state of grace that they cannot finally fall away, then they may live as they list, and fruitless it is to exhort them to abide in the faith, or warn them of the danger of apostacy.' For concerning *these*, with abundance of truth it may be said, 'That their faith will produce holiness; and that, except they abide therein, and endure to the end, they cannot be saved.' For the end and the means are inseparably joined. Nor are exhortations to the use of means in vain where the end is infallibly ascertained. For God is pleased to work by them.

Nor will it follow from hence either that the called of God are then under a covenant of works, or constrained to obedience from a servile fear of being cast out of his family. Nor yet, that their salvation in the least depends upon anything in or done by them. For though they are no more servants, but sons, God's free-children that shall abide in his house forever (and many of them know it too, to their unspeakable joy), yet have they no liberty given them from God's Word to disobey his command, nor do [p. 73] they take liberty from hence so to do. But under the sweet constraints of that love that will never disinherit them, they walk before God as his dear children, in all holy obedience to his revealed will. Knowing that it is their constant duty so to do, that they cannot otherwise evidence their being his children, and that their sanctification is God's appointed *means* through which they are to obtain salvation. Yea, that it is the very *beginning* of it in themselves. And that the *more* they increase in holiness, the *greater* is their preparation for glory. Nor doth their salvation from hence, in the least depend upon anything in, or done by *them*, as a procuring cause thereof. Nor do they apprehend it so to do. Since it is *God* that worketh in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, that saves them unto faith and holiness, that maintains and increaseth the same in them and them in the same, and that upon their patient continuance in well-doing, seeking for glory, honour, and immortality, will give unto them eternal life.

Thus then I conclude that the final perseverance of the saints is a glorious truth of the blessed gospel. Their perseverance of grace, unto glory, doth not depend upon their own will and strength to keep themselves, but upon the grace, power, and faithfulness of him that hath called them. It's the same power that began their faith that doth maintain and finish it. It's the power of God that keeps their faith, and them through it, unto salvation. For [p. 74] all those who are begotten again to a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them, are likewise kept by the power of God through faith, unto that salvation which is ready to be revealed (1 Pet. 1:3–5). Thus sir, eternal, personal, absolute election, particular redemption, special vocation, and final perseverance make the gospel of Christ appear to be a consistent scheme, a design worthy of *God*; and the salvation of his people from first to last, to be of one pure piece of *grace*, and so the whole *glory* of it to be his due, and all creature boasting for ever excluded.

Whereas sir, in your scheme of God's choosing, or rather decreeing to choose, to life before time those whom he foresaw would believe in time of Christ's redeeming all mankind, of the sufficiency of general calling grace, and of the uncertainty of the called ones' perseverance, there are very great inconsistencies. It makes the gospel of Christ to be yea and nay, and a design very unworthy of *God*. It makes the salvation of his people to be partly of works and partly of grace, or rather to be all of *works* under the name of grace; and so leaves room for the creature to boast, while itself, by its own free will, makes itself to differ from another. How inconsistent is it with the glory of God's *electing* love to make the [p. 75] creature *first* in its love and choice of God; and the sovereign Lord of all to be in a sort *dependent* upon his creature? And how contrary is it to 'We love him, because he first loved us' (1 John 4:19)? How inconsistent is it with the glory of the Redeemer to assert that he died for the *salvation* of all mankind, and yet that the far greater part of them shall *perish*? And how contrary is it to 'lay down my life for my sheep', I give unto them eternal life, and 'they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand' (John 10:15, 23)? How inconsistent is it with the glory of God the *caller* to assert the *sufficiency* of his general calling grace to save all men, and yet that it is *insufficient* to save any unless they are disposed to save themselves by it? Or unless, through the sufficiency of their own free will, they make it sufficient for them? And how contrary is this to 'Other sheep I have ... them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice' (John 10:16)? Or 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power' (Ps. 110:3)? And especially, how inconsistent is it with the glorious *power* and unchanging *faithfulness* of that God who hath called his people into a state of *salvation*, and unto his *eternal kingdom and glory*, to assert that, notwithstanding this, they may *lose* the salvation they are possessed of, and never *see* the glory they are called to, but *sink* into hell-torments with the devils? And how contrary is this to, 'The gifts and calling of God are [p. 76] without repentance' (Rom. 11:2); and 'the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom' (2 Tim. 4:1); and 'faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it' (1 Thess. 5:24)? How unworthy, sir, is such a salvation, as you imagine the great salvation of God to be, of the greatness and glory of the *Saviour*? And how contrary is it to that which is revealed in the Word of the truth of the gospel? How doth it make its great and precious promises to the heirs of salvation, which are all and always 'Yea and Amen' in Christ, to the glory of God by us, to be one while 'Yea', and another while 'Nay'? And so rob God of the glory of his grace and faithfulness therein? Yea, how doth it make the absolute promises and declarations of his grace conditional? And so the salvation of the saved ones to be of themselves? For if the salvation of the creature, from first to last, is all of its own will, is not the creature then its own saviour? And may it not truly say, 'I myself have made myself to differ'? 'I myself, by my own free-will, although given me of God, have made myself to differ with respect to happiness from another, who had as much freedom of will given him, and might have been as happy if he would, and yet made himself miserable'? And is not then the glory of the creature's salvation wholly due unto itself? Oh sir, we had need beware lest we turn the gospel into a law. Lest by depending upon our own free-will [p. 77] instead of God's free grace, we seek salvation in such a way in which it can never be had—viz., by works and not by grace. For God has resolved to save sinners merely from the good pleasure of his own will, by the power of his own arm, and to the glory of his own name. And those who are not willing to be saved in this way shall not be saved at all. For his glory herein, from first to last, he will not give unto another.

And think, dear sir, what you *gain* by your scheme of things? Of what little *worth* that 'salvation' is which you say is of *grace*? You say you are interested in God's everlasting love, and that it extends itself equally unto all. But will *thousands* be ever the better for it? Yea, what may *you* be the better for it? If you have not power in yourself (as most certainly you have not) to keep yourself from falling, you may, instead of being an object of his love, become a vessel of his wrath for ever. You say that Christ has died for your sins, and that he hath done the same for all men. But what will *the greatest part of mankind* be the better for it? They must yet bear their own sins, and perish forever notwithstanding. And what may *you* be the better for Christ's death than either Cain or Judas was? Have *you* any more power in yourself to keep from falling, from sinking into perdition, than *they* had? And if you say you are *called* of God, that you [p. 78] are born from above, to the inheritance in heaven. Is this any great matter, if *all men* may be in the same condition with *yourself* if they *will*? And if they *were*, both you and they might yet, of *children of God* become the *children of the devil*—and instead of enjoying the heavenly *inheritance*, have your 'portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone'?<sup>32</sup>

Oh sir, the salvation that you plead for is rather *name* than *thing*, *shadow* than *substance*, and of so little *worth* that my soul could have no *joy* in it. And indeed I am at a loss to know how yourself can have *much*. Surely, if you had a due sight of the desperate wickedness of your own heart, of your great weakness by reason of sin, of the subtlety and power of Satan, the enemy of souls, and of the many and great snares of this world, you could have but little joy in such a salvation as *this*! Is it any great matter for a soul to know and say, 'Christ loved, and died for *all the world*? May not *any man* know and say the same as well as *he*. And what may *he* be the better for it, any more than *those* who are now in hell? Is it any great thing for a man to know that his sins are *forgiven*, if so are the sins of *all men*, of the greatest reprobates? And were those of Cain and Judas, who for sin are gone to their own place? And if *his* sins, who is now forgiven, may again be charged unto his score and rest forever, with [p. 79] God's wrath for them, upon his head? Oh what joy and rest of faith can any sensible soul have in such a salvation as this? How far doth it fall short of that great salvation of God which the gospel declares to be wrought out for his people, and that shall be bestowed upon them!

One thing more, sir, and I have done. I think it a very awful thing that you should stake your soul on *universal redemption*, and even refuse to be saved if it was not so, in that surprising, shocking verse of your *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love*, page 28:

My dear Redeemer, and my God,  
I stake my soul on thy free grace,  
Take back my interest in thy blood,  
Unless it stream'd for all the race:  
I stake my soul on this alone,  
THY BLOOD DID ONCE FOR ALL ATONE.<sup>33</sup>

Now sir, suppose it should *not* have streamed for all the race, that it should *not* have atoned for *all*—as most *certainly it did not* (for if Christ did not *pray* for the world, he did not *die* for them, his intercession being founded in, and is the consequent of his oblation)—how dreadful is it that you should stake your soul upon a false supposition that it did? And even refuse to be saved if it did not? In that shocking expression, [p. 80]

Take back my interest in thy blood,  
Unless it stream'd for all the race.

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<sup>32</sup>Rev. 21:8.

<sup>33</sup>CW, Hymn 13, st. 1, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741), 28.

Oh sir, if Christ did not die for all, to give them eternal life, but only for those the Father gave him, have you not hereby resigned your *interest* in his blood and your *own part* in his great salvation? And how sad would be your case, if Christ should take you at your word? If he should say, 'He refuseth to be saved by my blood, unless it streamed for all. And as I died for none but my sheep, which the Father gave me, let him perish among the guilty goats!' But sir, as there neither is nor can be any such thing as Christ's taking back the interest of any person in his blood for whom it was shed, so if he died for you (as I hope he did), he will not take back your *interest* in it, nor take you at your *word* in refusing to be saved by it. But your *sin* herein is never the less than if, as the just dessert of it, he was to send you down to the pit of hell. Oh, if Christ did not bleed and die for you, for *this sin* of your refusing to be saved by his blood, the guilt of it must rest forever on your head. Sure I am that in this you have run a desperate length. But as you did it ignorantly in unbelief, I earnestly desire, to the glory of God's free, rich, super-abounding grace, that you may find mercy. And if you, among the remnant [p. 81] for whom Christ died, are brought safe to glory you'll for ever admire and adore that grace that brought you thither, notwithstanding that dreadful opposition you made against it—that was so exceeding abundant towards you in the forgiveness of all your sins, and especially of *this*!

But sir, that there can be no such *thing* as Christ's taking back the interest of any person in his blood for whom he died, consider that in order to Christ's *death* he was first made *sin*, and that by his death he did at once and for ever *expiate, put away*, and make an *end of sin*—of all the sins of all those for whom he died. How then is it possible that the sins of any one of them should ever return again upon his own head? God the Father, in order to save a remnant of sinful men, did lay their iniquity upon his own Son. He took off their sin from them and transferred, or carried, it over unto him. As the sin of the Israelites, in the type, was taken off from them and transferred, carried over to, or put upon the head of the sacrifice. Thus Christ was made *sin*, antecedent in order of nature to his being made a *sacrifice*, or an offering for sin. And the sin of God's people, his sheep that went astray, that was laid upon Christ was *all* their iniquity, their original and actual sin, their sin before conversion and after it, from their birth to their death. He bore *all* their iniquities and *all* their transgressions [p. 82] in *all* their sins; iniquity, transgression, and sin, even *all* their sin, of every kind and degree. And being thus made sin by imputation, the holy law of God found him *guilty*, and requiring *satisfaction*, thundered out curse, wrath, and death against him. And a sin-revenging God would not spare him a jot. But according to his strict justice, called for his *blood* with an 'Awake, O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd' (Zech. 13:7). And indeed the sword of justice smote the shepherd for the sins of the sheep, and bathed itself in his blood until it was fully *satisfied* and the gracious *end* answered. To wit, *a turning of the Lord's hand* in a way of grace and everlasting favour upon the little ones, the sheep, for whom he died. And as all the sins of all those for whom he died were laid upon him, as a full satisfaction for them was required of him and given by him, so this was a *proper* satisfaction. It was properly given to the justice of God for *their sins*, and received thereby as such. It was a *proper* payment of *their debt* that Christ made. And this his payment, his satisfaction, was an *absolute, unconditional* one. It was without 'ifs' and 'ands', without reservation, without respect to their approving of the same and their willingness to receive their discharge hereby. The payment made and the discharge taken being *absolute*, their salvation to faith, and through [p. 83] it, were *absolutely* secured here. Christ *once suffered* for every individual person of that vast number he died for. And by that his dying for them, he gave them an *eternal interest* in the benefits of his death, unto *their eternal life*. And is it possible that the sufferings of Christ can be *recalled*? Can it ever be that he should have suffered *less* than he has, either *really* or in the *account* of God? As *impossible* then is it that either he or his Father should take back the interest of any soul in his blood, or that those for whom he died should ever miss of eternal life, since all-sufficient is the merit and eternal is the efficacy of his death. It was *eternal* redemption that he obtained for them, and the *sure* mercies thereof, which cannot be *lost*, he gives to them.

Happy are you then, dear sir, if *you* are one of them for whom *Jesus died*, in that, though you have made this *offer*, he will never *take* it at your hands. But having loved you, and washed you from all your sins (even from *this*), his heart will never *change* towards you. He'll never become your *enemy*, nor suffer his death to be *inefficacious* for your life. No, he well knew beforehand how obstinate you would

prove, that your neck was an iron sinew and your brow brass. He knew the weight, and bore the guilt of this your sin, with the wrath of God due for it, that so you might not sink thereby into eternal perdition. And having thus loved and saved you from the *guilt* of it by his great sacrifice, he'll love and [p. 84] save you from the *power* of it by his glorious intercession. He'll love you into a willingness to be saved by his *blood*, unto your eternal salvation thereby; although it was shed for none but his *sheep*, and those who himself calls 'goats', 'serpents', a 'generation of vipers', and 'the children of the wicked one' have no share in it. And hereby he'll raise your endless wonder and praise so much the higher at his rich, free, boundless grace to *you*, in that it was *distinguishing!* In that he took *you* when he passed others by! In that he saved *you* by his death from the same kind of sins for which *others* must die eternally! In that he redeemed *you* by his blood out of *some* of your kindred, out of many of your tongue, people, and nation, and made you a king and a priest unto God and his Father, to reign with him in life and glory, unto ages without end!

And now, sir, that the free grace of God in the salvation of his people, in their eternal, personal, absolute *election*, particular redemption, special vocation, and final perseverance may shine into your soul with the bright rays of its distinguishing glory, to the illuminating your mind and attracting of your will and affections with its glorious brightness, its ineffable sweetness, to the bringing you out of your present darkness into God's marvellous light, to stand on the side of his *free grace indeed*, as one of his witnesses, to [p. 85] the instruction and edification of thousands, and to your own present joy and future crown, is the hearty desire of, dear sir,

Your affectionate and humble servant in the Lord, etc.

A Poem on Salvation by General and Special Grace:  
Or the Insufficiency of the One, and All-sufficiency of the Other.

Let others sing of God's *electing love*,  
That from their faith *foreseen* to them did move;  
That with their *faith* doth keep an equal pace;  
That if it *fails*, to them is no more grace.  
Let who will sing of Christ's *redeeming love*,  
That tow'rds the whole of Adam's race did move,  
That bought them *all* from hell, and set them free;  
Yet leaves the *most* to die eternally.  
Sing they that please, of *general calling love*,  
Sufficient unto *all*, if they improve;  
But if they *do not*, insufficient still,  
And can do *nought*, for want o' th' creature's *will*.  
And sing who can, of God's *renewing grace*,  
That turns the soul from sin to holiness;  
And yet can't *finish* what it hath begun,  
Unless the creature's *will* holds to go on.

[p. 86]

Thus sing who will of being *sav'd by grace*,  
Thro' their *free will*, from all their trespasses.  
So sav'd that when it's *done*, they *perish may*,  
And never *see* salvation's endless day.  
That have no better *right* unto salvation,  
Than they may *lose*, and sink into damnation.  
Let them that can take up their resting-place,  
In a *salvation* said to be *of grace*;  
That stands no *firmer* than their fickle will,



Which if it *turns*, will bring damnation still.  
Let who will bring forth *fruit himself unto*,  
To *save himself* from everlasting woe.  
Let who will strive in vain for *holiness*,  
To *bring himself* to everlasting bliss.  
Let who will *stake his soul on gen'ral grace*,  
And else, desire not salvation's place;  
That will 'resign his interest in Christ's blood',  
If 'it for all the human race ha' not flow'd'.  
That says he's willing to be sent away.  
From Christ hereon, to be the devil's prey;  
Who, if the Lord should deal to his dessert,  
Must feel the fire of hell's tormenting smart.

[p. 87]

But sing my soul, of God's *electing love*,  
That from his *sovereign will* to thee did move;  
That chose thee *unto* faith and holiness,  
And keeps thee *thro' them*, till thou life possess.  
And sweetly sing of Christ's *redeeming grace*,  
Extended only to *the chosen race*.  
Sing of his love, who for *thy sins did die*;  
While *thousands* under sin and wrath do lie.  
And sing likewise of *special calling love*,  
That to Christ's *people* doth effectual prove.  
That makes them *willing* by its glorious power;  
And made *thee so*, at the appointed hour.  
Yea, sing the *power*, the *grace*, the *faithfulness*,  
Of God, who *calleth* his to endless bliss.  
That the good work *began* in them and thee;  
And will *perform* it till we glory see.

[p. 88]

Thus sing my soul, of *grace* that hath *thee freed*,  
Of God's free-grace, that *aye* hath done the deed.  
That *sav'd thee so*, from sin's, law's, Satan's train,  
That thou can'st never be *unsav'd* again!  
That *sav'd thee* hath to *present grace* below;  
That save thee will to *future glory* too;  
That now to thee the *right* thereof hath giv'n,  
And will hereafter give to thee *thy heaven!*  
Take up thy *rest* in God's unchanging grace,  
His *endless truth*, his *glorious faithfulness*;  
In God, *thy God of love*, who aye will be  
A sea of peace, of love, and life to thee!  
And let *free-grace indeed*, thee *aye constrain*  
To *gospel holiness*, with might and main.  
To love and praise thy God for *saving grace*,  
Which gives to thee an *endless happiness!*

Venture, my soul, *thy weight on special grace*;  
For this alone can give thee *heaven's bliss*.  
Still plead thine *interest* in thy *Saviour's blood*,

Tho' for God's *chosen only* it hath flow'd.  
Lay *hold by faith* on 's blood for *sinner*s shed;  
And *endless blessings* shall be on thy head!  
Thy Lord will say, Oh Soul, I died for *thee*;  
And *thou* shalt ever reign in life with *me*!  
*HALLELUJAH!*

*Source:* published transcription; [Anne Dutton.] *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley: in vindication of the Doctrines of Absolute, Unconditional Election, Particular Redemption, Special Vocation, and Final Perseverance. Occasioned chiefly by some things in his 'Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend'; and his 'Hymns on God's Everlasting Love'* (London, Hart, 1742).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park, Castle Donington<sup>1</sup>]

February 19, 1742

My Dear Friend,

I did believe it would be pleasing to you to hear that the Lord had brought us safe to this place. We felt your prayers on our way and was much comforted thereby. God will, I am sure, restore them a hundred fold, even in the present world. As we came into the town of Gloucester,<sup>2</sup> we met on horseback coming out of the town Mr. [George] Whitefield, who stopped to tell me he would be back by eight o'clock and would then wait upon me, to which I agreed. I mentioned my high approbation in your separation that while < ...<sup>3</sup> > I could not see it was possible.

He held forth above two hours upon the doctrine of election and reprobation, and collected all the choicest flowers of all that was to be gathered or said upon the several heads to charm me, telling withal (or giving me to understand) I was an elect. I told him upon what he said that upon the whole I found I should be such a loser by his way of thinking, that no consideration that I was yet able to see from anything he had said could have any weight. He seemed surprised and said 'How could that be?' I told him I was so much happier than he was and that not from anything in myself but on my constant dependence upon Christ and next that I waited <and hoped for<sup>4</sup>> an absolute deliverance from <sin which> he was willing to groan under always. He then said 'Pray does your Ladyship live without sin?' I told him 'No!' but that there was such a state. He said none had ever yet done it, he was sure, that ever lived. But I made him own God was both able and willing, and that before we died it was absolutely necessary we should be in it, and in this we only differ. I never could have received by anything that had been wrote against the doctrine so strong a prejudice as his whole conversation was for it. Though I must say he talked very sensibly, his manner agreeable, and command of words and smoothly put together, but never would bear searching into.

I charged him with <some severity> about his conduct to you. <He seemed> ashamed and was much provoked by your brother's calling them 'priests of Molock'.<sup>5</sup> I hope I shall soon hear from you. It is true pleasure to me and always I truly and really believe a certain good to me. Do think of your journals being published.<sup>6</sup> From the bottom of my soul and in most fervent spirit I commend you to our Lord, who

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<sup>1</sup>The residence of Lord and Lady Huntingdon in Leicestershire.

<sup>2</sup>Lady Huntingdon passed through Gloucester on her way from Bath to Donington Park, on Feb. 9, 1742.

<sup>3</sup>The first line of the second page of the manuscript has been torn off.

<sup>4</sup>A corner of the manuscript is now missing, affecting scattered lines. This portion was apparently still present when the transcription was done in John R. Tyson and Boyd S. Schlenther, *In the Midst of Early Methodism: Lady Huntingdon and Her Correspondence* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2006), 49–50. We fill in the missing text from that transcription. (Our transcription of this and other Lady Huntingdon letters is done from original manuscripts and differs at points from Tyson/Schlenther.)

<sup>5</sup>See *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1742), 34.

<sup>6</sup>For some years both JW and CW had circulated journal letters or manuscript journals among close friends, for edification. More recently, controversy had led JW to publish two extracts from these manuscript journals: the first extract, covering Oct. 1735 – Feb. 1738, was published in June 1740 to answer accusations about his time in Georgia (see the preface, *Works*, 18:121–22; the second extract, covering Feb.–Aug. 1738, was published in Nov. 1741 in an attempt to clear the historic Moravian church from the charge of quietism. Lady Huntingdon was encouraging JW to publish a further extract that could help define and defend Methodism from various attacks. This extract, covering Aug. 1738 through Oct. 1739, was published in Oct. 1742.

is able to build up and to carry you through the work he has given you to do, the perfecting all the saints now with you. Don't forget Bath. See Mr. Graves if possible.<sup>7</sup> All my children prosper. Remember us at Kingswood. I dare never to think of that place but my soul longs too much after it, for I feel I love them in the bowels of Christ. Forgive this, but I have not time to read it over and forget if it is nonsense. Your brother knows nothing of what passed at Gloucester but that we saw him [Whitefield].

All is well. As to my journey to Kingswood, I feel it would be good for me to be often there. But his blessed will be done, not mine. Miss C[owpers]<sup>8</sup> beg love to you. Commend me in the same to [Thomas] Maxfield.

*Address:* 'For / The Revd Mr / Wesley at the New School / Bristol / [via] London.'

*Postmark:* '19/FE'. *Frank:* 'Free / Huntingdon'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L. Hu. Feb. 19. 1742 / a[nswere]d 27'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 1.

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<sup>7</sup>Charles Caspar Graves had formally renounced his earlier Methodist ties in Dec. 1740, but was now regretting that move; Lady Huntingdon is helping arrange the meeting with JW that would lead to their reconciliation. See Seymour, *Huntingdon*, 1:48–49.

<sup>8</sup>Frances ('Fanny') Cowper (1716–42) and her sister Anne (1713–43) were daughters of William Cowper, Esq. (1695–1756), Knight Harbinger to George II. Their mother, Anne (Scudamore?) Cowper was deceased by 1741. The sisters lived in East Barnet, Hertfordshire and were friends with Lord and Lady Huntingdon, whose home in Enfield Chase was nearby. The sisters were converted and drawn into the Methodist movement by CW in Oct. 1741. He entrusted them to Lady Huntingdon's care. In Feb. 1742 Fanny and her sister accompanied the Countess first to Bath, then to her estate in Donington Park, where Fanny died on May 27, 1742. Anne returned to East Barnet, but soon became ill herself, and died Sept. 7, 1743; see *WHS* 7 (1909): 39.

From Howell Harris

Llanhilhal<sup>1</sup> near Pontypool  
February 28, 1741/42

Dear, Dear Brother,

I am persuaded you have fresh discoveries of the base ingratitude of your nature to the best of friends, you loveth yourself more and more daily before him. And that you daily grow more and more in love with and conformity to the dear and precious Jesus. I believe he has a great work yet to do in us, and perhaps by us, before we shall be brought to that union with everyone that feels the inward work in himself longs for. In the meantime I trust our dear Lord will help us, for his glory's sake and for the church's sake, so to behave to each other in love and forbearance that shall not give the enemy room to blaspheme, or the weak ones to take occasion to behave spiteful, or angry, or unbrotherly towards each other. I trust we are of the same seed and shall at last stand before the same throne forever. And who knows but we shall first be tied by the same stakes and ascend up in the same fiery chariot. *O let us then not quarrel, though we cannot see alike. Let love and forbearance be your topics among the lambs.* O the precious lambs! The only precious jewels of the earth! The body of Christ! Let us always pray that we may be kept out of our own spirits in his Spirit. I bless God for this power to write to you sweetly and brotherly, and in love. I have often felt since I saw you some coolness to you, and for want of being enough in the love of God, and of hearing from you, hearing various reports, have been staggered. But still I feel there remains (I hope) a spark of solid love in the bottom.

I see more and more daily that there are depths of unconceivable evils in our nature, and incomprehensible depths of the riches of grace in Christ. We can never be abased too low, and Christ can never be elevated too high. He is all in all, glorious in his teachings. O my dear brother, hear what your poor brother do chatter[?] of him. I shall one day speak plain. Wonderful is the depth in that word 'He is made unto us righteousness and sanctification',<sup>2</sup> and in him we are complete. Though I doubt many say this in the flesh, without hearing it revealed to them in the Holy Ghost. But it is a glorious light ravishing our poor souls when we see God looking on us as in him, reckoning his righteousness as ours, and accounting us (imperfect in all) in him perfectly holy and wise, and so in that relation with him giving us sweet fellowship with himself. Thus does he himself touch me, a poor ungrateful sinful worm. Indeed, I am the vilest of men, the chief of sinners, and stand only by the faithfulness of Christ. And that rock is enough to keep me from falling. O that I was all love and praise!

Pray give my tenderest love to all the dear lambs under your care. I can say I am helped to love them tenderly. I thank you tenderly for your sermon,<sup>3</sup> and I believe when it is God's time to bring us together, to ask one another what we mean in many expressions, which I believe one speaks in this wise and another in another wise, and so it is made the root of contention. I believe, I say, when we shall have more simplicity, tenderness, love, and forbearance with each other, to object and answer, and meet in love with simple minds, open to the truth, weighing fully what is said of both sides and praying much, we shall be brought to see we aim at the same things. But by Satan's craft and the prevalency of self in all of us, we will not take the right way to come together. I have met a book among my old books written by Christopher Ness,<sup>4</sup> and there are some reasons against free will and for perseverance that I think are worth the reading. I had sweetness in reading it and I could not act the brother better than [to] send it [to] you to read if you have the time. I know you will take it as a brother. I am persuaded I send it simply and brotherly to you. I know some things there differ with your sentiments. But God may convey light to us,

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<sup>1</sup>Perhaps he means Lanhilleth; about 4 miles west of Pontypool, Monmouthshire.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. 1 Cor. 1:30.

<sup>3</sup>JW had almost certainly sent his sermon titled *Christian Perfection*, published in Sept. 1741; see *Works*, 2:99–121.

<sup>4</sup>Christopher Ness, *An Antidote against Arminianism* (London: R. Tookey, 1700).

and has to me many times, through such means, as especially [John] Cotton, [*Treatise*] on the *Covenant of Grace* [1671], etc.

I sent you this secretly, not telling as much as one brother that [I] did send it. I think that this is the way that love teaches. I feel in my own soul that doctrine of perseverance is like a bulwark in me against sin, and never works in me (no, not for a moment), I think, licentiousness, but the other wise. And to take it (which I feel I cannot, as I feel I am sealed by that word 'I change not'<sup>5</sup>) would tumble me to unbelief, and to work for life. Indeed to show of God's faithfulness to the true believer, feeds his faith and increases love, and zeal, and fruitfulness, etc. But who am I to speak to you. I know all this you feel.

H. H.

*Source:* Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #490.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Mal. 3:6.

<sup>6</sup>A somewhat abridged transcription, reflecting Harris's spelling and contractions, was published in *Trevecka Letters, 1742–47*, 5–6; a briefer and polished excerpt appears in Morgan, *Howell Harris*, 90.

From Isabella (Ward?) Johnson<sup>1</sup>

[London?]  
[c. March] 1742

On Christ appearing to my soul as a great transparent stone,  
looking to find my name written thereon, I discovered him stained with my offences.

O thou oriental diamond to my soul, thou perfect brightness, whose ever streaming rays overcome me. I faint beneath the wonders of thy beauty. I am thy only speck, thy blemish, and thy stain. O lend me thy cross, there let me sit and mourn, and wash me in those streams that issue from those wounds. But if thou bleedest afresh, my sin must wound thee. I cannot bear my guilt. I fain would spare my Lord, but then with sin must burst and die. And dying, lose his presence, in whose absence all is hell. I know not which way to turn. I cannot bear his love. Forgiveness melts me down and rends my heart asunder. O bring me to thy cross and hide me in those wounds. My sin hath opened wide. I want the fulness of the fountain. And never let me thence depart till I am made like thee, pure as thou art, strong as thou art, wise as thou art. As thou art all sufficient to work my Father's will, then interchanging smiles would be my portion—likeness with perfect likeness. Then thou my living vine and I thy fruitful branch would flourish in thy love and bear thy meridian brightness. The full ripe fruit would fall, the grovelling hand would reach, and thankfully taste the blessing. The ripe remaining fruit the raised hand may reach and gather in due season, and thus adorned by thee I would in thy image shine and blazon all thy beauty.

Isabella Johnson

*Endorsements:* 'A copy of my last to Mr. Jno. Wesley' and 'Heart Breathings'.

*Source:* original manuscript copy for records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #507.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Copies of three letters of Isabella Johnson (two to CW and one to JW) are present among the Trevecka Letters collection at the National Library of Wales. The collection also has a letter dated the same year from Joseph Johnson of Aldgate, London, to Howell Harris. And JW mentions in his diary a visit at the home of sister Isabell Johnson on Feb. 1, 1741 (see *Works*, 19:499). However, neither Joseph nor Isabella appear in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). Drawing these threads together, it is most likely this is Isabella (Ward) Johnson, who married Joseph Johnson in 1724 in London. And it appears that they sided with the Calvinist branch of Methodism in the 1741–42 split.

<sup>2</sup>A partial transcription was published in *WHS* 13 (1921): 37.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London  
March 11, 1741/2

My Dear Brother,

I thank you for answering my letter.<sup>1</sup> We have had uncommon appearances of our dear Lord's presence since I wrote last. He daily fills both me and his people as it were with new wine. Surprising accounts are brought from diverse places.

O that we may all be united in one! But you seem, dear brother, to be prejudiced too much against some of the Brethren. I entreat you, be simple, and let brother [Joseph] Humphreys and [John] Cennick know what you have to lay to their charge. I was with brother Cennick yesterday. He promises to ask you pardon if you are pleased to tell him in what he hath wronged you. Brother Humphreys, I am persuaded, will do the same. I wish *you* would write to brother Charles [Wesley]. He is too shy of me. I offered last Sunday to help him administer the sacrament, but he sent me word he was not to administer that morning, and gave the young man I sent to him a lecture for coming to hear me. This I think is not right, and will in the end destroy the cause you would promote. I believe Jesus Christ fights for the Moravian Brethren. They will insensibly increase. They get ground daily. I fear you grieve the Spirit of God, dear sir, in speaking against them and us. O pray leave it off. I have had free conversation with Mr. [August Gottlieb] Spangenberg several times. Indeed I think he is a simple man.

Brother [John] Hutchin[g]s is come to town, and kindly salutes you, as does dear brother Syms.<sup>2</sup> I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate though unworthy brother and servant in Jesus Christ,

G. W.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr. John Wesley / In the Horse fair / In / Bristoll'.

*Postmark:* '11/MR'. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'G. Wd writing re the Mor[avian]s / March 11, 1742 / a[nswere]d 13'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/131.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The last known surviving letter of Whitefield to JW is Oct. 10, 1741 (above). JW's answer to that letter is not known to survive.

<sup>2</sup>This is possibly Whitefield's spelling for Peter Sims, an early supporter of the revival in London.

<sup>3</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:74.



From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]

March 15, 1742

My Very Much Beloved Friend in the Lord,

I cannot help saying that I thought it long till I heard from you. Not but I was well assured that some good reason had prevented you [from writing]. May the Lord strengthen you more and more. I am sure you are a chosen vessel, and set for the defence of the gospel. It is the Lord's work, and the good that is done upon earth, he doeth it himself. Stagger not then through unbelief at his promises. He is come to send fire upon the earth, and soon I believe it will be kindled. O that we may all be fit for the day of trial! He will thoroughly purge his floor. The chaff and the wheat are now mixed together, and it is the Lord of hosts must separate them. But I trust we shall be among those who rejoice at his appearing.

Many things agreeing have determined me to lay aside the school at Markfield, and for that end I have discharged the schoolmasters. It is but too plain the time is not yet come. Mr. Ellis<sup>1</sup> is gone much backward—fear and all evil, I find, now breaks in upon him. I believe longer experience, with much better observations than I am able to make, will prove this an undeniable truth: that a school will never answer the end of bringing forth any of the gospel fruits of holiness till the parents are first made Christians. The parents must lay up for the children, not the children for the parents.

John Taylor<sup>2</sup> is gone to be an assistant to David Taylor,<sup>3</sup> and if it can be brought about, to become a schoolmaster among those people who are awakened, and talks of returning to London. He is honest of heart, but weak in faith. I believe it will be much for the good of his soul. This thought tends to make him rejoice much, that he is to leave his present employment; though I must say he has long declared that he did not think the Lord prospered the work. Unthankfulness and discontent seemed to reign throughout the parents.

Surely my friend [i.e., JW] has a mind to exercise his gift of humility in an extraordinary manner, when he could once ask my opinion upon his journal. That it will both delight and comfort me I have no doubts, and I think nothing is left for me but to speak my heart, knowing the love God hath for you. He will bring good out of evil for your sake, and in this hope I will do my uttermost in much simplicity. Our friend, now in town,<sup>4</sup> seems as a lamb in the midst of wolves. May the Lord give him the wisdom of the serpent, and the innocency of the dove.<sup>5</sup> Divine grace, and the uprightness of his heart, will make him more than conqueror.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Ellis (1711–95) was a contemporary of CW at Westminster, before receiving his BA at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He served as rector of Markfield 1737–49, and was initially supportive of his friend in the emerging revival.

<sup>2</sup>John Taylor (fl. 1740s) was apparently the younger brother of David and like him in service to Lady Huntingdon. John assisted the Wesley brothers in the early 1740s, at Lady Huntingdon's request. He later settled in London.

<sup>3</sup>David Taylor (1715–83) underwent a spiritual awakening in the mid-1730s, while a servant in the household of Lady Huntingdon. With her encouragement he was soon preaching and gathering societies in the Sheffield area, in some association with Benjamin Ingham. Taylor was instrumental in the conversion of John Bennet in 1742. While ever an itinerant, Taylor was independent of mind and fluctuated in his alliances, between Methodists, Moravians, and even Quakers for a while.

<sup>4</sup>CW, currently in London, which was broadly referred to as 'town'.

<sup>5</sup>See Matt. 10:16.

I think and believe that God hath blessed your conversation to Mr. Graves,<sup>6</sup> whom I have just heard has much love and gratitude, expressed warm sentiments for you. The Lord will water his word in his own time.

All goes well here, with respect to an abundance of the outward means. But alas, none of the signs which follow believers. Do you not think that John the Baptist's disciples had remission of sins under his ministry? It is said: 'That he was filled with the Holy Ghost',<sup>7</sup> and that he gave 'the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins'.<sup>8</sup> Or rather, is it only meant here the good tidings which were to follow, and that our Lord was to give the knowledge of salvation? We read that repentance went before his baptism, and is it not proved that pardon followed it, by fire and the Holy Ghost, given by our Lord himself? Surely less is not meant than entire purification of soul. But my blindness, your light will assist in this, when you have leisure.

We are earnest in prayer for you. And could I do justice to my heart, I should say how much love and gratitude I hourly feel for you, and it is the only good I know that it ever was possessed of. May the Lord enable you to remember me. May your patience be tried by this, as I think it is the only good you can receive by so tedious and unpleasant a scrawl. May our Lord bless you. I wish you good luck in his name, and that he may prosper your handy-work.

Your most unworthy but affectionate friend,

S. H.

*Source:* published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 21 (1798): 642–43.

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<sup>6</sup>Charles Caspar Graves; see letter of Lady Huntingdon to JW of Feb. 19, 1742 (above).

<sup>7</sup>Luke 1:15.

<sup>8</sup>Luke 1:77.

**From Henry Newman (SPCK)**

[London]  
March 16, 1742

‘Outward—John Wesley at Bristol, 16th March, that his Packet was left at the Foundery in Upper Moorfields 6th Current. Value £2.’

*Source:* abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/26 (in back, under date).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:637.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]  
March 25, 1742

I had yours today. John Taylor will be with you by the time this is.<sup>1</sup> Do with him what you will. I bid him tell you from me that unless David Taylor would commit his flock into your or your brother's hands, I dare not support or countenance him.

I ask myself, 'Would you trust David with the guidance of your soul?' I say, 'No, not for worlds.' Then am I not much unlike a Christian neighbour to approve it in others? But I find he is going to build himself a room, and to break (I doubt) with the ministers, and become a lay teacher. He has more pride than I ever saw in man. If he will commit his poor sheep into your hands, and will say, 'How far shall I go?' and then go no further, I will assist in the room, school, etc. But else will I do nothing.

You are much mistaken about the bishops not reading. I *know* they do, many things, if not *all* you publish.

In your next let me know if you do not approve what I have done about David [Taylor].

I do not find one thing I would have altered in the journals. The texts you opened upon going to Bristol you query about. But I vote them in.<sup>2</sup> Have you done the grace of God justice with respect to your own soul? When you have completed it, it will be much approved by me. There is so much simplicity in the account that the sincere must applaud and encourage the work. As I may keep these, if you permit, I will upon receiving the last make a few memoranda and send them as I have observed upon reading them.

May the Lord be with you and enable you to find whence this evil of coldness springs! I am sure the law is a good exercise against this. The cross and self-denial are very good, let our saints of stillness say what they please. I have just been overturning one of the quiet creatures, who owns now what I tell him is all true; and he finds now he has no faith at all. The soul grows but little under all this rest they are giving themselves, for indeed all that I see were as forward the first day as they have ever been since. But I find the sincere cannot bear it, they will be forced into the truth.

Remember me in your prayers, that I may have words given me to confound the mystery of folly and sin. I am, in much love,

Your unworthy but faithful friend,

S. H.

*Source:* published transcription; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 68 (1845): 1072–73.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See previous letter.

<sup>2</sup>JW apparently voted them out, as there is no mention of him opening his Bible to any texts of confirmation in the published *Journal* account of the beginning of his ministry in Bristol in Apr. 1739 (see *Works*, 19:46ff). His reticence might be explained by the criticism George Whitefield had recently published of JW's reliance on casting lots.

<sup>3</sup>There is also a secondary manuscript copy of this letter in MARC (MA 1977/489/77), but it is missing a few sections found in the *WMM* text. An abridged version was published in *Works*, 26:74–75.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon<sup>1</sup>

[Donington Park]

[April 19, 1742]

Your opinion of David Taylor will, I fear, be found true. I think it will be best to take no notice till I find a way open to do it effectually. When we lose our plainness there ends the Christian. A double-minded man who can bear? I have enclosed you Mr. [John] Simpson's conversation. He has left the Moravians, as he tells me, and is not quite at ease now. I have no doubt but he will be brought right at last.

I leave the affair of your sister to you and your brother.<sup>2</sup> Act in it as you think best, and I shall know God will order all things most to his glory, and I feel no desire in earth or for heaven but to cease from offending *him*, and that his name may be glorified upon earth, and that all the world may know the salvation of our God. I know your pious soul would rejoice at the object now before me, who is waiting for the consolation of Israel with that promise of peace and hope that is not to be described and indeed she grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.<sup>3</sup> She has no joys, but the work seems gradual and the light I doubt not but will shine out ere she is called hence.

I think that there is not one thing in the journal ought to be omitted. The manner in which you speak of yourself cannot be mended, supposing you have done justice to the grace you have received. The printing it in two parts, that the history of stillness may be together, will be well judged.<sup>4</sup> Your brother mentioned either having wrote or designing to write an address to the bishops and clergy.<sup>5</sup> Might not this in the room of a dedication be proper?

Miss [Fanny] Cowper desires [me give you her] most affectionate services. And we never forget recommending you, with all your undertakings, to the throne of grace. And so long as you follow the Lord Jesus in simplicity and godly sincerity, I hope to be the happy friend that shall live and die by you if the Lord permits. And may you be his peculiar charge now, henceforth, and forever more.

I believe you will not disapprove my treating Mr. Simpson with that plainness. Tell me if *you* think I have. If you think your brother would like to see it, send it him.

Get us sent down one dozen of the last hymn-books,<sup>6</sup> bound in black, unless you have any ready bound by you. And 24 new sermons.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wesley has used the head of p. 1 to add details of some of his members, in two columns: 'Lydia White 1s / Nichs Mason 1s / Wm Hornby 2[s] 6[d] // S. Anna Kent's fr[ien]d, Wormw. Str. / Eliz. Simpson / Mrs Hankerson, Steward Str, next door to S. Crouch / Mr. Nargent, Surgeon'.

<sup>2</sup>The reference is to Emilia (Wesley) Harper. Her husband Robert had depleted her financial reserves and they were moving toward separation. The question was whether Emilia would move to London, to live at/near the Foundery and be supported by CW and JW.

<sup>3</sup>Frances ('Fanny') Cowper.

<sup>4</sup>JW broke off extract 3 of his published *Journal* at Nov. 1, 1739, just as he was returning to London to confront the English Moravians and the 'quietist' controversy. The preface to extract 4 (covering Nov. 1739 to Sept. 1741) set this controversy at the forefront; see *Works*, 19:116–18.

<sup>5</sup>The work mentioned was most likely JW's *The Character of a Methodist*, which was published in Mar. 1742; see *Works*, 9:32–46.

<sup>6</sup>*HSP* (1742), which were published in Dec. 1741.

<sup>7</sup>The last four words are added by JW, likely referring to his sermon titled *Christian Perfection*, published in Sept. 1741; see *Works*, 2:99–121.

*Address:* 'For / The Revd Mr Wesley / at the Foundry / near Uper Moorfields / London'.

*Postmark:* '19/AP'. *Frank:* 'Free / Huntingdon'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L. Hu / April 19 / a[nswere]d 22'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/104.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>A transcription of the first two and a half paragraphs of this letter (presented as the first half of a letter on Jan. 9, 1742) was published in *MM* 21 (1798): 490–91. An abridged version, properly dated, was published in *Works*, 26:75–76.

From S[arah] C[olston]<sup>1</sup>

Bristol  
April 24, 1742

Reverend Sir,

I rejoice at this opportunity of writing unto you. At first, indeed, I found an unwillingness unto it. But I prayed unto the Lord that he should show me if it was right I should. I find my soul does rejoice in God my Saviour. I feel a peace which passes all understanding, and which surmounts all doubts and fears. I have power over all sin. For when I feel it stir in my heart, I directly look up unto the Lord Jesus, and he takes it from me. Yet the enemy tells me that I am in a delusion, because I do not reason that therefore I resist the Spirit. And when he would convince me, I will not permit him. But I commend my cause to Jesus, and he shows me it is my business to live unto him from hour to hour, and from moment to moment. Glory be to my Saviour, for he is nothing but love. I could praise him till I could speak no longer. I feel burning desires, and hungerings, and thirstings which are stronger than death. I look for the Lord Jesus coming into my heart to seal me his abode, and make me one spirit with himself. I have a sure hope that he will accomplish his work. I hear his voice, and feel his love. I cannot tell what Jesus does for me, for it takes away my strength. I think I shall not be long in this world. I find my outward man decays more and more. I could rejoice greatly to meet death this hour. Come Lord Jesus! But he knows best. My time is in his hand, and I know he will finish the work of holiness in my poor heart. Now, even now I feel my heart in great peace.

Dear sir, pray for me that I may have no will but that of God, and that I may be faithful to death. O that I may to the utmost improve the talents God has bestowed on such an unworthy sinner as I am. What matter of praise it is that I am alive to hear the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ! What shall I render unto him for all his benefits. The name of Jesus is more to my soul than all the world. Every moment he gives me fresh tokens of his love. 'He creates all things new.'<sup>2</sup> Every moment opens new scenes of spiritual pleasure. What shall I do to love Jesus? I long to love him with my *whole* heart. O Lord give me strength to 'rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks'.<sup>3</sup>

I hope I shall never forget to offer my weak prayers for you. May the Lord Jesus bless you, and be with you, and lead you by his Holy Spirit into *all* truth. May he fill your heart with his love this hour, and to all eternity. So prays, from her *heart*,

Your daughter, *and unworthy child in the gospel of Christ*,

S. C.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 137–38.

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<sup>1</sup>This is almost certainly Sarah ('Sally') Colston (1716–67). CW had ministered to her brother, Joseph Colston (or Coulston, 1713–81) in Bristol on Sept. 2, 1739 (see CW, MS Journal), and Sarah was active in the society in Bristol in 1745 (see her letter to JW dated June 6, 1745 below).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Rev. 21:5.

<sup>3</sup>1Thess. 5:16–18.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]

[April 29, 1742]

Methinks I rejoice at Mr. [John] Bray[’s] observation. His experience of our Lord so long before he knew the Moravians makes me think he is more to be depended upon than any of them. I will not answer, but his sentiments so exactly agreeing with mine may make me partial to him. For sure I am, whether he is sincere or not, it will be so.

Nothing less do I look for from you than making our sinner, apostate Church the footstool of Christ. For this end was you born, for this end came you and your brother into the world. Attempt nothing less than all mankind. The work is nothing for our Lord, or he will make it as little for his instrument. All will fall before you. I know it, I am sure of it. You are the only one, with your brother, that has ever showed the riches of the gospel, and God will open more and more to you. Make no abatement of his promises. Oh, they are beyond conception great! I will grasp at them all while I have life, in the largest and most extensive sense as to both outward and inward holiness. Let us rest not in any thing where unto we have attained. We are but just entered upon infinitude.

I approve very much of your *didache* to the bishops and clergy,<sup>1</sup> that hint I meant (of the address) should lead you to this resolution. Enclosed I send you David Taylor’s letter by which you will find he will have no one to rule over him. And I think Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham has a hand in it, for he was there at Sheffield while John Taylor was there, when this was brought to a resolution. For should a school of mine be there, the fear seems of a way being opened for you or your brother coming among them. But our Lord will take care of this for us. John Taylor is now going to fix at Rathby, and I think he shall have a little shop to sell all your books and other things which with a school will do well. And I shall contrive it so that it shall be a place of reception for you or your brother, that should God bless it, a little church might be raised there.

Your prayers for one near me here would make me wait in joy for the time coming when they should be answered. I feel no fear [that] you should ever depart from the simplicity of the gospel. The work God has set you to do will secure you. He will make you an able minister. But all evil do I expect from myself. I am amazed at the Lord’s patience with me, ask what you will for me and it shall be given you of the Lord. It is yours and your brother’s prayers that hold me up. My little saint [Fanny Cowper] has the promise that as the outward man decayeth she *is* renewed. Day by day she is a blessed soul, for she hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness and she will be filled. I shall be very particular in the account of her departure. I think if you approve it I shall take no farther notice of David Taylor’s proceedings, or give encouragement to him. But this you shall direct me in, for whatever you shall think best will soon be made my choice. I love John Taylor. He is a sweet and humble spirit.

May our dear Lord bless, preserve, and protect you and lead you into all truth. The Lord gives me to pray for you continually and bless you. He surely will in time and in eternity. My heart has been revived by a letter from Mrs. Bethel,<sup>2</sup> who has received forgiveness and is all joy. Mr. Caladin<sup>3</sup> stands firm, and is bringing his brother and wife into the narrow [way] again. I am going, when the Lord releases my little saint, to take some of the most extreme poor that are simple of heart under my care and have them come twice a week. Pray the Lord that he may bless this. May I explain the Scriptures? Or how will

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<sup>1</sup>She is likely referring to JW’s *The Character of a Methodist*, published in Mar. 1742; see *Works*, 9:32–46.

<sup>2</sup>Bridget Bethel (b. 1692), daughter of William and Elizabeth Bethel of Swinton, Yorkshire, resided in Bath with her sister Lady Mary (Bethel) Cocks. The sisters were early converts of Whitefield and friends of Lady Huntingdon.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Caladin, of Hemington; see JW, *Journal*, June 10, 1741, *Works*, 19:198.



you direct me? When they are fit I shall put them in band. May I venture upon such an office? Speak plainly; I feel no will but I am a barren fig tree.

My faithful friend, farewell.

Query, would it not be worth considering if the circumstances of Mr. Nash and that following it of the ladies had not be better omitted in the journal?<sup>4</sup>

*Address:* 'For / The Rev'd Mr John / Wesley at the Foundry / near uper Moorfields / London'.

*Postmark:* '3/MR'. *Frank:* 'Free / Huntingdon'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'L H. Apr. 29, 1742 / a[nswere]d May 9'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 2.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>See JW's *Journal* account of his interaction with Richard ('Beau') Nash and some society ladies in Bath on June 5, 1739 (*Works*, 19:63–65). It is not clear whether there was originally more to this account, which JW abridged in light of Lady Huntingdon's suggestion.

<sup>5</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:76; cf. *AM* (1799): 99–100, dated 'Sept. 29, 1742', and mingled with passages from another letter.

From Susannah Designe

[Bristol]  
May 4, 1742

Reverend Sir,

When you left Bristol I had a great sight of the promised land, and surely I did taste of the fruit thereof. But now it seems at a great distance. Yet I cannot doubt but my Lord will appear the second time, without sin unto salvation, and it may be very suddenly. O that I may be found watching! Sometimes I find my soul so poor and heavy, so dull and naked of spiritual comfort, that I have nothing left but a sense of pardoning love. Yet at such times I have found a greater resignation to the will of God than at some others.

I earnestly long to do the will of my heavenly Father. None but the searcher of hearts knows how my soul thirsts to *love* and *obey* him. My spirit groans to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. I want to be nearer to Christ and to become one spirit with him, in a fuller sense of the word than I have yet attained.

Since the beginning of last week I have had, almost continually, a sinking and depression in my spirit, attended with an inward trembling, which so affects my body as if my life was departing from me. O that it might be a symptom of the old man's death. O that Christ might be *fully* formed in me. This close exercise of mind brings such a lowness of spirit, and inward mourning, that my heart seems to bleed with contrition and I could be content to weep my life away at the feet of Jesus. In the midst of this I find settled peace and solid comfort.

In this state I do not find I can ask or desire joy or grief, light or darkness, but to be kept from offending God and empowered to use as I ought the talents he gives me, that they may answer the ends of his glory, my advantage, and his people's good. I never see the power of God more visibly than when it is perfected in my weakness, in doing the least good to any other. For many times I cannot help asking pardon of my Lord for my poor, yea sinful manner of performing my duty in any respect, and especially in admonishing and reproofing others. And yet the Lord doth frequently bless to others those labours I have need to repent of myself. At the present I find such self-abasement as makes me hateful to myself when others speak well of me.

I find I can now declare my mind unto you with great freedom, as frequently I can in writing unto others. And though I speak from the overflowing love and great abundance of my heart, yet I am afraid lest this should be a means of their thinking of me above what I really am. I am so full of weaknesses and infirmities that I fear lest my conversation should rather be a stumbling-block than an agreeable example. I have often reflected upon myself for my being less watchful at some other times than when in your presence. If I always saw myself as seen by my Maker, I should not be liable to these changes. I could at this time tell you the inmost secrets of my heart. And I could be willing that there were a window opened in my breast, that all the children of God might see everything which passes there. It is not so easy a matter to discover the state of another by the strictest personal examination as by a daily observation of their behaviour in their respective callings, how they spend their time in private, and whether they buy up every opportunity of doing good. If our soul is but yet *partly* renewed in the *image* of God, there is not any time for trifling. And if it is wholly renewed, there is not any inclination unto it, but an insatiate desire of doing everything for God. They say, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.'<sup>1</sup> O that none of us who have received grace may ever be guilty of wasting our Lord's goods, or neglecting the improvement of the talents we have delivered unto us. But, O Lord, grant that we may be burning and shining lights, and adorn thy gospel in all things. O that I may be a pearl in your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

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<sup>1</sup>John 5:17.

I am

Your unworthy friend in Christ,

S. D.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 113–15.

From John Nelson<sup>1</sup>

[Birstall]  
c. May 12, 1742

[Nelson comments that in May 1742 one of his hearers was going to London, and said, 'I should be glad to see Mr. John Wesley, whom you call your father in the gospel.' Nelson replied, 'If you will carry a few lines for me to him, you may see him and hear him too.' So he did, wherein]

I desired Mr. Wesley to write to me, as he was my father in the gospel, to give me some instructions how to proceed in the work that God had begun to do by such an unpolished tool as me.

[When Nelson's hearer got to London he wrote to me that he had seen Mr. Wesley, and given him the letter; who read it, and asked him some questions about me, and said, 'Do you write by this night's post, and tell him I shall be at his house on Tuesday next, if God permit.']

*Source:* published transcription; John Nelson, *An Extract of John Nelson's Journal* (Bristol, Farley, 1767), 57.

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<sup>1</sup>John Nelson (1707–74), a stonemason from Birstall, heard JW preach while working on buildings in Moorfields, London in 1739, and was converted. On returning home he became an evangelist in the area around Birstall. In 1742 Wesley enrolled him as a regular travelling preacher and he remained under appointment until his death.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]  
c. May 14, 1742

My [[dear friend]], the very thoughts of seeing you here has filled us with great joy. Poor dear Miss ['Fanny'] Cowper is still living, and it is very remarkable, in the beginning of her illness she said she should be glad to see one of you just before she died. Her eyes with mine overflow with the loving-kindness of the Lord, who has even a regard to the desires of our hearts. . . . I beg you will set out as soon as may be after receiving this, as every day she has lived this last fortnight seems a fresh miracle, wrought for some purpose not yet known.

[She then tells me she has ordered a horse for John Taylor to come down with me.]

*Source:* manuscript transcription (quoted in JW letter to CW, May 17, 1742; MARC, DDWes 3/5).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:77.

From the Rev. Henry Piers

Bexley  
May 24, 1742

My Dearest Brother and Friend,

I am at a loss to say whether I am more filled with joy or grief at the preaching of my visitation sermon at Sevenoaks.<sup>1</sup> To see Satan rage and storm at the shaking of his kingdom is a great cause of exultation and triumph in the grace and power that Christ gives to men, and a glorious presage of that judgment which his former vassal shall exert over him when we shall in this life tread Satan under our feet, and more gloriously triumph over him when united in one body with Christ his *bruiser*, when we shall judge the world, when we shall judge angels.

But alas, how grievous is it to consider the universal extent of the kingdom of darkness, the general *unexcepted* ignorance, corruption, and hellishness that is equally in the minds of all. For I have often observed the *same* judgment of spiritual things, the *same* notions of the gospel, in those that have attained the summit of human learning and the most *illiterate* mechanic. That is equally, I say, in the minds of all who are not enlightened by him who is the light of the world. Those *lost*, by whom the gospel is heard, in whom the God of the world hath blinded the minds of them, that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

I found the beginning of my discourse listened to gravely, but the things that I took for granted seemed matter of novelty to most of them. The division was received with shrewd looks, hems, indignant smiles, and laughter. As the tragical scene arose, that is, as the doctrines of their Church were laid before them, the dislike increased in loud whispers, changes of countenance and posture, and other symptoms of uneasiness (some having been heard to say, 'The man is mad, crazy, a fool'). Till coming in my third head to inquire whether these doctrines were preached, whether we had such tempers and led such lives, the Ordinary could bear no longer; beckons to the apparitor to open his pew door, and to the minister of the church, who sat in the desk under me, to bid me stop—who, putting up his hand to the pulpit cushion, said something so *cowardly* that I could not hear. After this the Ordinary (or Chancellor) desires me to dismiss the people with the blessing, 'for there was enough'. I took no notice, but went on with my discourse. Away he sweeps his clergy (except one or two who had the face to hold out to the end), and collects their procurations, while I finished my discourse to an attentive lay-audience.

This brought to my mind the very different behaviour of the simple people towards our Lord and that of the learned scribes and Pharisees. 'Is not this the Son of David' said they; while the Pharisees said 'This fellow doeth cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils.'<sup>2</sup> After I had done I went into the Chancellor's court (a place within sight and hearing of the pulpit) to show them that I was not ashamed of the gospel, the power of God to salvation. But having nothing to do there, I (who in the morning was honoured with his right worshipful coach) went on foot to my inn, attended by about twenty of my friends who came from Bexley. After he had ended his court he came to his inn, and sent for me very civilly. When I came I was surprised to find him as complaisant as in the morning. He makes me a compliment of my preaching (a favour always granted to the preacher), and tells me he liked my sermon 'exceeding well', but that it was 'too long', and then 'entering upon a third head I found inconsistent with my business'. Sir, said I, you seem not to know that the sermon, together with the prayers of the Church, is the most important part of the business of the day. As to the objected length of my discourse, it is altogether a pretence. For I was but about fifty minutes in all, and you interrupted me when I had not preached above thirty-five. Sir, I must tell you, you have done what you cannot justify. I found he had nothing to say, and do believe that he heartily wishes he had not done what he did, for fear the sermon

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<sup>1</sup>This sermon was preached before the clergy of the Shoreham deanery on May 21, 1742. JW helped Piers prepare it for publication as *A Sermon Preached by the Reverend Henry Piers* (London: Strahan, 1742).

<sup>2</sup>See Matt. 12:23–24.

should appear in print. For (as he recollects) the doctrines being all of the Church of England, he thinks it may make a bad figure in the eyes of the world that the Ordinary of an ecclesiastical court, together with his clergy, cannot bear the doctrines of their own Church, which they have so often subscribed.

Indeed, I believe it to be an unprecedented thing. Nay, it is a breach of the law of the land, and that by a judge in the execution of his office. Not to say that here are none of the *foolish* objections to be pleaded in excuse, of 'field preaching', or 'breaking in upon the established regulations of parishes'. Here, it is plain, nothing can give offence but the gospel of Christ, the *very scriptural* doctrine of our Church.

As to the printing of it, I want to be advised by you. Here is ample matter for a preface: the devil (like the fallen reason in man), though subtle he is, often overshoots himself. I wrote to my man, Pierre Stirrup, who is now in Lancashire, together with two or three well-disposed young men in his neighbourhood, to give you the meeting at Wakefield. If they come to you, I know you will receive them to instruction and edification. I am acquainted with a clothier's wife at Wakefield or Halifax whose name is Farrar. If you will give my service to her it may be a means of bringing you acquainted in the family, and, I hope, of bringing salvation to the house. You may tell her that I was acquainted with her when a curate of Winwick.

My dear brother, I am forever indebted to you and dear Charles [Wesley] for having brought me acquainted with our Lord. May he ever knit our hearts to himself above all things, and to one another in his love.

Your affectionate though unworthy brother,

Hen. Piers

No mailing details.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'May 24, 1742 / NB'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/8.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>An abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:78–79.

From the Rev. John Whitelamb<sup>1</sup>

[Wroot]  
June 11, 1742

Dear Brother,

I saw you at Epworth<sup>2</sup> on Tuesday evening. Fain would I have spoken to you, but that I am quite at a loss how to address or behave. Your way of thinking is so extraordinary that your presence creates an awe, as if you were an inhabitant of another world.

God grant you and your followers may always have entire liberty of conscience. Will not you allow others the same? Indeed, I cannot think as you do any more than I can help honouring and loving you.

Dear sir, will you credit me? I retain the highest veneration and affection for you. The sight of you moves me strangely. My heart overflows with gratitude. I feel, in a higher degree, all that tenderness and yearning of the bowels with which I am affected towards every branch of Mr. [Samuel] Wesley's family. I cannot refrain from tears when I reflect, this is the man who at Oxford was more than a father to me. This is he who I have there heard expound, or dispute publicly, or preach at St. Mary's, with such applause. And oh that I should ever add, whom I have lately heard preach at Epworth (on my father's tombstone)!

I am quite forgot. None of the family ever honours me with a line! Have I been ungrateful? I appeal to sister Patty.<sup>3</sup> I appeal to Mr. Ellison,<sup>4</sup> whether I have or not. I have been passionate, fickle, a fool, but I hope I shall never be *ungrateful*.

Dear sir, is it in my power to serve or oblige you any way? Glad I should be that you would make use of me. God open all our eyes, and lead us into truth, whatever it be.

John Whitelamb

*Source:* published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 183–84.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Whitelamb, who had married JW's sister Mary and succeeded Samuel Wesley Sr. at Wroot, had continued to serve that parish after his wife's unfortunate death in childbirth in 1734.

<sup>2</sup>JW was preaching in the Epworth area June 5–13; see *Journal*.

<sup>3</sup>Martha (Wesley) Hall.

<sup>4</sup>Richard Ellison, husband of JW's sister Susanna Jr.

<sup>5</sup>Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:80.



From J. A.

London  
July 5, 1742

Reverend Sir,

The following lines are the result of great joy which I almost continually feel in my heart. The Lord is now reviving and carrying on his work in my soul. I know that my Redeemer liveth. I feel that I have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins. His Spirit is continually bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. I have not any doubts or fears respecting my state. I feel a continual hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that I might partake more and more of the divine nature, of the power and fullness and presence of God. God's presence on earth is heaven begun; it is sweet *indeed* to my soul, as marrow and fatness, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. O that I might always enjoy the light of his countenance! O that my soul might always be inflamed with divine love! I do always love him in some measure, but I wish to love him more abundantly. I would have my soul changed into the nature of love. I want to be like the angels above. My continual prayer is that I may not commit sin, but that the Lord would accomplish in me his will, by restoring me 'unto the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ',<sup>1</sup> *by creating me after himself; and sanctifying me wholly in body, soul, and spirit.*<sup>2</sup>

At intervals I find some hidings, some withdrawing of God's presence from me. But oh what an aching void do I then feel in my soul! I am then restless, and importunate in my desires and endeavours after God till he return. At such times I feel as if it was a worm gnawing my soul, and nothing in the universe can give me any ease or satisfaction. The effect this has upon me is I see the emptiness of the whole creation, without the Creator. I feel myself to be nothing but a heap of vanity and confusion. I find no remedy but crying, 'God be merciful unto me, and help me a poor sinner.'<sup>3</sup>

I desire to give glory to the grace of God. I now feel much power over outward and inward sin, far greater power than I have had for some years, *even* from the time I was in my first love. 'O my Lord and my God, do thou continue to bestow on me thy poor helpless creature, this power continually; *yea*, do thou augment and increase it day by day.'

I am deeply convinced of the necessity of a *pure heart*, a *single eye*, and a new creation. *Yea* rather I am convinced of the impossibility of my soul being happy without it. For indeed I can relish no other happiness but what consists in the love of God, and in being like unto him, and in acting conformably to his will. None of the trifling vanities or little perishing things of this world can satisfy the great desires of my immortal spirit. The Lord has given me a foretaste of heavenly delight, in contemplating the amiable perfections of the divine nature, and feeling my soul exhilarated by his loving presence, which has kindled such a flaming desire in my spirit for God, as can never be satisfied but with *all his fullness*. There is something in me continually craving. There seems to be an emptiness in me, a lack of something essential to my soul's happiness—which lack, I well know, is the *perfect stature of a man in Christ*. It is that *alone* can make me happy. The want of which is the cause of these pantings, these desires, these achings and strong appetites, which do perpetually put me upon crying unto the Lord that he would transfer his image to my soul. That he would destroy all my sin, both outward and inward, both original and actual. That he would purify my heart, by restoring me unto *perfect* righteousness of the divine nature, by lifting up the light of his countenance upon me so that I may continually fit under the droppings of his sanctuary, and his shadow with great delight.

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<sup>1</sup>Eph. 4:13.

<sup>2</sup>See 1 Thess. 5:23.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Luke 8:13.

These are the desires the Lord has given me, and sure I am he will fulfill the desire of my soul according to his promise. 'He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.'<sup>4</sup> I have already obtained the salvation which some *who are of little minds* speak of. I am saved from guilt, from fear that giveth great torment, and from the dominion of sin. I do not commit sin in St. John's sense. I am *almost* continually looking unto Jesus. I *almost* pray without ceasing, and am thankful for the glorious manifestations of the Lord. I rejoice *frequently*. But will this satisfy the mighty desires of my soul? No, it cannot, it will not, it does not. I am not yet swallowed up in God. I am not yet without intermission in a flame of love. This, *this* is, dear sir, the thing I aim at. Help me by your prayers. I very much long to see you at my house. It is the very great love I have unto you, and the expectation I have of being profited by you has made me so bold.

From yours in Christ,

J. A.

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 134–37.

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<sup>4</sup>Heb. 10:37.

From the Rev. Westley Hall<sup>1</sup>

[Sarum]  
July 17, 1742

Dear Brother,

I think I cannot present put you upon anything that may serve to strengthen our hands more than making a plain, perfect, and public declaration of *what* that Church of England is wherewith you do agree, and *what* is your agreement with the same. For my part I know of only one foundation of the church of Christ, and this is what I have endeavoured to lay here according to that scripture, 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.'<sup>2</sup> You may easily infer that this way of proceeding will not soon enlarge our sp[ecia]l building, and indeed I have found more and more the necessity of not making haste in this matter.

As to the outward order and economy of our little family, we meet on Thursday evening to confer of the proficiency of such as are upon trial, to censure or exclude any that shall break the bonds of unity among us, to propose such as desire to come upon trial, and to admit as many as have been approved of all the leaders (of their sex) into the society. On Sunday morning all the leaders meet to confer, first of their own state, and next of their several bands; and then two or more of each sex confer separately with such as are admitted on trial, till all agree in declaring their particular approbation of each of them. Every Sunday evening is appointed for thanksgiving in general, and afterward some join in a love-feast. Every morning at five only such as are of the society, or upon trial, meet for prayer and thanksgiving, general and particular. At noon we are engaged to intercede for each other, and all the day have regard to the watchword (e.g. 'Watch and pray, ...'<sup>3</sup>), which is given out every morning and made the subject of inquiry and conversation when any of the society meet together. Several of the Sabbatarians, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, etc., have openly renounced the doctrine of reprobation which they were bred up in, and some communicate with us at the cathedral every Sunday, whilst others are waiting for baptism (by immersion), and others repelled from the communion by their party professors for thus appearing to condemn their party spirit.

I have been engaged to preach at many of the villages round about, and am called to more and more; and several persons come to hear for eight or ten miles round, some of whom afterward do constantly attend at Sarum. I have had leave to preach in a very large church about five miles off, which perhaps may be continued; and at a little one somewhat nearer, where after prayers we were obliged to go out into the churchyard because of the press.

I have many things to say to you, but I have not time or room to add more now, but I am

Your affectionate brother,

W. H.

Our bishop and clergy seem to look toward them with surprise at the increasing number of communicants, and you may suppose have not omitted to declaim against the sect which is everywhere spoken against.

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<sup>1</sup>JW's brother-in-law was apparently still serving as curate at the parish church of Fisherton, near Salisbury, but also maintaining a society which borrowed features from Methodism and Moravianism.

<sup>2</sup>1 John 5:1.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 26:41 and parallels.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr Charles Westley<sup>4</sup> / at The Foundry Near / Upper Moorfields / London'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'b. Hall, Jul 20, 1742 / ad Aug. 6'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/611.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Although addressed to CW, by the time the courier reached London with the letter CW had changed places with JW at Bristol, so that JW dealt with it.

<sup>5</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:80–81.

From John Haime<sup>1</sup>

July 27, 1742

Dear and Worthy Sir,

I very heartily embrace this opportunity of writing my mind unto you, to inform you what the Lord has been doing for and in my soul. Since I was with you in Branford, we began our march, and such-a-one I never had before. When I came to my quarters the first night, I had not any place of secrecy for prayer. But I made a closet of the necessary place, and Christ made a paradise of it unto me. Here I met my divine Master. He is no respecter of *places*, more than *persons*. I could have been contented to have made that place which was my closet, and my paradise, my bed also, for the inexpressible sweetness I felt in the presence and love of my Redeemer.

The next night when I came to my quarters I was, if possible, many times more happy than before. O the sweet presence of Christ which I there found! I cannot forbear to speak of it, and yet an angelic tongue cannot describe it. What wondrous work is this he has done in my poor heart! I am as if I was filled with the love of God, and swallowed up with the thoughts of God, and his love towards me! When I think of his having fixed his love on such a vile unworthy creature as me, who by nature was as black as hell, I am melted into tears. O the love of Christ to poor sinners! He is fairer than the sons of men. Yea, he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I was going on in the broad way to destruction, but he prevented me by the blessings of his goodness. If he had not had compassion on me, where should I have landed? Surely I must have landed in hell. O my dear Lord, how shall I mourn for my sins? How shall I praise thee for the pardon of them! Consider, oh my soul, the countless multitudes of benefits thy God has bestowed upon thee, and be thou confounded and ashamed of thy ingratitude.

I entreat almighty God to give me help, that I may press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. For I am not to rest in any thing, or in any measure of grace attained on this side of heaven, but still be seeking after farther discoveries of Christ, until I enter within the vale where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary enjoy an everlasting rest. O for perfect freedom from sin! *Yet* it cleaves unto me in all my duties. I cannot get rid of it, however I shall one day be free.

I had only one in the whole troop who would converse and pray with me, and he is gone after the other. The dog is returned to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire.<sup>2</sup> So I am left alone among a company of *bears* and *lions*. But God is all-sufficient. He adds proportionate strength to my faith, for which I thank his dear name. I hope, dear sir, you will excuse me in writing unto you, and take the trouble to read this, for I had nobody to break my mind to. I would have got somebody to have wrote for me, to have done it better, but they would have thought me *mad* for writing so much nonsense. If you would be so kind as send me two or three lines, they would be sweet as *honey* to me. So no more at present from

Your loving brother and humble servant,

J. H.

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 126–28.

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<sup>1</sup>John Haime (1710–84), of Shaftesbury, heard CW preach in 1742, while serving as a soldier. He soon organized a religious society for his fellow soldiers. Upon his discharge from the army in 1747 he served as a travelling preacher for two decades.

<sup>2</sup>See 2 Pet. 2:2.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]

August 4, 1742

The Lord, I believe removed from you one you much loved.<sup>1</sup> But I have the pleasure to believe it was because he loved her better; that he has taken her from you, that he might deliver her from the evil to come.

Enclosed I send you your brother's elegy upon Mr. Jones.<sup>2</sup> However partial I may be to his performances of this kind, it would never prevent my considering well the end proposed by any such undertaking. I believe you will agree with me in thinking this will not be of any good in the printing it—and what does not tend to that, really and substantially, the fewer of those sort of things appear[ing] out in the world from those devoted to our Lord's interest, the better. Many, I think, under the character of an elegy would not buy this (I mean of the better sort) and poetry to the others is but ill-understood. And I think no distinction of rank ought to be regarded, lest too great a deference should be paid to that, and the gentleman considered more than the Christian of which we make our boast. I think to speak my mind plainly is best. Some plain account—unornamented—of what his life and death was under the character of a believer (if any is to appear) would seem to have most weight, in which we might boast justly of God's love to him. I would have as little of all creatures thought on as possible, that God may be all in all.

The enclosed [account<sup>3</sup>] I send you of the poor woman. When you have read [it], you will send to your brother. I conclude you have prevented, at present, his thoughts of an northern journey I hope he will make. Prevail with Mr. [Charles Caspar] Graves to call on his brother.<sup>4</sup> Surely a Christian heart subsists not without love and obedience to those of our own house in the flesh. The Lord forever direct and lead you into all truth, keep and preserve you, close to himself that you as the good shepherd, after you have converted many, may have a blessed portion high above them all in that glorious mansion, that where our Lord is there you may be also.

*Address:* 'For / The Rev'd Mr Wesley / at the Foundery / near uper Moorfields / London'.

*Postmark:* '7/AV'. *Frank:* 'Free Huntingdon'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, L. Hu. Aug. 4. 1742 / a[nswere]d 14'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 2.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>JW's mother, Susanna (Annesley) Wesley, died on July 23, 1742.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Jones of Fonmon Castle, a recent strong supporter and friend of the Wesley brothers had died unexpectedly on June 8, 1742. CW channeled his grief into an extended elegy that was both a tribute and biography in verse. But CW also wove into the elegy the doctrinal disputes with the Calvinistic Methodists (see lines 432ff). It is likely this fact, in addition to the ornate style, which is behind Lady Huntingdon's hope that it would not be published. But CW was not deterred, issuing (likely in August) *Elegy on the Death of Robert Jones, Esq. of Fonmon Castle in Glamorganshire, South Wales* (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1742). JW subsequently included it in the *Moral and Sacred Poems* (1744), 3:210–32.

<sup>3</sup>See next page.

<sup>4</sup>Richard Graves (1715–1804), older brother of Charles, and later author of *The Spiritual Quixote* (London: Dodsley, 1773).

<sup>5</sup>An 'improved' transcription of this letter and the enclosed account was published in *MM* 21 (1798): 531–34.

[Account enclosed in letter – covering last two weeks of July 1742]

For this fortnight [I] worked much on instruction and some short exhortations to the weak have at times been of great use in this point—especially among my work people, who I pass part of every day with. I have found much comfort in this myself, and rarely ever am out of the presence of the Lord. He is as a pillar before me of light and knowledge. More of this understanding I want, to keep his whole law. Yea, I then shall keep it with my *whole* heart. Clouds and darkness are the habitation at times of his fear. But there shall go a consuming fire before him, which shall burn up his enemies,<sup>6</sup> and destroy all them that persecute me, and shall say unto my soul, '*I am thy salvation.*'<sup>7</sup> The Lord often appeareth *out* of Sion, and in great beauty. Surely he hath done a marvellous thing of late! And I find so much done by this act of his love, that I am all love and wonder. The baseness of my heart on Miss ['Fanny'] Cowper's death, that felt impatience at her not having so much light as I expected; and my heart then used to say, 'We have prayed so much. I have so much longed for this triumph of faith in the last moment, that we shall surely have it in her.' Not considering we should not be heard for our much speaking, or that there was not anything in man that could incline him [God], but only for his holy name's sake. The devil thrust sore at me, but I looked to my Lord, and though in the dark, he bade me tarry his leisure.<sup>8</sup>

After Miss Anne Cowper was gone, I walked a little way from this house to the waterside, where there are some houses for the poor, in number about six, two of which are ale houses and are the harbour of the devils themselves. I called in at one of the other houses to see a poor woman that I used to think meant well, in order to stir her a little up. After talking for some time, she told me she had been lately with one of her neighbours. She had some hope before she died she should know whether she should be happy. They would both know my opinion of it, and I answered them 'As she believed, so would it be.' I told them I would come down and read to them. They seemed pleased, but particularly her whom I went to see. When I went, she took eagerly after me and pressed me in an uncommon manner to come again.

A few days after, her daughter came up to tell me her mother was extreme ill, to send her something for the colic. I told her, so old as she was, I would not give her anything till I had seen her, and would come down to her. And as soon as I was well able, I took a friend and went. I found her in great bodily sufferings, as they seemed to me. But upon feeling her pulse, I could not find that so much as ruffled. But her sweats were the most violent I had ever seen. Her agony being so great she could not contain [it], and said, 'O this [is] nothing. I possibly may die, and what will become of my soul! O pray for me! O mercy! Mercy!' Her trouble and humble misery were such [that they] brought tears from all our eyes. I beheld her with my heart filled with love and pity, and said, 'Now, where are all your good works? What is become of all your honest labour for sixty years? And what are [you] a poor perishing sinner at last?' 'O', she cried, 'it will not do. I am too bad to be saved.' Her tears and expressions of her sufferings were more than can be imagined. I then told her, 'Well now you are quite lost. You will find him that came to seek and to save just such as you are now. My life upon it, he will soon come.' 'What!' she cried, 'to such a sinner as I am!' 'Yes, it was only for such he died.'

These extreme agonies had so affected her body that we thought it had raised a fever, yet by her pulse we could not discover it. She lay thus all night. I went the next day and found her the same. No medicine was of any use, though I tried many. Her cry was still the same. I told her the next day I would come again and bring our chaplain to give her the communion. She seemed pleased and said she should die. I told her joy and peace would be her portion first. But she would not be comforted. We went the next day and found her the same. We received the communion with her. I found God's Spirit to be present with her from my own, and with joy I then said as soon as it was over, 'O what a loving Saviour have you!' Her tears were still overflowing her cheeks, with all the marks of misery as before. And this at

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<sup>6</sup>See Ps. 97:3.

<sup>7</sup>Ps. 35:3.

<sup>8</sup>See Ps. 27:16.

above seventy years old might affect a heart of stone, that had not my hope for her. About six at night they brought me word she was seized with a cold shivering fit, and was in cold sweats as in the agonies of death, and had sent to take her leave of all her children. This was her last plunge into the deep. Her soul and body was in hell. Four men [were] not sufficient to hold her in her bed, so great was Satan's power over her.

After these hours of this suffering the heavenly child was born. The poor people were surprised on a sudden to find her lying quite still. And thus she continued twelve hours, feeding on the fatted calf. She told them she had not slept, but had been partaking all night of the joys of heaven. When I came at the noon to see her, she said, 'O my Lady, my dear Lady, what great things the Lord hath done for me! I have no fear or doubt. He has given me that peace that the world can neither give or take from me.' Her whole looks were altered. She lay with such sweetness and complacency in her looks that my soul delighted to behold her. 'You have saved my soul. You know this blessedness I have laying this night, comforted by such flashes of the divine love that it is not to be expressed. O what a thing it is to have the heart flaming up always to the Lord.' She bore me much on her heart and this prayer that God would give me many days, for the sake of many. I would have prevented her doing this by saying the Lord's time is best. But she continued, remarking anew upon my first attendance of her in her sickness. She seemed exceeding grateful for all endeavours for her bodily ease. But upon my dressing her blisters last, she opened not her mouth to thank me for this end any longer. A very poor man (her son), extreme drunken, with all her other children, God has smote to the ground. She has since that hour felt neither pains of body or mind, but exhorteth all that comes in her way. She has forgot all the knowledge and experience of seventy years, and is become a little child. I have sent many to see her. And one of her own daughters is seeking, in the bitterness of her heart, *that* Lord who hath so comforted her mother.

The first time I saw her after this change in her, many poor and ignorant people, and those of the most corrupt sort, were by her. I turned to them and said, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish. This is the work of God, that you will not believe, though a man declare it unto you to the effect of these words.' I talked long to them—some had ears, and others had none. She possesses her soul in patience, but is starved with hunger. She finds she cannot live without the company of those who are sharers with her in like precious faith with herself. And cannot rise, she says, if she does not come up to me (even thus weak and old) every day.

[July] 29, Thursday. Spend much of my time every day in bringing on souls very earnest in search of our Lord. I have much difficulty in keeping them from clinging to me—such wondrous love they bear me (and this I know must be for my Lord's sake, for in *me* dwelleth no good thing).



From E. H.

[London]  
August 23, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I desire to praise the Lord. I find he is still with me, and I trust he will continue with me in all my temptations. When the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him. When troubles are at hand, I go and fall down before him and humbly ask his help, and he comforts me with his love and makes a way for my escape, so that I am able to bear them. I am happy beyond all expression when I feel and know that Jesus loves me, *even me*, a poor, weak, sinful creature. I am frequently unfaithful, and at every turn grieving the Holy Spirit, and yet his love is not taken from me, but very great toward me. I pray I never may be left to my own deceitful heart, for then I shall run into all manner of wickedness, but may I be 'kept by thy power, O Lord, through faith unto full salvation'.<sup>1</sup>

Dear sir, the time I believe is hastening on when I shall 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning me'.<sup>2</sup> The hope of this is a blessing unto me. It lifts my fainting spirits up, and quickens every power of my mind. Last Sunday I was at St. Paul's [church], I felt the love of God so shed abroad in my heart as I cannot express, and such sweetness and joy in my soul as my tongue can never explain. *Indeed his name was as ointment poured forth.*<sup>3</sup> And this I could truly say.

Thy name a sweeter odour cast,  
Than Lebanon with cedars grac'd.<sup>4</sup>

I had such glorious thoughts and apprehensions of God as I never had in all my life before. And surely I had a taste of that *perfect love* of God with which I hope to be filled to all eternity. O how I long for the meek and lowly mind which is also in Christ! Then, *only* then, shall I find rest to my soul.

I have many trials and temptations, and sometimes I am afraid I shall fall by them. 'Without are fightings and within are fears.'<sup>5</sup> But I pray to be delivered from the plague of my own heart, which is worse than anything else to me, and I find help. I beg you would also pray for me that I may not faint in the end, but that I may run with steady patience the race set before me, always looking unto Jesus who has been the author until he become the finisher of my faith.<sup>6</sup>

My master's behaviour is often a very great burden and trial to me. Yet *even* in this, when I look to Jesus, I am a conqueror. One or other of the *still brethren* are often with him, and I think he seems to incline to their way very much. He says there is much sweetness and love among them. When I tell him what I think of him, he tells me I cannot see all things clearly yet, and what is sin to me may not be so to him. I think by this rule one might have an excuse for the breach of any commandment. That which is sinful in itself, is sinful to everyone who does it. But I leave them 'to their own master to stand or fall';<sup>7</sup> although I know by experience, to be in their company is hurtful to *me*.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. 1 Pet. 1:5.

<sup>2</sup>1 Thess. 5:16–18.

<sup>3</sup>See Song of Sol. 1:3.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. George Sandys, *A Paraphrase upon the Song of Solomon* (1641), Canticle 4, lines 41–42; 'Thy robes a sweeter odour cast, / Than Lebanon with cedars grac't.'

<sup>5</sup>2 Cor. 7:5.

<sup>6</sup>See Heb. 12:1.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Rom. 14:4.

I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and simply to love and follow him whithersoever he goes, through fire and water. And all trials he may permit to come upon me till he brings me into the wealthy place. I trust he will give me power to deny myself, and take up my cross daily. I have yet many foolish, and hurtful desires; but the *strongest* is that of following Jesus. And I say of the other, 'These shall he destroy by the Spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his appearing.'<sup>8</sup> I am less than the least of all my Father's children, yet I trust I shall be a jewel in the Lord's cabinet—and *your* crown of rejoicing—in that day which is approaching. I should be glad of a few lines from you, if it was the Lord's will; if not, his will be done. May the Lord direct and bless you in all *you do* and *say*, and fill you with the blessing of the gospel of peace. I am

Your unworthy sister, etc.

E. H.

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 115–18.

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<sup>8</sup>Cf. 2 Thess. 2:8.

Thomas Christie to Robert Williams<sup>1</sup>

*A Letter from Thomas Christie, Esq.; Recorder of the Town and County of Savannah, in Georgia (who has been in England these two years past) to Mr. Robert Williams, Merchant in Bristol, in answer to a paper entitled 'A Letter from the Rev. Mr. John Wesley to Captain Robert Williams'.*

September 18, 1742

Sir,

I received a favour of yours, with a paper entitled *A Letter from the Rev. Mr. John Wesley to Capt. Robert Williams, occasioned by an Affidavit made some time since and lately reprinted*. His answer is so indirect and full of evasion that it must appear to all impartial judges rather a justification of what you had charged him with than a confutation.

As to your improvements, they are so well known—nay, to Mr. Wesley himself, and that what you say concerning them is true—that his evasion and his leaving any doubt must reflect entirely upon him only, and plainly show malice and insincerity.

The fact he relates in regard to his indictments and behaviour thereupon stands in a different light than he tells it. I will here give it [to] you as near as I can recollect.

A grand jury of the principal persons within the township of Savannah, in Georgia, being summoned and sworn, consisting of above forty of the principal inhabitants of the northern part of the province, did find several indictments against Mr. Wesley, containing the complaints he mentioned, which they agreed to and delivered to the court as true bills, without making any objection.

Mr. Wesley being called upon by the court, Mr. John Coates and another person offered to enter into a recognizance of his appearance, which they did and were accepted of.

Mr. Wesley did appear at the next court, and desired that his trial might be brought on or his recognizance estreated.<sup>2</sup> But the court (being very tender of him) took further time to advise about it.

But Mr. Wesley, continuing to disturb the public peace, and Mr. William Williamson laying fresh accusation to his charge concerning his wife<sup>3</sup> and his design of leaving the colony privately, a great penalty was publicly affixed against the persons that should carry him away.

Notwithstanding which, in the evening after the publication, he privately withdrew himself, and took with him not only the said [Mr.] Coates (who was one of his bail and largely indebted to the orphans and the public) but several other persons who took the opportunity of going off with him with several sums of money, and greatly indebted, who never after returned or made their creditors any satisfaction. When Wesley and they went off, they gave out that they would oppose with violence any person that should attempt to seize any of them, and immediately after a great reward was affixed publicly for the apprehending of Mr. Wesley.

As to his relation of persons dissenting on the grand jury, and his mentioning such a thing without names and date, [it] must be a story of his own making or ought to be looked upon as such.

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<sup>1</sup>While not directed to JW, this public letter was part of a chain of letters concerning JW's departure from Georgia (see the letter of Thomas Causton to JW, Aug. 10, 1737 for the beginning of this chain). The recent discussion had centered in Bristol, where Captain Robert Williams published an affidavit against JW on Mar. 14, 1740 (see 1735–40 in-letters). JW first published extracts from his manuscript journal to answer Williams's charges, then he published a public letter to Williams dated Aug. 3, 1742 (*Works*, 26:83–85). The present broadsheet was published in support of Williams. JW answered it with a second public letter to Williams dated Oct. 17, 1742 (*Works*, 26:88–90).

<sup>2</sup>I.e., forfeited.

<sup>3</sup>Sophy (Hopkey) Williamson.

There are many other aggravations of Mr. Wesley's behaviour. I will take the first occasion of sending you the report made by the court to the Trustees [of the Georgia Colony] of his endeavouring to make an insurrection in the public court whilst sitting, as likewise Mrs. Mark's affidavit, which will be still further momento to convince the world what a base and Jesuitical man he is.

I am, sir,

Your very humble servant,

Thomas Christie

*Source:* published transcription, circulated as broad sheet in 1742; reprinted in [Anon.], *The Progress of Methodism in Bristol* (Bristol: J. Watts, 1743), 57–60.

From John Okeley<sup>1</sup>

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
September 26, 1742

Dear and Respected Mr. John and Charles Wesley,

I doubt not but you know by this time that the Lord has brought me, with my dear brethren, safe in this land.

I think of you very often, and fetch many a sigh out of the depth of my heart for you to my Saviour. I love you both tenderly, and that sweet fellowship and unity which we once had together comes often in my mind. I do not, neither ever shall, forget, with the utmost gratitude of heart, that you have been instruments of the Lord for my good, and those many benefits I have received at your hands—of which my being now in the Lamb's blood-bought, blood-besprinkled train, is not one of the least.

O my dear brethren, the Lamb's blood is now my chiefest good. From thence comes all my happiness in time and in eternity. Thanks be to him that he has opened my eyes and enabled me to see into the mystery of his cross and sufferings, and to find life, peace, rest, pardon, and salvation to my poor soul. You know what I have been—a poor, reasoning, unhappy man, and could not believe on the Lamb of God, neither had rest night nor day, because I was ignorant of the righteousness of faith, went about to establish my own, and did not submit myself to the righteousness of God. *One thing* has brought me through, it was thy being slaughtered so. I can now believe on him, and know it is eternal life. He has been made an offering for my sins, and made reconciliation to God not only for mine but also for the sins of the whole world. Christ's blood and righteousness, mine finery, is my wedding dress, wherewith before my God I will stand when I approach the heavenly land. Of this I will witness to my poor fellow creatures as long as I live, and bring as many as I can to the knowledge of their crucified Redeemer, which is freedom from condemnation and eternal life. The Lamb will by me stand!

My dear souls, I wish you in every respect well. May my dear Lamb overstream your hearts with his grace, and keep you therein unto eternal life! I should be glad to hear from you. Brother [James] Hutton can convey them to

Your unworthy poor brother in Christ,

J. Okeley

P.S. Salute all I know.

No mailing information.

*Source:* manuscript copy for Okeley's records; London, Moravian Library and Archives.

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<sup>1</sup>John Okeley (1721–92), a native of Bedford, was part of a Moravian congregation there that his mother Ann helped organize. He was part of a major immigration of Moravians to Pennsylvania in 1742, and became an important Moravian itinerant throughout the Philadelphia region. His last name is often spelled 'Okely'.

From M. C.<sup>1</sup>

[London]  
October 2, 1742

Reverend Sir,

God has been pleased to make my journey much shorter than I expected when I left you. When I met my sisters in band on Monday night, they all strove to comfort me under the cross. The day I set out two of them joined with me in prayer, and my soul was much comforted and strengthened. I resigned myself into the hands of God, looking upon myself to be stript of all outward helps. I cast myself upon the never-failing, and great mercies of God.

It was on Friday I set out. I found the Lord very present with me on the way. When I came to the inn on Saturday, I asked the maid whether they got time to go to church there or no. She said they were to have liberty to go to church, but that they seldom had. On Sunday I went to church, but thought it strange to hear a few singing, and all the rest unconcerned in the matter. When I returned back again, one asked me how I liked their church. I answered there were but a few people in it, which was a want. He then began monstrosly to condemn the minister, and swear he could make as good a sermon himself. I told him if he was a preacher he would lead men to *hell*, not to heaven. His mouth was stopped and he looked confounded, while all in the room looked one on another. After the evening service I spent my time in reading, singing, and praying. My heart was in great peace, yet I could but mourn as a dove in my solitude. I seemed as a sheep wandered from the fold, or as a branch cut off from the vine, or a member from the body. My heart is so united unto my sisters in band that when I am from them I think part of myself is wanting. O the blessedness of the communion of saints! I often think of the happiness my brethren and sisters enjoy, and it causes me to grieve that I am absent from them—which sometimes makes me fear that I love the children of God better than their Father, and the means of grace better than the will of God. It is enough that Jesus loves me, and bears me up in his arms. This sight and sense of God's presence made me ashamed of my grieving, and comforted me greatly. My heart was as melted wax, and my soul was much humbled before God.

On Monday I spake freely to two women in the wagon, one of which was a Scotch woman. She told me the people of Scotland loved God, and kept the Sabbath so strictly that one must not carry water through the streets on that day. Indeed she had a good desire to be saved. I exhorted her to pray and not faint, not *even* for wandering thoughts, of which she complained. When I desired the other not to swear, she told me I should quarrel with my husband if I would not let him swear.

When I met my husband, he could not speak for joy to see me. I was also very glad to see him, but did not feel that great flutter in my breast as I did upon any sudden joy before I was united to God. Many came to welcome me to Portsmouth, and professed to be glad to see me. But when I opened my mouth to reprove them for swearing, they all fled away from me.

As soon as I was alone with my husband he told me he had been in very great dangers at sea. I asked him, if he had been killed then what would have been his everlasting state? 'If I had died I should have been saved for the sake of Christ who died to redeem all men.' I said, 'Do you think you deserve hell?' 'No, my dear, for I do not swear and game as bad as my companions.' I told him, 'Your heart is just the same with theirs, only the grace of God restrains you more than they. You have never done one good thing in your life, but have always sinned against God continually.' He was greatly struck at that expression. His heart condemned him and he began to relent, and asked if I had any petition to ask of God in his behalf. I prayed with him with great freedom and enlargement of spirit, and confidence in God. His eyes were melted into many tears, and he said, 'I am *very* wicked indeed. If I could live with you I should love God, but it is impossible on board a man of war.' I said, 'All things are possible with God. He is able to save unto the uttermost, either by land or sea.' When he asked me to see the *Victory* man of war, I told

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<sup>1</sup>There are about half a dozen married women with these two initials listed in the Foundry Band Lists in 1742, and no means to ascertain which of these the correspondent might be.

him if all the curiosities of the world could be brought together in one place I would not lose the time to see them. I could spend it better. In short, I spake very freely unto him of the things appertaining to the Kingdom of God.

He said he once read so much till he was almost melancholy at the sight of his own wickedness, and had like to have gone into despair. He told the chaplain of it, who bid him leave off reading so much and he would be well again. I told him the chaplain was not his friend, for that God was striving to bring him to a good state. He revealed his sins unto him that he might, through penitence and faith in Christ, be forgiven. He said also, 'You once told me in one of your letters that you did not know till lately the nature of true religion, now you do. O that I might know the same, but if we so much as go to prayer here we are laughed at and reviled; and how should one know religion, and be acquainted with God, if one has not opportunity to enquire of him in prayer?' I answered, 'My dear, you should not be kept from prayer for the fear of being laughed at, for this would be the case if you was not on board a ship. I, you know, am in London joined unto the society of people who are seeking the Lord, and the men of this world say all manner of evil of us falsely. So it was ever since the fall. Persecution began in Cain, and it has been continued, in one way or other, ever since. If you was in London, and rose at five o'clock every morning as I do to hear the Scriptures expounded, the men who know not God would think you *mad*. Therefore I say we must not be kept from religion by a little foolish laughter, or if we should suffer greater inconveniences.'

I was at Portsmouth only one day, and then set out for London again. I was in many temptations, but I prayed unto the Lord and he strengthened me. First Satan tempted me to think my friends did not love me, but I thought if God loves me it is enough. Then he tempted me to laugh at idle things and to say light words. I cried unto the Lord, 'Lord save me or I perish', and I found help in time of need. There were but two persons in company with me. I spake of their swearing again and again, but with little success. A stage player came in by the way. When I reprov'd him, he said nothing, but seemed in much confusion.

When I came home my spirit rejoiced greatly. O how I love the ordinances and people of God! I have a small trial in want of work, but the trouble of it does not tarry long. I fly unto the Saviour, and he taketh it away. Yet the thoughts of my poor husband's condition return upon me, and so oppress me that I am well nigh overcome. My soul is wonderfully drawn out in agonizing prayer for him. It may be the Lord will have compassion upon him. Cries, and tears, and prayers shall not be wanting in his behalf.

Finally, the Lord showeth me that my heart is polluted with all manner of sin. I draw near unto him as a man full of diseases to a physician from whom he expects help. I doubt not but his *blood* will heal all my maladies, and make me *thoroughly* whole. Now when I pray my heart appears so unclean, compared with the holiness of my Maker, that I am ashamed and blush before him, while I remain in profound silence, quite helpless at his feet. Here I desire to be. Here I am determined to wait, till the Lord maketh me as he will. Dear sir, pray for

Your weakest daughter in Christ,

M. C.

From Mary Bainton

Bristol  
October 3, 1742

Reverend Sir,

I think it is my duty for to let you know what the Lord though your ministry hath done for my soul.

In the year 1739, November fifth, when your brother was preaching on that subject of the woman who had the issue of blood,<sup>1</sup> I received the remission of my sins. Though I was not without doubts and fears for three quarter of a year, yet the Lord was my keeper; though I was sometimes in heaviness through manifold temptations, yet I know in whom I had believed—even in Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

It pleased God for to give me the abiding witness of his Spirit which hath ever since beared witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. So that I have such a sense of the redeeming love of God in Christ, so that I can cry out with St. Paul of the depth and breadth and height of wisdom and goodness of God to poor sinners, worms of the earth. If I were to tell of his goodness it is more than I am able to express (my soul shall praise him). I have always such a sense of the love of Christ, so that unto every soul that I see I could (if I was called) lay down my life for their sakes. I do daily feel, since last summer when I received full redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ, that God dwelleth in me and I in him. And I have in mind that love so that I could go to prison or to death for his sake.

And [I] am a living witness of the gospel which you preach is the power of God unto salvation, even the salvation of my soul from all iniquity and that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ do[es] cleanse the souls of all that believe from all sins. For I know that he hath delivered me from the body of death and hath brought me into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For I am born of God and cannot commit sin, for my soul is all love. And I cannot sin for I am born of God. I love God with all my heart and my neighbour as myself and am saved by the Spirit of God unto the day of redemption and can say with St. Paul, 'What shall be able for to separate me from the love of Christ, shall tribulation or persecution or famine or pestilence or sword be able to separate me?'<sup>2</sup> No, for I am one spirit with the Lord and bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Yea, he is my life and my soul, for Jesus takes up all the room in a believing heart. This is the liberty of the children of God. Oh that all mankind did but enjoy that happiness which God hath prepared for them that do wait for him. This is that water which our Saviour saith, 'whosoever drinketh thereof shall never thirst, but it shall be in them a well of water springing up into eternal life.'<sup>3</sup> This is that Spirit which whosoever believes in him shall receive. Now my body is a temple of the Holy Ghost and I am a pillar in the temple of God and can go no more out for he hath made me a tree of righteousness which his own right hand hath planted. So that I know my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. So that when Christ, which is my Lord and Master, shall appear in the clouds of heaven I also shall appear with him in glory and shall enter into the joy of my Lord there to reign with him for ever and ever.

Sir, I am

Your unworthy sister in Jesus Christ,

Mary Bainton

[On the reverse, in JW's hand, there is a transcription of an interview with an unknown person.]

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<sup>1</sup>This sermon was preached in the Brickyard in Bristol; see CW, MS Journal.

<sup>2</sup>Rom. 8:35ff.

<sup>3</sup>John 4:14.



Christmas<sup>4</sup> Day

Are you afraid to die? No.

Do you know God loves you? Yes, yes. O what would I not go through to come to thee? Racks, fire, what[ever] thou pleasest. But let me come to thee. Let me come now. Dear Father, let me not stay here.

Thou knowest I would die this moment to be with thee. O let me come now.

The devil! Twenty devils. 'Are you afraid of him?' No. No. He knows that. He knows he cannot hurt me. But he will trouble me as long as he can.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr John Wesley / these'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 13.

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<sup>4</sup>JW spells the ending 'mass', reflecting its origin as 'Christ mass'.

From Sarah Perrin<sup>1</sup>

Bradford<sup>2</sup>  
October 3, 1742

Esteemed Friend,

I greatly desire to give my whole heart to the Lord, and my time to the service of the church. And I hope I shall receive wisdom and resolution to perform what his ministers think fit to employ me in. I sensibly feel the want of both. I find a fear upon my mind, if thou shouldst employ me, I shall not be qualified as I ought, even to visit the sick. Yet I have faith, if we ask in his name, I shall receive of his grace and good Spirit to fit me for it. I well know I fall short daily of performing those duties I am already convinced of. I sink too much into false stillness. I greatly rejoice when at any time I overcome it. O may our Lord purge it away and quicken me with his Spirit! Surely he will, for I know this [false stillness] is not a plant of my heavenly Father's planting. And he has assuredly promised to bless me, and the only blessing I desire is to do his will on earth as it is done in heaven.

These words of our Lord have been comfortably brought to my mind of late: 'Ye shall know them by their fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?'<sup>3</sup> I know the fruit of your ministry has been sweet to my taste, and strength to my soul. Therefore I have great confidence in you, and can speak freely, although we differ in some things. O my brother, how have I wished such ministers were in every parish in this nation! It would make it much easier for Dissenters to join with you. I plainly see it is not being of your opinion, or ours, that makes gospel ministers. But those who dwell in the life and power of our Lord Jesus raise up a living people to serve him in newness of life. It is with concern I find those who shall promote good, and join in the closest fellowship with you, prevail with such as adhere to them to shun your books as deadly poison. O may our Lord open the eyes of these blind Pharisees, and convince them of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Notwithstanding I have been absent so long, I find my love increase to you. Yet I cannot think it my duty to join in outward communion,<sup>4</sup> and I find it hurts me to think about it. Therefore I intend entirely to drop it, and only make this request to thee—to be as free in directing, employing, and reproving me about those duties I am convinced of, as if I was in all things of the same mind.

For some days past I have felt more deadness and barrenness of soul than usual. I find it difficult to keep under a lively sense of the full liberty we are waiting for. I do not lose sight of it, but sure it is a great advantage to be with those whose faith is stronger than our own. This consideration makes me long for the time of my going to Bristol.

Suffer me to entreat thee to be careful of thy health. And may the God of all our mercies preserve and bless thee, now and for ever.

Farewell.

S. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 218–20.

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<sup>1</sup>JW's note in *AM*: 'Sarah Perrin was for some years my housekeeper at Bristol, and a mother in Israel. I do not know that her marriage increased either her usefulness, or her knowledge and love of God.'

<sup>2</sup>I.e., Bradford-on-Avon, where she was visiting her aunt Constant (Groom) Bailward.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 7:16.

<sup>4</sup>Remember that Perrin is a Quaker.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Newcastle upon Tyne]  
Sunday Afternoon [October 3, 1742]

Dear Brother,

This people whom our Lord has gathered will be scattered again if left in their infancy. Tomorrow I am bound by my word to set out for Yorkshire. Our brethren Lee<sup>1</sup> and Errington<sup>2</sup> I shall station here till brother [Thomas] Maxfield or [Thomas] Richards can relieve them. London requires two, but Bristol I could look after alone for a month. On my return we must forthwith extract a second hymn-book out of each of the three volumes.<sup>3</sup> Two thousand [copies] I could just now dispose of here. Neither London nor Bristol will yield such a harvest of souls as the rude populous north. Maxfield might come by ship. Write to me under cover to our friend. I shall return by Leicestershire. The Lord strengthen us for the work whereunto he hath appointed us.

My love to all.  
Adieu.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 6/1.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Lee (d. 1768) was an initial member of the Fetter Lane society who came over to the Foundery with the Wesley brothers (see Foundery Band Lists). He worked in the same shop with Matthew Errington. JW described him as 'for several years a burning and shining light' (*AM* 5 [1782]: 580). But he eventually left the Methodists; cf. JW, *Journal*, Jan. 31, 1786, *Works*, 23:383–84.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew Errington (1711–88), a tailor converted in 1741 in London, helped care for a while for the Foundery (see his name in single men's bands in Foundery Band Lists). He moved to Newcastle in 1749 and served as JW's book steward at the Orphan House until his death.

<sup>3</sup>See *A Collection of Hymns published by John Wesley ... and Charles Wesley*, published in Nov. 1742 (*Bibliography*, No. 68).

<sup>4</sup>This personal note appears at the end of a journal letter; a transcription was published in *Works*, 26:86–87.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Edinburgh  
October 11, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

About ten days ago I sent you a packet by my dear wife,<sup>1</sup> which I hope you will have received ere this comes to hand. Yesterday morning I had your kind letter dated October 5.<sup>2</sup> In answer to the first part of it I say, 'Let old things pass away, and all things become new.'<sup>3</sup> I can heartily say 'Amen' to the latter part of it. 'Let the king live for ever, and controversy die.' It has died with me long ago.

I shall be glad to see the extract of your journal.<sup>4</sup> Be pleased to send it immediately, under cover, to Mr. [James] Erskine, Member of Parliament in Edinburgh. I shall not leave Scotland in less than three weeks. Before yours came I had engaged to go through Newcastle in my way to London. I rejoice to hear the Lord has blessed your dear brother's labours.<sup>5</sup>

I am enabled to preach twice daily with great power, and find I walk in light and liberty continually. Like the ark, I am surrounded on all sides, but enabled to swim triumphantly over all. O free grace! I thank you, dear sir, for praying for me, and thank our common Lord for putting it in your heart so to do. I have been upon my knees praying for you and yours, O that nothing but love, lowliness, and simplicity may be among us. It grieves me to see what a sad spirit prevails among Mr. [Ralph] Erskine's people. Father, forgive them! I trust you will remember my poor orphans. God gives me strong faith for them, though no news yet of the Spaniards leaving Georgia. Yesterday morning a dear little hospital girl went off in triumph. The work is still increasing in Scotland, especially at Kilsyth. Surely we shall see great things ere long.

Dear friend, my soul is on fire. O let us not fall out of the way! Let us bear with and forbear one another in love. God be praised for giving you such a mind. My kind love to all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. In much haste, and with great thanks for your last letter, I subscribe myself, reverend and very dear sir,

Your most affectionate, though younger brother, in the gospel of our glorious Emmanuel,  
G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters*, 1:448–49.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Whitefield had married Elizabeth (Burnell) James (1704–68), a Welsh widow, on Nov. 11, 1741.

<sup>2</sup>This letter is not known to survive.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

<sup>4</sup>JW had just published the third extract of his *Journal*, covering Aug. 1738 through Oct. 1739; see *Works*, 19: 2–114.

<sup>5</sup>CW was currently ministering in Newcastle; see his journal letter covering Sept. 23 – Oct. 2, 1742 (MARC, DDCW 6/1).

<sup>6</sup>Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:87.

From Dr. Johannes de Koker

J. d. Koker      Joanni Whesly      S.P.D.

Dabam Rotterodami  
18/11/1742

Dilectissime frater in domino nostro J. Christo,

Gratia et pax a Deo et Servatore nostro in communie Sp. Sancti sit tecum et omnibus qui Dominum en animo deligerut<sup>[?]</sup>. Amen.

Lettera tuas edilus<sup>[?]</sup> Julii datas ima cum Hymnis aliaque opuscula et conciones accepi, et perlegi. Doleo meam epistolam tibi vernaculo sermone scriptam a te non esse intellectam, in ea requeri, ut mihi causam et rationes indicare velis, quibus motus es a fratribus Hernhuttis te separare. Accepi enim a fratre Spangenberg aliisque te multo magis ab iis discrepare quam Whitfield, cum quo fratres illi intimius se conjunctos este mihi tradiderine<sup>[?]</sup>.

*Characterem Methodistae* legi et perlegi, ac saepius desideravi talem Christianorum Societatem noster ac propius eorum consortio uti. Bene titulo inscripsisti 'non quod jam altigerim' opinor enim plerosque idem agnisuros, quare characterem illum habes non enim, quem nondum omnes, ne quidem multi, sibi Dei gratia conciliarunt, sed debere aco optare ut sibi concilicur. Me quod attinet, ingenue fateor me. Longe adhucdium abeo distare, ea animo tamen vehementer eum flagitare. Miratus etiam sum te non tantum Christum Summum Deum confiteri, verum ideo ab Arianis, Unitariis, etc separatam velis. Nonne mecum libenter agnosces numquam in Sacra Scriptura Christum 'Summum Deum' vocari, quare ergo titulos ac sensus concinnamus qui non clare a Spiritu Sancto nobis sunt descripta. O utinam omnia verba et tituli humani in perptuum in Christi Ecclesia essent proscripti, ac ejus Verbum Solum absque ullis hominum dictu esset Character et canon fide ac vitae nostrae. Indies magis ac magis omnes fere Sectus ac Sectarum sententias ea meo animo conor remove ac Deo et Servateri meo carissime uni adhaerer omnesque qui ejus sunt diligere, ac eo magis non ut Methodistam, Calvinistam, Anabaptistam, Arianum, etc. Sed quo Christi animus ac Spirit ut in eo fervere ai Sabirare cerno. Amantissime frater, omnes intendamus nervos, quibus Satanae regnum diruatur, ac Christi regnum ubique indes in animis multorum, qui eum adhucdum quidem ore confitertur sed operibus suis abnegatur, erigatur ac dominetur.

Porro Deum ac Dominum ardentem precor, ut conatibus tuis opituletur, ministerio tuo perpetuo adsit suo spiritu, gratia, et auxilio, quo plurimos ei lucrare possis ac mercem fidelis ministri in hac et futura vit ea gratia afflequi<sup>[?]</sup> queas. Plerique in hac urbe admodum torpent ac languent. Laodicensium nimis pro dolor similes, perpauca quibus fervor ac Spiritus vere Christianes in est. Utinam Deus fideles ministros ac operarios in messam Suam emittat.

Quid plura, mi Jane, nisi quod Deus corda nostra magis ac magis agglutiner, ut uno animo et Spiritu certernut<sup>[?]</sup>, eumque et nos invicem amemus et quesque annem operam navare in omnibus, ad quae Dominus noster quemque vocavit. Si Deo placuerit te iterum Rotterdamum aliquando profecturum omnia mea usui tuo libenter offero. Vale ac me amare perge.

Rogo obnine ut data occasione mihi iterum letterus des pronomen meum non est Thomas sed Joannes, ac gratias habeo pro libeltis ad me missis. Si quaedam on Hollandia desideres pero ut modo mihi Scribas.

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<sup>1</sup>Koker writes in small letters that are not precisely formed, making it difficult to discern a few of the words.

[English Translation]

Rotterdam  
November 18, 1742

Dearest Father in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Grace and peace from God and our Saviour, in union with the Holy Spirit, be with you all who choose the Lord in your heart. Amen.

Your letter dated July *edilus*?, together with the hymns and other tracts and discourses, I have received and read. I am sorry that you could not understand my letter to you written in the vernacular [i.e., Dutch], in which I request you to tell me the reasons and causes that moved you to separate from the Brethren at Herrnhut. I received it from brother Spangenberg and others that you differ much more from them than [does George] Whitefield, with whom I am told the Brethren are more intimately linked.

I read and reread *The Character of a Methodist*, and often desired such a Christian society with whom I might associate. The title inscription 'Not as though I had already attained'<sup>2</sup> is fitting, I think, for most people acknowledge they have not reached this mark. In fact many people have not procured the grace of God for themselves, but still fall far short of the goal. As for myself, I frankly confess I do. It is still far off, but it earnestly demands my whole being. I am very surprised you not only confess Christ as 'Supreme God' but [consider that] it is what distinguishes you from Arians, Unitarians, etc.<sup>3</sup> I am well aware that Christ is never called 'Supreme God' in sacred Scripture. Why then do we cultivate titles and understandings that are not clearly given to us by the Holy Spirit? O that all human words and titles might forever be banned from Christ's church, and that only his Word, void of human expressions, could be the character and rule of faith for our lives. More and more I try to set aside the opinions of almost all separatists and sectarians, and to embrace all who love my dear God and Saviour; and this not because they are Methodist, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Arian, and so on, but because the mind of Christ and the Spirit are living and glowing within them. Most beloved brother, let us strain ever fibre of our being by which the kingdom of Satan is destroyed and Christ established and sustaining his reign continually in the lives of many who have confessed him with their mouth but denied him in their actions.

Meanwhile, I ardently pray our God and Lord will bless your efforts in ministry, being perpetually present with his Spirit, grace, and help, by which you may be able to win many, and obtain by grace the benefits of faithful ministry in this life and the next. Most people in this city are very sluggish and infirm, unfortunately very similar to the Laodiceans.<sup>4</sup> Very few have the warmth and spirit of true Christians. May God send faithful ministers and workers into the harvest.

Much more, my John, may God bind together our hearts more and more, and enable us to contend with one mind and one spirit, and that we render assistance to one another in all things to which our Lord does call us. If it pleases God to have you return to Rotterdam sometime, I would be glad to assist in any way I can.

Good bye and fare well my friend.

Let me take advantage of this occasion to say that for future letters my first name is not Thomas but Johannes; though I am grateful it still got to me. Whenever you think of Holland, please write to me.

*Address:* 'To Mr / John Whesly / London'.

*Endorsements:* by CW, 'Koker to B[rother]'; by JW, 'Dec. 11, 1742<sup>5</sup> / a[nswere]d Feb. 23, 1743'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/93.

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<sup>2</sup>Phil. 3:12, the motto printed on the first page.

<sup>3</sup>See *Character of a Methodist*, §1, *Works*, 9:34.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Rev. 3:15.

<sup>5</sup>This is apparently the date JW received the letter.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London  
December 5, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I long to hear from you, and write this hoping to have an answer. ... I rejoice to hear the Lord blesses your labours. ... May you be blessed in bringing souls to Jesus Christ, even more and more! I believe we shall go on best when we only preach the simple gospel, and do not interfere with each other's plan. ... Our Lord exceedingly blesses us at the Tabernacle.<sup>1</sup> ... Our glorious Redeemer surely shows us his hands and his feet, and says, 'Peace be unto you'.<sup>2</sup> I doubt not but he deals in the same bountiful manner with you.

I have had sweet letters from Georgia. My dear family is safe at Bethesda.<sup>3</sup> Their deliverance from the Spaniards is really wonderful. The minister of Savannah is dead. I believe Mr. Meriton<sup>4</sup> of the Isle of Man will succeed him. I trust our Lord will yet take Georgia into his own hands.

I was at your letter-day on Monday. ... Brother Charles has been pleased to come and see me twice. ... Behold what a happy thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!<sup>5</sup> That the whole Christian world may all become of one heart and one mind, and that *we* in particular, though differing in judgment, may be examples of mutual, fervent, undissembled affection, is the hearty prayer of, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate, though most unworthy, younger brother and servant in the  
kingdom and patience of Jesus,

G. Whitefield

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 31; with some minor changes (such as the indication of ellipses) incorporated from the further abridged and undated text in Whitehead, *Life*, 2:137.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Whitefield's preaching house in London.

<sup>2</sup>See John 20:26–27.

<sup>3</sup>That is, the children and others at his orphan house.

<sup>4</sup>Whitefield was trying to arrange for Rev. John Meriton to be appointed to Savannah, but he was not successful.

<sup>5</sup>See Ps. 133:1.

<sup>6</sup>Refined transcription published in *Works*, 26:93.

From Abraham Jones<sup>1</sup>

Chamber Street, Goodmans Fields, London  
December 12, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Glory be to God for the success of the gospel in those parts where you are, and wheresoever else he shall please to send those glad tidings by the ministry of your brother and you. May his word run very swiftly and may he that is able to keep us from falling and present us faultless before his throne, preserve both them and us from turning either to the right hand or to the left, or from growing weary and faint in our mind. Being called to such a glorious hope, I pray it may abound by the Holy Ghost.

The Lord has been graciously pleased to give me, near two years since, not only a sure trust and confidence that for Christ's sake my sins are forgiven, but also that he will be mindful of his holy covenant and promise that I, being delivered out of the hand of my enemies, may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all my days. I have never since had the least doubt of being cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit and to be enabled to perfect holiness in his fear, through his power. Notwithstanding, I feel the corruptions stir more than ever and risings of anger, pride, and desires. Yet I pray against them and wait in the constant use of the means appointed, fully expecting a deliverance in his own time, desiring to be kept without sin unto salvation.

My class (except James Moss, for I know not how he walks) do all walk orderly and keep close to the word and the means of grace. E. S. the elder, in my class, complains much as being under strong temptations as to doubt the being of a God, or of ability to hold out; that if the Lord did not destroy the man of sin in her, that it would destroy her. And yet [she] acknowledges that at every one of these assaults of the enemy the Lord appears in the promises to her relief and she is delivered. She tells me the evening you met the bands last before you went out of town, she wished herself out of the room, and wished herself at the Tabernacle,<sup>2</sup> and that she never was there tempted likewise not to go to the Lord's table. And yet [she] is preserved by his grace, and by your brother's preaching on the promises in Isaiah lately is now much strengthened. I exhorted her in the words of the apostle, 'Be confident of this very thing, that he ....'<sup>3</sup>

Since it pleased God you should call so weak a worm to lead a class and visit the sick, I am amazed at myself, seeing my weakness and unfitness, when I hear any of the children of the Lord complain so much of darkness and deadness whom I took to be as it were pillars, and who were in Christ before me, crying out under strong temptation and fearing lest their bread should fail. I have been tempted to believe my own state far worse, as experiencing no such desertions, or that I might be fast asleep still and in an unawakened state.

But I know his workings are not the same in all souls. And trust he will carry me on in his way till he fulfil all the good pleasure of his covenant upon me and the work of faith with power. I pray that he will keep me without sin unto salvation. I want more humility, more meekness and lowliness of heart. I want to have the fear of man wholly removed and to be enabled to take up the cross daily and follow him.

I want a power to pray. Since you have appointed me to be a visitor of the sick I have been ashamed of my barrenness. And yet I find much help from God and know he will help me more and more. I have sometime[s] used the form in the [Book of] Common Prayer for visitation, with a written form after of my own, as I have been enabled to compose them to different occasions. But being at some times and places where it was not light enough to read the words or notes of a prayer, I have had nothing left but to look to him, and he has given me words. It was like to me as when I first learned to swim. I was

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<sup>1</sup>See the note on Jones's earlier letter of Aug. 10, 1741.

<sup>2</sup>I.e., George Whitefield's preaching house in London.

<sup>3</sup>Phil. 1:6.



greatly afraid of going out of my depth. It has brought to mind what Mary Flantor<sup>4</sup> said in my house some months since, that the lame must use crutches till they can go without. Why, I say, Mr. Wesley can go without, and yet does not wholly lay aside forms. I think again, when I find most of our people have the gift of extempore prayer, the Lord withholds it from me because I have for so many years past despised it, as most others who were called High Church likewise did, for I have formerly very much spoken against it. Yet I trust the Lord will open my mouth wide and fill it, and make the tongue of the stammerer speak. When I am under the word, or hearing you or your brother pray, I think I can likewise. And the Lord has given me strength, and I trust will daily make me increase in the knowledge of his will, and make me faithful to his gifts. My wife and I join in praying that God would prosper the work of your hands exceedingly, that many may be brought [out] of darkness into light. And may the angel of his presence continually be with you and bring you unto us again, in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace, prays

Yours in Christ,

Abra. Jones

Blessed be God, we have none of our people sick in my division at present, so that sister Ladson and I visit others who desire it.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Burton the baker, who was in my class, tells me the deacons of the meeting have been with him lately about his going to hear those men, for he is pretty constant at the Foundery, mornings as well as evenings. He says the preaching he hears on Sundays there tells him he must not expect deliverance here. I told him they'll excommunicate him, then he may wholly follow on to know the truth.

*Address:* 'To the Revd: / Mr John Wesley / These'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'Abr Jones / Dec. 12. 1742 / ne o'.<sup>6</sup>

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/90.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Jones may mean Mary Flanders, a married woman who appears on the Foundery Band Lists starting in Mar. 1743.

<sup>5</sup>Mary (Parker) Ladson appears as a leader of bands for married women throughout 1742–45 on the Foundery Band Lists. She married Robert Ladson in 1716.

<sup>6</sup>JW's final abbreviated note expands to: 'needs not [to be answered]'.

<sup>7</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:94–95.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]  
December 16, [1742]

On Monday we had a letter-day extraordinary<sup>1</sup> (or our sheep would have strayed to the Tabernacle<sup>2</sup>), and continued from 3:00 to 9:00 rejoicing as men that divide the spoil. Your last letter brought up the rear, and furnished me with an occasion of provoking them to love, obedience, and good works.<sup>3</sup> On Tuesday I laid the matter again before the leaders of the bands, and began a collection just then. Being unprovided, they could only raise £5. Another brother helped us to £10 more. And most advised me to preach on the occasion and make a public collection on Sunday night. You know how pleasing such a task will be to me, but your sentence determines it. Yesterday Joseph Pimm of the society came and offered us the £100 enclosed.<sup>4</sup> He had seen in a dream of late several folds full of sheep, and a minister in the midst of them. At the same time [he] found himself full of trouble concerning some money which he had by him, and sent his wife to the minister to ask what he should do with it. The answer was, 'Do as the Spirit of God shall prompt you.' This dream he took no notice of till he heard me speak among the society, and then it was immediately suggested that this was the will of God concerning him; and his wife agreeing thereunto, he brought the money to Thomas Butts<sup>5</sup> and rests satisfied (till you come) with his note for it.

You build, as Caesar fights, in all weathers. We wish you good luck in the name of the Lord.

Sister Jackson<sup>6</sup> and books embark on Saturday. You *must*, positively *must*, get the fattest blunders corrected. Most of the bound books are ready done to your hands.

You *shall* have your picture drawn!<sup>7</sup> I am delighted with it above measure. Such a scarecrow let them make of me when I consent to make my appearance in black and white. Yet they say that comely face of yours may be taken out, and a less puritanical one put in.<sup>8</sup>

I have many things to write, but want time. Goodnight.

P. S. Mr. Spears cannot get bills till tomorrow. Expect the money by Saturday's post.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'C[harles] Dec. 16, 1742 / a[nswere]d 24'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/14.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>CW regularly solicited letters of spiritual testimony for members of the societies and would read them aloud on 'letter-days'.

<sup>2</sup>The preaching house George Whitefield had opened in London.

<sup>3</sup>See JW to CW, Dec. 8 and c. Dec. 12, 1742 on beginning construction of the preaching house in Newcastle, and a plea for CW to seek financial assistance from London Methodists.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Pimm (d. 1775) appears on the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46) from March 1743. He wed Katherine Lloyd (d. 1780) in 1731.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Butts (1719–78) was a native of Stepney, Middlesex. As early as 1742 he was looking after JW's book-keeping at the Foundry in London, when he appears in a 'trial band' there for single men (see Foundry Band Lists).

<sup>6</sup>Likely Margaret Jackson, a single woman who appears regularly on the Foundry Band Lists between 1742 and 1745.

<sup>7</sup>JW was preparing to have his portrait done by John Michael Williams (1710–c. 1780).

<sup>8</sup>CW is likely alluding to a print of JW produced by George Vertue in late 1741, which was judged a poor likeness.

<sup>9</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:96.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London  
December 21, 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I thank you for your kind answer to my last.<sup>1</sup> Had it come a few hours sooner I should have read some part of it amongst our other letters. But another part of it I could not read. I fear my reverend brother is too much embittered against the Moravian Brethren. My poor advice is, Let them alone, lest haply you should be found to fight against God. I am glad to hear the poor Calvinists find a place in your society. I am persuaded you will find a goodly number of them in heaven, even a multitude which no man can number. I am still inclined to believe you will yet be one before you die. But enough of this.

Your *Principles of a Methodist*,<sup>2</sup> reverend sir, I have read, but cannot say they are my principles. I cannot agree with any one of the three paragraphs wherein you declare the three different states of a soul, before he comes to Christ, after he comes, and when he arrives at what you call sanctification, or the indwelling of the Spirit. But no more of this either. In one thing we agree—viz., that we are saved only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. And I trust we shall always agree in another—viz., to love one another, and not to smite our fellow-servants. I am sure, honoured sir, I love you most tenderly, and wish the work of our Saviour may prosper much in your hands.

I mentioned your success in the north at our last letter-day, and prayed most earnestly for you. Your dear brother, I fear, appointed a letter-day out of course at the same hour to prevent his people coming to the Tabernacle. There is likewise preaching more frequent than usual at Deptford, and just when our little society meets. This proceeding, I think, is not of God. Our Lord will bless those most who use least *false art* to support his cause. The world takes notice of such conduct, and cry shame on it. I know you will not take this ill at my hands, because I write in much love. I would have nothing done through strife or to keep up a party. I want no people, honoured sir, to be called after my name. If Jesus lives, I care not if the name of George Whitefield die forever. Our Saviour gives me much meekness whilst I am writing.

I thank you for writing to Mr. [Ralph] Erskine.<sup>3</sup> If proper I should be glad to see the letter. That which he wrote to you, and which is extracted in your *Journal*,<sup>4</sup> I have sent to Scotland. It is by this time printed there. I know nothing under God more likely to confute those narrow-spirited brethren. Dear sir, who would not be troubled with the least remains of party spirit! May our Lord make all his children free from it indeed! My Scotch friends would be glad to see the original letter. Can you oblige them?

Dear Mr. [James] Hervey has wrote me a sweet letter lately. I think he grows in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I have had a loving conference with dear Mr. [Thomas] Broughton. This day I dined and met with a most tender recepti(on from<sup>5</sup>) old Mr. Hutton and his wife.<sup>6</sup> What a sweet thing it is to love one another(! I could) write much upon that now, but other business demands my attendance.

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<sup>1</sup>JW's answer to Whitefield's letter of Dec. 5 is not known to survive.

<sup>2</sup>JW published *The Principles of a Methodist* (*Works*, 9:48–66), largely a response to Josiah Tucker, in Oct. 1742.

<sup>3</sup>JW's letter to Ralph Erskine dated Aug. 24, 1739 (*Works*, 25:680–81); which Erskine would publish in *Fraud and Fals[e]hood Discovered* in 1743.

<sup>4</sup>Ralph Erskine's letter to JW of July 1739, which was published in the third extract of JW's *Journal*, June 30, 1739, *Works* 19:75–76.

<sup>5</sup>A small portion of the page was torn away by the wax seal, but can be reconstructed.

<sup>6</sup>Rev. John and Elizabeth (Ayscough) Hutton, the parents of James Hutton.

Honoured sir, may the Lord be with you. Salute all that love him in sincerity. Next week, God willing, I go to Bristol. My dear wife is now upon the road. Can I meet you there? God has wonderfully appeared for Georgia. My family is safe at Bethesda. I purpose to embark the latter end of the next month. In the mean while be pleased to write as often as you can to, honoured sir,

Your unworthy but affectionate brother and servant in Jesus Christ,

G. W.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr John Westley / at Mr Henry Jackson<sup>7</sup> a Weaver / Newcastle upon Tine'.

*Postmark:* '21/DE'. *Charge:* '4'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'a[nswere]d 31'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/188.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Henry Jackson (1666–1766) was one of the trustees to whom JW conveyed the completed Orphan-House at Newcastle on Mar. 5, 1746. See the letter on his death, sent by one of his daughters to JW, Feb. 23, 1766.

<sup>8</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:97–98.

From A. N.

December 27, 1742

Reverend Sir,

I received your kind and pious letter, and *should* have wrote sooner to acquaint you with my state, since you was so good as to desire it. But the reason why I deferred it was my being out of all hope of receiving any benefit from any means. I have wearied all my friends and correspondents with my vain complaints, and am now myself tired of complaining. The Almighty does not regard my languid sinful prayers. He hath hid himself from me, and shut me in thick darkness. My heart is hardened from his fear, nor can I see my want, nor mourn my misery. I have not *even* a notional faith, nor any will or endeavour to turn. The little spark of grace I once had is totally extinguished, I have not any concern at all. I cannot see sin, nor can I pray from my heart, either for myself or others. Yet do I make a constant use of all the ordinances of Christ. I would not willingly commit *any* sin, nor can I allow it in others, and am unwilling to bring a scandal upon the people of God. I should not think any duty too hard if my heart were but affected. But alas! Woe is me, I am tied down by a thousand, yea ten thousand chains, and can no more lift up my heart to God than I can reach heaven with my finger. My soul is quite dead.

I was sometime ago wishing to be in this or that place, and still as my desires for God grew weaker would wish I was but as I was the year, or month, or week before. But now I cannot have any sense of my loss. The brethren here have prayed for me, but I am still more hard and more blind. I have no notion of death, or hell, or judgment, or eternity. Nor have I any sense of the law of God. If at any time I have a faint remembrance of the grace I once had, how I was affected some years since, and find some sorrow for the loss of my Saviour; or if a verse of an hymn affects me and forces a tear from my flinty heart, yet it continues not but is like a flash of lightning immediately gone.

I greatly long to see you or your brother here. Perhaps the word might come again with power to my soul. I am yet alive, therefore I will not say it is impossible for God to change *even me*. Some miracle of grace may make *even me* a monument of mercy. I would fain see my wants, and mourn my sins, and grieve under the burden of my woe. For I cannot conceive it possible I should love Christ without extremity of need compels me to it. O wretched soul, this is thy sad condition! I cannot find any way of returning, for I cannot repent. I have several times fervently prayed for *one* beam of light, but have found no answer.

In short, I have taken a great deal of pains to destroy myself. The more I strove, the more I was entangled. I know I formerly sought God sincerely, but when I endeavoured to give up my whole heart unto him the devil laid all his snares for me, and I am now his captive. I have betrayed my soul by endeavouring to preserve it. Their condition is preferable to mine who live in open profaneness. For were they once convinced of their danger, they would gladly embrace the Saviour. But I have a double veil<sup>1</sup> upon *my* heart. And if I perish *my* punishment will be far greater. When I look upon myself in this light, I do think there is not a more wretched creature breathing. I wander about like a desolate exile. I have lost my reason, and my understanding is taken from me. I have no peace, but a fearful expectation of judgment. Oh that the Son of God would look upon me in my lost estate, and force me to be saved by grace! If I should be restored again I will prize his mercy. And surely then I shall serve him all the rest of my days. But oh, it is a sad thing when one cannot repent, or *even* sincerely desire it! My hands hang down.

I have a thought sometimes to cast off the form, since I have lost the power of religion. I would fain die, if death would set me free. But I am not willing to quit all hopes of heaven.

I beg you will enquire of the Lord for me, and wrestle with him in my behalf. And if my day of grace is not yet over, oh beseech him to give me the comfort of his help again, and that his Spirit may strive with me. I sent a letter to this purpose to Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield a fortnight ago, but received no answer. Perhaps the Lord showed him I was lost, and he might be unwilling to tell me so. But I beg Mr.

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., 'vail'.

[Thomas] Williams would join with you in prayer, and let me know what the Lord will say concerning me. I shall impatiently wait the answer, for I would fain know the worst. I will yet wait upon the Lord. If I perish, I will not perish for want of asking. I will draw near unto God with my lips, though my heart is far from him.

Thus I have given you a description of hell upon earth. But I am confident you will not think much to labour for my soul, or angrily reproach my unprofitableness, notwithstanding the good advice you have often given me seems to be lost upon me. I have spun this to an unreasonable length, but I hope you will excuse my weakness, who am

Your most unworthy servant,

A. N.

P.S. I have just received a most comfortable letter from Mr. Maxfield. It has given me hope that I, *even I*, shall yet *know* and *love* Jesus Christ.

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 103–07.

From E. V.<sup>1</sup>

[c. 1742–1743]

Reverend Sir,

I know your love and care for our souls is great, and therefore I send you these few lines to inform you how the blessed Jesus deals with us.

I find my soul grow stronger and stronger in the Lord daily. He hath given me to eat of the 'hidden manna'<sup>2</sup> and 'the tree of life';<sup>3</sup> and given me 'the white stone, with the new name written therein, which none know save those who receive it';<sup>4</sup> and hath revealed himself unto me, in the manner he doth not unto the world. My soul is joined to Christ. I can pray without ceasing. The love of God is abundantly shed abroad in my soul, yet I continually hunger and thirst for more. O how I desire to do the will of God on earth, as angels do it in heaven! The Lord hath given me to believe that whatsoever I ask the Father in the name of Jesus he will do it for me. I feel his word and promise applied. He does give me what I ask. O that I could express the love I feel to God and all mankind. I could freely lay down my life for the salvation of any one sinner in the world. Great and inexpressible is that love wherewith Jesus loveth us. Sweet to my soul are all his commands. If at any time I have any temptation to break any of them, my whole heart riseth up against it. And for the love I have unto the law-giver, and to the purity of his law, I would rather die than break the least commandment. How can I offend so loving and gracious a Saviour? I would not do any thing which might displease my heavenly Father. In all things wherein I see the will of God, he enables me to do it *joyfully*.

I am always less or more happy in the Lord. Indeed sometimes I think there is something like a veil<sup>5</sup> which covers that *great* glory of the Lord, which at other times I see. But I then lie at the Saviour's feet, and wait till he gives me that sight of his glorious face again. I am never without him, but sometimes he does *fill* my soul so much with his lovely presence that my body can scarcely bear it, and I cannot at all express it.

Within these few days I have had a peculiar sense of my unworthiness, and such a sinking into humility as I have not always; so that I think myself utterly unworthy to lie at the feet of Christ. If I could find any place near unto him lower than this, I would lie there. But he has honoured me with a place at his *dear* feet, and his wings overshadow me and keep me from all storms. O that I could praise him sufficiently!

Dear sir, remember me in your prayers and praises. And may Jesus Christ continually bless you. I believe he will. O faithful shepherd of the flock! Your feet are beautiful wherever you carry the glad tidings of peace. Blessed be your goings out and comings in; your rising up and your lying down. May Jesus be with you for ever and ever. From

Your unworthy friend in Christ Jesus,

E. V.

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1761), 107–09.

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<sup>1</sup>This is most likely from Elizabeth Vandome, a member of the Foundery society in London.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. 2:17.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. 2:7.

<sup>4</sup>Rev. 2:17.

<sup>5</sup>Orig., 'vail'.

From Martha (Wesley) Hall

[Salisbury]  
January 26, 1743

Dear Brother,

I wonder a little at your long silence. Though perhaps one reason of it might be that you knew my brother John had been so kind to write to me.<sup>1</sup>

You may plainly perceive I intended this letter for my brother Charles. But as I received yours yesterday,<sup>2</sup> I thought I would answer it, for fear you should be gone from London.<sup>3</sup> I have so many things to say to you that I know not where to begin.

Doubtless you knew that I should be much concerned at what you said respecting Mr. [Westley] Hall. I do not know whether I know certainly what you mean by 'his new gospel' or no, but I suppose I may guess at it. I have long thought, and do still think, him a servant of Christ. How then could it be that he should not be kept (at least) from dangerous errors? I know you are ready to answer me—nay, indeed I can answer myself—that it must be from some unfaithfulness or other. And now immediately come the false Moravians to my mind. For if he should be so unhappy as to fall into any, or ever so many, dangerous errors, I must lay them all at their door, who transformed themselves into angels of light to seduce him from that apostolic church in which he was baptised, and in which he was called to the honour of being not only a member but a priest. O that he might (as you say) find them out!

Providence has indeed spoken to him in thunder (O that he may but hear). His brother has run through his whole fortune, and several thousand into debt. Insomuch that he is at present in prison and has got his brother Westley, who knew not his circumstances, to be bound for three (hundred) pounds for him, which he must now pay and then must be obliged to manage his estate without the least human probability of ever being able to clear it again. Yet this is a small trial to me in comparison to several others. I have never once found fault with him for being bound, but have told him I did not blame him at all, as he was a stranger to his brother's circumstances, and he promised him good security. But that a person whom I still love too well should be erring from the right way, and I not able to do the least service to him (for he will in no case receive my saying; he will not hear me speak upon any account) is a trial that is sometimes almost too hard for me. Yet it is given to me to say: 'Nevertheless, though I am sometimes afraid, yet put I my trust in thee.'<sup>4</sup> I have indeed that blessed peace that passeth all understanding, and have had such remarkable promises so particularly applied to me that I stand astonished at the goodness of God in supplying in so wonderful a manner the loss of parent, children, friends to me. One day when I was at church those words (which I had never taken notice of before) were given to me in such a manner as I believe you understand: 'As a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, so shall the Lord thy God rejoice over thee.'<sup>5</sup> I am ashamed that I should love so little, having so much forgiven and such constant blessings.

I have writ[ten] till I am quite ill, so must bid you good night, only desiring your prayers, and particularly for Mr. Hall, but not that he may be taken from the earth.

I am, dear brother,

Sincerely yours,

M. Hall

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<sup>1</sup>These two sentences appear to have been written before Martha received JW's letter (though there is no paragraph break here or elsewhere in the letter).

<sup>2</sup>This letter of JW to Martha is not known to survive.

<sup>3</sup>JW was in London in late January, but left mid-February, headed north toward Newcastle.

<sup>4</sup>Ps. 56:3 (BCP).

<sup>5</sup>Isa. 62:5.



Pray write before you go to Newcastle.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/6.

From Howell Harris

May 27, 1743

My Dear, Dear Brother,

I have been just now reading your *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*<sup>1</sup> and I think I was never so knit to you before. I feel I love you with undissembled love and could freely fall on your neck and wash your feet with tears of pure love that flow not from the old but the new man. My soul was made thankful to God for you and all the graces and gifts he has conferred upon you. May your God and my God strengthen your hands and make you the spiritual father of thousands!

I see the more we die to ourselves and nature and live in and to God, and the more we come out of the spirit of this world into the sure love of God, the more we shall bear and forbear with each other. And what before by the prevailing of hidden pride was turned to be matter of heat and anger will become matters of pity and compassion towards each other. And when our faith will so overcome unbelief, self, and nature as continually to view God's free and eternal love to our souls, we shall all be changed into the same image and shall converse together in that desired temper and shall convince the world indeed we are of God through the undeniable proof—love.

We are all but young in the school of Christ, at least I know I am, and continually stand in need of forgiving love from my compassionate Father and all his dear family. I feel my heart loves and honours you and rejoices in your happiness (I think I can honestly say) as much as in mine own. I will with great expectation await for God's time and way to bring us fully and outwardly one. I think I feel my heart prepared for it indeed. Blessed be God our Saviour is getting the victory more gloriously among us. In several places especially in Pembroke, Cardigan and Carmarthen and Cardiganshire. Many daily come to the glorious liberty and walk in and with God in power, love, and light, and sweetness. Our Lord blesses brother Rowland<sup>2</sup> and brother H[owell] Davies<sup>3</sup> in an uncommon manner indeed. And I believe the Lord blessed you much to young Mr. Phillips,<sup>4</sup> the minister, when you were here. He seems to be under convictions, I am told, and sweetness and love. May the Lord teach and help us to strengthen one another's hands and to be more like our heavenly Father—tender, forgiving, and forbearing. I wish you could send me a score of your *Appeals*. I hope they will be blessed to much good.

I am in great haste, else my heart I feel is enlarged towards you and I could write much. I will not ask a line. I know your time is taken up and you cannot well spare time to write, if you can to read this—but assure you, and that in the assured confidence, through free grace we shall both soon meet before the throne to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb forever.<sup>5</sup>

While here, I am,

Yours most tenderly, humbly, and affectionately in our dear Jesus,

H. Harris

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<sup>1</sup>JW had just published his *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* in Apr. 1743; see *Works*, 11:45–94.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. Daniel Rowland (1711–90), a Welsh clergyman, converted to the evangelical cause by Griffith Jones, who joined forces with Howell Harris and others in leading the revival in Wales by 1737.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. Howell Davies (c. 1716–1770) was a schoolmaster at Talgarth, Breconshire when he was converted by Howell Harris in 1737. He was shortly after ordained deacon and priest, serving churches and itinerating in support of the Calvinist Methodist cause in Wales.

<sup>4</sup>Rev. Edward Phillips (1716–c. 1776), a graduate of Jesus College, Oxford, had been ordained in 1740 and currently curate (later rector) at Maesmynys, Wales, where he served till his death. JW was with him in Maesmynys on May 4, 1743 (see *Journal, Works*, 19:324).

<sup>5</sup>See Rev. 15:3.

P. S. My tenderest respect and my warmest affection to brother Charles [Wesley] and all as you think fit. Today was a day of uncommon power among us. I discoursed near a great fair at Landover, as I did yesterday in Carmarthen fair.

*Source:* Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #879.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>A transcription reflecting Harris's spelling and contractions can be found in *Trevecka Letters, 1742–47*, 96–97.

From William Welsh<sup>1</sup>

Black Friars [London]  
Saturday, May 28, 1743

Reverend Sir,

Your letter is gladly received, dated March 7, 1743,<sup>2</sup> from Newcastle, which much revived my melancholy and dejected spirit, for about that time darkness did overshadow me and my soul was in heaviness through manifold temptations. But now the Lord hath lifted up the light of his reconciled countenance upon me and I do in a measure rejoice in God, my Saviour.

And because I know you can rejoice with those that do rejoice, I therefore take this opportunity to declare what the Lord hath very lately done for my soul. But first, I would premise that notwithstanding howsoever erroneous Mr. [James] Foster's<sup>3</sup> tenets may be, yet I have no manner of doubt of his not believing the Bible. I ground my opinion of him (not so much from his preaching or writings but) from his private conversation and from his solemn address to God in the name of Jesus. Now if he doth in fact believe in a being that cannot be deceived nor will not be mocked, he must be lost to all sense of reverence and filial fear. If he should thus dare to affront his omniscience as to speak so much of the intrinsic excellence of a written revelation and of praying to the same God through a mediator, whilst at the same time he did not believe anything of the matter, this therefore doth encourage me to hope, that I have sufficient ground whereon to work.

Immediately after your letter came I wrote both to Mr. Foster and Mr. [Joseph] Burroughs<sup>4</sup> (the other minister of that congregation and one of those fifteen that preached at Salters Hall against popery<sup>5</sup>). I comprised my thoughts under the four following propositions:

- 1) of our vitiated nature in Adam;
- 2) of the universal restoration of the human species by Christ Jesus;
- 3) on justification or the remission of sins; and
- 4) on the Christian perfection.

These doctrines I did strengthen with a number of plain and as I think uncontested texts of Holy Scripture, hardly adding anything of my own judgment because I have found to my great comfort that a bare recital of scripture texts, especially in points of controversy, are surprisingly convincing.

And as I had for several years looked upon both these gentlemen as gospel ministers, and fearing lest I should be guilty of rash credulity in matters of such great moment, I was therefore very desirous to hear their objections, either by letter or which way they thought most convenient. And accordingly on Monday, March 14, I sent to the Rev. Mr. Burroughs and the next day I received the following answer:

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<sup>1</sup>William Welsh (fl. 1740–70) appears in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46), among married men, starting in a 'trial band' in Apr. 1742. He became one of JW's strong supporters, serving as a steward at the Foundery by 1748 (see *Works*, 10:223). In the early 1750s he took a lead in reviving The Society for the Reformation of Manners, which had declined dramatically in the 1730s; though this effort would prove unsuccessful (see JW's comment on dining with Welsh on Feb. 2, 1766 (*Journal*, *Works*, 22:30)).

<sup>2</sup>See *Works*, 31.

<sup>3</sup>James Foster (1697–1753) was a deist-leaning pastor of the General Baptist chapel in Paul's Alley, Barbican, London. His writings brought notoriety and support—for example, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity (DD) from the Marischal College in Aberdeen in Dec. 1748.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Burroughs (1685–1761) was Foster's senior colleague at the General Baptist chapel in Paul's Alley, Barbican, London.

<sup>5</sup>Burroughs was one of the preachers included in vol. 2 of *Sermons Against Popery preached at Salters Hall in the Year 1735*, 2 vols. (London: John Noon, 1735).

Monday Even; March 14, 1742/3

Mr. Welsh,

I just now received and read your letter, and because you say you shall wait with some impatience for an answer, this comes with the first opportunity to assure you that I shall be glad to give you what satisfaction I can in the variety of particulars you mention. But so little is my inclination to controversy, and likewise my strength of body to carry it on if I were so inclined, and at the same time so many other affairs of importance am I unavoidably engaged in, that if you expect a correspondence of such a kind by letter you will find yourself much mistaken in,

Your affectionate brother in Christ Jesus,

Joseph Burroughs

In a few days after I called upon him, when at the same time he endeavored to answer each proposition. I was indeed at first a little staggered at what he said. But the Lord, knowing what my soul longed after, did not suffer me to fall. And by the divine aid I am determined that (howsoever short others may stop of the grace of God, yet I cannot) I will not be satisfied without full redemption.

On Tuesday, March the 15, I sent to Mr. Foster but I received no answer that week. I went to him in the vestry the first Sunday after and he told me that he had received my letter, but as yet he had no time to answer it because he had been preparing something for the press, but the next week I might expect an answer. I waited all that week but no answer came. Another week also passed but I received no answer. Then did I write unto him in the following manner.

March 29, [1743]

Reverend Sir,

I hope you will easily excuse my freedom when I again put you in mind of answering my letter. Indeed, it is with some backwardness that I now remind you of it because perhaps it may interfere with some other affairs which you may have in hand of greater importance. Yet, as you did promise to write as last week, every day did I expect to hear from you. Favor me with your answer with all speed. It may be of greater use than perhaps is imagined from

Your disquieted but sincere servant, in Christian faithfulness,

William Welsh

Another week passed over my head yet heard I nothing from him. I now began to be much surprised. I could not rest until I went to his house, but on that day when I called (which was Easter Monday) he was gone to preach at Deptford.

Whilst he thus delayed sending I was in great conflicts of soul, occasioned chiefly by the doctrine of the Trinity. I was in such perplexity that when I attempted to pray, God, the chief object of my worship, did as it were vanish out of my sight so that I knew not who or what to invoke. It was often in my mind that our Lord had reserved gifts for men. I did often ask him for those gifts, as also frequently did I ask for the wisdom that was from above and most heartily was I enabled to ask him to give me a saving knowledge of himself in respect of his divinity. But what was very remarkable at those times was that whenever I poured out my complaint unto Jesus I could hardly forbear to cry out, 'Almighty Jesus, thou everlasting son of God' and the like. When it was thus with me, I was in fear lest I should rob the supreme God of his glory and give it unto another.

And what yet added further to my grief was something in the second page of *The Character of a Methodist*,<sup>6</sup> as also in your last *Journal*, page 2, in the preface.<sup>7</sup> And few, very few of our brethren could I meet with that, as I thought, could truly sympathize with me, their experience being of a different kind.

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<sup>6</sup>*The Character of a Methodist*, §1, refers to Christ as 'the Eternal Supreme God' (*Works*, 9:34).

<sup>7</sup>In his Preface, §4, to the third extract of his *Journal* JW names the current challenge of Deists and Arians to the gospel (see *Works*, 19:3).

Thus was I harassed in my poor, weak mind and these things when meeting altogether lay heavy upon me. Yet could I make my solemn appeal to Jesus that in this thing I did not err willfully. I could call heaven and earth to witness that I was very unwilling to receive any traditions of men as a rule, either for my faith or practice, nothing but the word of God, nothing but his sacred word. And oh how earnest was I in my address to Jesus the Son of God after a saving knowledge of his divinity that if I was in any error destructive to my poor soul, that he would work a miracle to convince me—that he would bring me into the way of everlasting truth and that the truth might make me free.

It was the week before Easter when by providence I met with Robert Barclay's *Catechism and Confession of Faith*.<sup>8</sup> And there to my great astonishment in Chapter 3, page 20, the author presented to my view such a number of irresistible proofs and yet nothing but bare quotations of Scripture, which appeared in such a strong and overbearing light that I was that very week most clearly convinced of the unity and of the eternal and supreme divinity of the Son of God with the Father and Holy Spirit. As also the first Sunday after Easter the Comforter came and with much boldness I could then and can even now say that I am justified freely, for I have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I have some accounts by me concerning my former experience, how good the Lord hath been to me and how often I have departed from the living God, all which I choose at present to omit because it sufficeth that I do now believe. And though I am tempted on every side—namely to the desire of the eye, to the pride of life, and to blasphemy itself; nay, my inward parts as yet are very wickedness—yet I do assuredly know that I have a power given unto me to become a true son of the living God. And if I am but as clay in the hands of the potter I shall be enabled to purify myself from all filthiness both of the flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God.

Yet all this while heard I nothing from Mr. Foster. Therefore now I judged it high time entirely to quit myself of that communion and to show my reasons why I renounced those two ministers as my spiritual directors. And accordingly on Monday, April 25, I sent them a very large letter (the copy of which I have by me) wherein I enlarged upon the four former propositions:

1) After having shown that we were all shapen in iniquity and by nature the children of wrath, I then showed the absurdity of making mere human reason the basis and foundation whereon Christianity must be built.

2) I took an occasion to speak, amongst other things, of an instantaneous work and of the absolute necessity of an inward revelation unto every human soul.

3) I attempted to prove that the remission of sins was the privilege of every believer without exception.

4) I endeavoured to explain the term 'perfection', namely that I did not mean an absolute but only a sinless perfection. And I also showed what texts of scripture were applicable to a perfect Christian, declaring at the same time my disapprobation to all those prophets that prophesy smooth things and cry, 'Peace, Peace', when there is no peace.

My fifth reason was the doctrine of the Trinity.

Sixthly, my desire of more frequent communion than once a month.

And seventhly, concluding with the manner of God's providential care and goodness in drawing me to hear and approve of that sect which is everywhere spoken against [i.e., Methodism].

This much I thought it was my duty to relate unto you, and indeed a happy relation it is to me that Jesus hath given such gracious answers to my prayers. That whereas a few weeks ago I was possessed with the spirit of bondage to doubt and fear, but now I know that I have the spirit of adoption whereby I can cry, 'Abba, Father'. As also a few weeks ago I could only acknowledge God my Saviour as a creature, but now as the Creator of all things and consequently that he himself was created by none. I am now convinced (and that from plain inferences) that Jesus Christ, together with the Father and the eternal Spirit, are the one true God, blessed for ever more. I do this day publicly declare, as in the presence of the

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<sup>8</sup>Robert Barclay's *Catechism and Confession of Faith of ... Quakers* was first published in 1673. Chapter 3 has an extended defence of the divinity of Christ.

majesty of Jesus before whom angles veil their faces, that I believe him to be possessed of such immutable and inconceivable perfections, of such spotless purity and perfect rectitude of nature, as is far beyond the conceptions of any finite creature. Therefore, let the whole family of heaven and earth; yea, let the universal and immense creation set forth their Lord. Hallelujahs to him which was and which is and which is to come the Almighty (Rev. Chap. 1).

I am and through grace shall ever be

Your most affectionate and dutiful son in all Christian faithfulness,

William Welsh

[no postal information]

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'William Welsh' and 'b[rother] Welsh'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/135.

From Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright

Stanmore<sup>1</sup>  
c. July 1743

Dear Brother,

Some years ago I told my brother Charles I could not be of his way of thinking then, but that if ever I was I would as freely own it.

After I was convinced of sin, ...<sup>2</sup> and of your opinions as far as I had examined your principles, I still forbore declaring my sentiments as openly as I had an inclination to do, fearing I should relapse into my former state. When I was delivered from this fear, and had a blessed hope that he who had begun would finish his work,<sup>3</sup> I never confessed so powerfully as I ought how entirely I was of your mind, because I was taxed with insincerity and hypocrisy whenever I opened my mouth in favour of religion, or owned how great things God had done for me.

This discouraged me utterly, and prevented me from making my change so public as my folly and vanity had formerly been. But now my health is gone, I cannot be easy without declaring that I have long desired to know one thing, Jesus Christ and him crucified,<sup>4</sup> and this desire prevails above all others.

And though I am cut off from all human help or ministry, I am not without assistance. Though I have no spiritual friend, nor ever had one yet except perhaps once in a year or two when I have seen one of my brothers or some other religious person by stealth, yet (no thanks to me) I am enabled to seek him still and to be satisfied with nothing less than God, in whose presence I affirm this truth. ... I dare not desire health; only patience, resignation, and the spirit of a healthful mind. ... I have been so long weak that I know not how long my trial may last. But I have a firm persuasion and blessed hope (though no full assurance) that in the country I am going to I shall not sing 'Hallelujah', and 'Holy, holy, holy' without company, as I have done in this.

Dear brother, I am unable to speak or write on these things. ... I only speak my plain thoughts as they occur. Adieu. If you have time from better business to send a line to Stanmore, so great a comfort would be as welcome as it is wanted.

Your loving sister,

Mehet. Wright

Source: published transcription; Whitehead, *Life*, 1:68–69.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Apparently Stanmore, Middlesex, 11 miles northwest of Charing Cross. Mehetabel was clearly sick and had likely gone to Stanmore to escape the bad air of London generally and the lead work of her husband's plumbing business in particular.

<sup>2</sup>Whitehead inserts three dashes at several points. This appears to be his way of showing elisions, so we have changed them to ellipses.

<sup>3</sup>See Phil. 1:6.

<sup>4</sup>See 1 Cor. 2:2.

<sup>5</sup>Whitehead's transcription is reproduced without change (except omitting the dashes that likely reflected elisions in Whitehead) in Clarke, *Memoirs* (1823), 494–95; and Stevenson, *Memorials*, 315. Both Clarke and Stevenson appear to be relying on Whitehead, rather than a manuscript letter at hand.



From Henry Durbin<sup>1</sup>

Bristol  
August 5, 1743

Reverend and Honoured Father in Christ,

As you have been a minister of great good to me, I think it my duty to give you a short account how God began and carried on his work in my soul. I remember to have had many convictions for sin. But the first deep conviction of my fallen state was about seven years ago, and was occasioned by a fall, which bruised my knee very much. I greatly feared that I should become a cripple and my designs of worldly happiness, which I had been seeking after in all the harmless diversions (as they are called) of the age, were frustrated. But that spark of grace which God had given me kept me from sins of the grosser kind. This disappointment affected me much, and I began to pray to the Lord, which I had seldom done for two years before. It was impressed upon my mind, that I must seek happiness in wisdom, as Solomon did. But the enemy insinuated that the knowledge of astronomy and natural philosophy was the true wisdom; and my heart, greedy after knowledge and prone to seek happiness in anything rather than in God, pursued these studies two years. During this time my thoughts were seldom employed upon inward religion. As I had left off the pleasures of the world and now studied the works of God in creation, I thought that I was sufficiently religious. But I have now reason to believe that I was then in a state harder to be convinced than before, having a formal morality, and it is a wonder that I did not fall into deism.

When Mr. [George] Whitefield came to Bristol, I heard him on the 'new birth', and the Lord (blessed be his name) convinced me of the folly of placing my happiness in the acquisition of worldly knowledge or of any science except in him alone. Although these studies are good, if they are used right. Otherwise, I believe they are a great hindrance to the true knowledge of Jesus Christ. I now began to seek happiness in God, and threw aside those studies about a year. But I never heard much of faith in Christ till I heard you the first time at the society. However I was offended, with many others, because you used extempore prayer, and was persuaded to put myself out of the society. But in a few days I was convinced that I had done wrong, and went to hear you again, the first time at the New Room,<sup>2</sup> and was fully persuaded that you spoke the truth.

At Mrs. Grevil's<sup>3</sup> you gave me one of the *Homilies of Faith*,<sup>4</sup> by reading of which I found my soul quickened to hunger and thirst after Christ. At night I dreamt that I saw a very bright light arising from the side of a hill. It was so bright that I could scarce look at it, and it seemed to enlighten my whole soul. Next day I had this light seemingly before my eyes. I thought I saw different from what I did before. Two or three days after, as I was reading the homily, I saw it was by faith in the blood of Christ that my soul could be saved. When I came to the words, 'By grace ye are saved through faith',<sup>5</sup> presently a great joy filled my soul and I cried out, 'By grace I am saved through faith!' I could read no further, but repeated that sentence several times over. I was filled with rapturous joy and the love of God, to so great a

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Durbin (1718–99) was an apothecary in Bristol and (as this letter suggests) a member of the Baldwin Street religious society even before JW's first participation in the revival in Bristol. Henry and his wife Hester (Thrilly) Durbin became early members in the Wesleyan work in Bristol, with Henry serving as a trustee of the New Room chapel. They were also close friends with Charles and Sarah Wesley during their years in Bristol.

<sup>2</sup>JW's first recorded time preaching in the New Room was on June 3, 1739.

<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'Mr. Gravell's'; almost certainly a misreading. In 1739 JW was often at the boarding house of Elizabeth (Whitefield) Grevil.

<sup>4</sup>JW's extract from the Book of Homilies, titled *The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works* (Oxford, 1738); see *Works*, 12:32–43.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, I.8, *Works*, 12:35.

degree that I scarce knew where I was. I saw the Scriptures in a different manner to what I had done before. All the promises of Christ were mine. I knew I had received the Spirit of adoption, and had redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins. How sweet was the name of Jesus, and his words, to my soul! Before I received the forgiving mercy of our Lord I could not rightly believe in the Trinity, and at times had many doubts respecting the being of God, notwithstanding I was acquainted with astronomy, which clearly demonstrated his wisdom and power. But now these doubts were taken away, for I experimentally knew that God the Father had forgiven me, for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit witnessed this saving truth in my soul. How plain and simple is that knowledge which God teaches! By this I know faith is the evidence of things not seen.<sup>6</sup>

These rapturous joys did not continue long before I was exercised with many doubts, and my soul was overspread with heaviness and a fear of falling away. Yet I was not afraid of death. At that time I had no opportunity of conversation with experienced persons, which was a great disadvantage and exposed me to many embarrassing temptations. I had frequent intervals of joy and heaviness, but through a timorous disposition I never told my trials to anyone. I grew weary of this unsettled state. Till, by reading Mr. [William] Law's writings, I was made sensible that I wanted a new nature. And that unless I was fully renewed after the image of Christ I could have no happiness in heaven, even if I was to gain admittance there. And that a persuasion that I should not fall would do me no good, without holiness of heart. I then found great calmness and peace overflow my soul, attended with a pure, solid joy such as I never felt before. It took away all the painful weariness that had oppressed me. The joy I had before was transient, but this was serene and solid, continually abiding with me, and melting my heart as wax before the fire. Doubts and darkness fled away, and I clearly beheld the true light and walked in it.

After this great deliverance I was beset by strong temptations from my own evil nature, and gave way to the slavish fear of man. Which, for this year past, brought a deadness and indifference upon me, but not doubts or darkness, nor had any outward sin dominion over me—except anger once, which brought upon me the fear of death, but I soon found the pardoning love of God again. The Lord showed me that the cause of my deadness was in part occasioned by striving to deliver myself from temptations without Christ.

By the ministry of Mr. [Charles Caspar] Graves<sup>7</sup> I am made sensible to the necessity of abiding in Christ by faith, and receiving life and power from him every moment, to do his will and overcome temptations. I am convinced that I must be sanctified by faith, as well as justified. The Lord hath heard my prayer and quickened me. Temptations are weak, in comparison to what they used to be, and I trust I shall experience my heart filled with divine love and the fear of the world taken entirely away. To be dependent continually on Christ abases my soul much. When I think how often I offend him, I am confounded at his goodness to me, that I am out of hell. When I see that I have offended him in anything, not willfully, I am convinced I have done wrong, which seems to be the teachings of the Spirit. But I do not find that I am brought into condemnation or darkness for it. I feel I have an advocate with the Father. Some of my brethren think I am wrong in this matter, and say that I ought to feel condemnation and the wrath of God for the least offence, unless my heart is hardened. If I am in a delusion, I do not know it. Neither do I love disputes. Therefore I desire your advice.

The Lord has given me a confidence that I shall be made perfect in love, and kept and preserved by his power, through faith unto salvation. Yet I believe it possible I may fall away, notwithstanding I know at the same time that I shall not. This faith is not founded on the notion of 'once in grace, always in grace', but on that promise, 'the Lord is faithful, who also will do it'.<sup>8</sup> Some have thought that these sentiments are founded on the doctrine of predestination, and have likewise misunderstood Mr. Graves. But to me it appears to be quite different. I do not desire to follow my own judgment in any matter, but

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<sup>6</sup>See Heb. 11:1.

<sup>7</sup>Orig., 'Greaves'.

<sup>8</sup>1 Thess. 5:24.

am willing to submit to your direction. Please to remember me in your prayers, for I have many enemies within and without. I trust the Lord will revive his work.

I am, dear sir,

Your unworthy servant in the faith,

H. D.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 200–02.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol  
August 6, 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I never had so great a desire to see thee in my life. My spirit is weighed down exceedingly. I mingle my drink with my tears, and eat the bread of affliction.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in the midst of my sorrow I feel such a solid peace, such a full confidence that the Lord is my God, as I would not part with for the whole world. I know he has laid his hands on me for good, and sure I am the cry of my soul has reached his ear. But I dread this holy exercise ceasing. I fear I shall give over asking before my petitions are sealed. Yet surely this fervent supplication of his own Spirit cannot prove ineffectual. It is for the peace of Jerusalem I suffer. It is for the prosperity of Sion that I pray. It is for the offences that have been committed I mourn. O that I may prevail with my God for the souls that have sinned against him? Yea and I have faith that I shall prevail, or why am I thus zealously affected?

I feel not motion of any desire but for<sup>2</sup> his glory and the good of his people. O how do I long to give myself wholly unto him! How gladly would I lose my life, that I might serve him! Yet how ignorant am I [of] what is his will, or how I shall act most for his glory!

I find no motion of anger to such as have offended. I rather see it is my duty to confirm my love towards them. And notwithstanding I have been tempted many ways. I never felt less inclination to forsake you, nor ever found so close an union to the faithful few amongst you. I pity those whom Satan has had any advantage over. I plainly see those who serve the church must have much long-suffering, or they cannot be of any use in it. I believe if I was to despise another for falling into any sin whatever, if it was what I had the strongest abhorrence to, my Lord would in a little while convince me that I was capable of falling into it. I am no judge of the temptations of others, therefore I cannot despise any. But the wounds they make in the church give me pain inexpressible.

I retain a grateful sense of the goodness of God in prospering my soul since I was acquainted with you. And the Lord knoweth, for his sake I greatly love you. Sally Colston gives her duty, our friends at Stoke's Croft their love,<sup>3</sup> to thee.

My duty and unfeigned love is to thee, earnestly desiring all things may work together for good. I conclude,

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 220–21.

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<sup>1</sup>See Ps. 102:9.

<sup>2</sup>'For' added in errata (at end of vol. 9).

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth Stafford (1697–1774) and Francis Vigor (1699–1741), both members of the Quaker community in Bristol, were married in 1722. By this point Elizabeth was a widow, and lived near her unmarried sister Ann ('Nancy') Stafford (c. 1710–92) in the King's Square / Stoke's Croft neighborhood of Bristol. Vigor would later help CW find a house in this neighborhood, on his marriage to Sarah Gwynne.

From the Rev. Westley Hall<sup>1</sup>

[Salisbury]  
August 16, 1743

Dear Brother,

Tis well if you have not tasted of the gall of bitterness. Take heed that you be not led *captive* in the bonds of uncharitableness! To profess as you did your generous persuasions of my sincerity, etc., even till now, if you had *ever* found such witnesses as you pretend of guile and dissimulation, was such a *stretch of inconsistency* (not to say insincerity), as one should not have suspected—had not you yourself *declared* it! It might perhaps have given some appearance of strength and terror to your weak words—if you had added but the names of such formidable accusers. Pray let me know *them*, that I may publish them with this if need be to all the world—that so all deceit and guile being thus discovered, you may find yourself undeceived at last, and own as *publicly* that you have neither known *yourself* aright, nor yet

Your affectionate brother.

*Address:* 'To The Revd Mr John Wesley'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'b[rother] Hall / Aug 16, 1743 / a[nswere]d 17 / Answer inclosed'.

*Source:* secondary manuscript copy; MARC, DDWes 8/38.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hall is likely responding to a letter of JW that does not survive. Some sense of JW's growing concerns about Hall can be gained from JW's letter to his wife Martha (Wesley) Hall of Nov. 17, 1742, *Works*, 26:90–91.

<sup>2</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:102.

From Margaret Jenkins<sup>1</sup>

Bristol  
October 8, 1743

Reverend Sir,

I think it necessary to give you a short account of some of my past experience. I begin at the time the Lord gave me a full assurance of pardon. It was under a sermon in which these words were repeated, 'Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'<sup>2</sup> I was surprised with the glory of the Lord that shone around me. It shone, indeed, in a way that was unutterable. It was as bright and as discernible as the natural sun at noon day. I thought my body as well as soul was changed, and I seemed as if I was lost to this world, and yet my understanding was never clearer. The Lord spoke loudly unto my soul, 'This day salvation is come to thy house.'<sup>3</sup> I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'<sup>4</sup> I replied, 'Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'<sup>5</sup> I felt myself clean every whit; nor could I make myself sensible that ever I had sinned. I praised the Lord in the words of the Virgin Mary, but not with my outward voice. I knew I was born of God, and felt I was brought to an innumerable company of angels and spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant and the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things than that of Abel. I opened my eyes (for they were shut) and I thought all things around me were holiness unto the Lord.

This happened two years ago last August. But I forgot I was to come daily and wash in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. I went on as if I had grace enough to carry me to journey's end. So foolish and ignorant was I! But now the Lord showed what I was by nature more than ever, so that I groaned under the intolerable weight of inbred sin. And I had many a dry and barren day, I believe, because I did not watch unto prayer. But it was not long before I was again surprised, as it were, with a fresh sense of his love and a clear sight of the way that I should walk in. Commonly, before the Lord dealt thus graciously with me, I was ready to give up my confidence. So I see that man's extremity is God's opportunity.

About two months before I went from Mr. Sayse's,<sup>6</sup> I had such a calm peace and such an inward, intimate communion with the Lord that when I sat down to work I seemed to be compassed about with the immediate presence of God, so that I sometimes cried out, 'I am a child of an hundred years old!' The Lord now taught me many things, and led me by a way that I had not known. The following winter I fell into grievous distress of soul that I cannot describe. Neither did anyone I conversed with understand me. I was not in doubt or fear, but the enemy suggested grievous things to me. I find some have been in the same way since. Now I know Satan had me, to sift me as wheat. I prayed to the Lord that my faith might not fail, and I found myself willing to bear it as long as the Lord would suffer it. Two days after (which was the second of January last) in the morning, while a dear and worthy minister of Christ was preaching the grace of God in Christ, I had an immediate sight of my Saviour upon the cross. My soul was directly set at liberty and I went my way, praising God with an exceeding great joy. I have been many times since under grievous temptations—but never like this, nor my deliverance ever so glorious. The more I see Jesus' love, the more I see of my own vileness. So that I can say, 'Lord, thy compassion never fails, and

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<sup>1</sup>JW adds this note in *AM*: 'I insert this letter chiefly for the benefit of her daughters. God grant they may tread in their mother's steps!'

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 15:57.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 19:9.

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 13:5.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Luke 2:29–30.

<sup>6</sup>Orig., 'Saise'. Thomas Sayse was a hooper in Bristol, and member of the Methodist society. Mrs. Jenkins had apparently worked for a while at his shop.

therefore I am not in hell!’

Sir, I desire you would pray for me. I must praise the Lord for you, for in his hand you have been the sole instrument of my blessedness. Therefore I beg leave to conclude myself, dear sir,

Yours in the Lord,

Margaret Jenkins

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 228–30.

From John Ewer<sup>1</sup>

[London]

c. December 28, 1743

Sir,

I have had but very little rest since I left you, the cause of which was my leaving God first. Tis true I did in a very solemn manner, on my knees, break from you, as though I had done so merely to please God. But by what followed it appears otherwise. For I no sooner broke off from you than I began to think how I might make a worldly advantage by it. O, thought I, I shall not now be so scrupulous in many things, particularly in doing work on the Lord's day. Then I got me some rabbits and fowls, and I would be sure to feed and clean them well on that day and to be out on the hunt for food for them. And I took care my poor family should be sharers with me in the drudgery, or else they must expect many a sour look and bitter word at least. I then grew worse and worse, insomuch that I have given such occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, such a wound to religion, as I could not heal were I to live ten thousand years. O what have I done? O what have I lost! O that I might be admitted into God's favour once more! Pray for me, I beseech you, if you see any hope left, if you do not think that repentance will be denied me, though I seek it carefully with tears. Then if you can think of any shame that will be bad enough for me to undergo before I am admitted into that company I so willingly left, see whether I will not readily submit to it. O that God would be pleased to bring me into light and love again! How careful would I be of his grace! How would I deny myself, take up my cross, endure shame, suffer persecution of every kind, follow the dear Lord Jesus without the camp! But I have crucified him afresh. O that I could give full scope to my mind. But I cannot. These lines are but a very imperfect description of the state, condition, and desire, of

That backslider, that apostate, that traitor,

John Ewer

*Source:* published excerpt; JW, *Journal*, Jan. 1, 1744 (*Works*, 20:7).

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<sup>1</sup>See Ewer's earlier letter to JW, dated July 24, 1740.



From John Haime

Ghent  
February 2, 1744

Sir,

I make bold to send you these lines. February 18, 1743 we began our march for Germany. I was then much cast down and my heart was ready to break. But the day we marched to Maestricht I found the love of God shed abroad in my heart, that I thought my very soul was dissolved into tears. But this lasted not above three weeks, and then I was in heaviness again, till on April 24, as I was walking in the fields, God broke my hard heart in pieces. And yet I was not delivered from the fear of death. I went to my quarters very sick and weak, in great pain of soul and body. By the morning I was so weak I could scarce go. But this proved a sweet night to my soul. For now I knew there was no condemnation for me, believing in Christ Jesus.

June 16. The day we engaged the French at Dettingen, as the battle began, I said, 'Lord, in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded.'<sup>1</sup> Joy overflowed my soul, and I told my comrades, 'If I fall this day, I shall rest in the everlasting arms of Christ.' Now I felt I could be content to be cast into the sea for the sake of my dear brethren, so their eyes might be opened, and they might see, before it was too late, the things that belong unto their peace.

When we came to winter quarters there were but three of us joined together. But now, by the blessing of God, we are increased to twelve. And we have reason to believe the hand of the Lord is with us. I desire, for the sake of him whom we follow after, that you would send us some instructions how to proceed in our little society. ... God is become a mouth to me and has blessed even my words to some of their souls. All praise, and glory, and honour, be unto him and to the Lamb for ever and ever! From

Your affectionate brother,

J. H.

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 02, 1744 (*Works*, 20:8–9).

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<sup>1</sup>BCP, Morning Prayer, Te Deum.

From James Jones<sup>1</sup>

February 16, 1744

On Monday, January 23, a great mob gathered together at Darlaston, a mile from Wednesbury. They fell upon a few people who were going to Wednesbury and, among the rest, on Joshua Constable's wife, of Darlaston. Some of them threw her down, and five or six held her down, that another might force her. But she continued to resist, till they changed their purpose, beat her much, and went away.

Monday, January 30. The mob gathered again, broke into Joshua Constable's house, pulled part of it down, broke some of his goods in pieces, and carried the rest away—particularly all his shop goods, to a considerable value. But not satisfied with this they sought for him and his wife, swearing they would knock their brains out. Their little children, meantime, as well as themselves, wandered up and down, no one daring to relieve or take them in, lest they should hazard their own lives.

Tue. 31. About a hundred of the mob met together on the Church Hill at Wednesbury. But hearing some of Wednesbury were resolved to defend themselves they dispersed for that time.

Wednesday, February 1. Mr. Charles Wesley came to Birmingham, and the next day preached at Wednesbury. The whole congregation was quiet and attentive, nor had we any noise or interruption.

Mon. 6. I accompanied him part of his way, and in the afternoon came back to Wednesbury. I found the society met together and commending themselves to God in prayer, having been informed that many both at Darlaston and other places had bound themselves by an oath to come on Shrove Tuesday (the next day) and plunder all the Methodists in Wednesbury.

We continued in prayer till the evening. I desired as many as could to meet me again at eight in the morning. But I had scarce begun to speak when one came running with all speed and told us a large mob was coming into the town and had broke into some houses already. I immediately retired to my father's house, but he did not dare to receive me. Nor did anyone else, till at length Henry Parks took me in; whence early in the morning I went to Birmingham.

The mob had been gathering all Monday night, and on Tuesday morning they began their work. They assaulted, one after another, all the houses of those who were called Methodists. They first broke all their windows, suffering neither glass, lead, nor frames to remain therein. Then they made their way in, and all the tables, chairs, chests of drawers, with whatever was not easily removable, they dashed in pieces, particularly shop goods and furniture of every kind. What they could not well break, as feather-beds, they cut in pieces and strewed about the room. William Sitch's wife was lying-in, but that was all one; they pulled away her bed too and cut it in pieces. (Had the French come in their place, would they have done more?) All this time none offered to resist them. Indeed most part, both men and women fled for their lives. Only the children stayed, not knowing whither to go.

Wearing apparel and things which were of value, or easily saleable, they carried away, every man loading himself with as much as he could well carry of whatever he liked best.

Some of the gentlemen who had set the mob to work, or threatened to turn away collier or miner out of their service that did not come and do his part, now drew up a paper for those of the society to sign, importing that they would never invite or receive any Methodist preacher more. On this condition they told them they would stop the mob at once; otherwise they must take what followed.

This they offered to several. But they declared one and all, 'We have already lost all our goods and nothing more can follow but the loss of our lives, which we will lose too, rather than wrong our consciences.'

On Wednesday the mob divided into two or three companies, one of which went to Aldridge, four miles from Wednesbury, and plundered many houses there, as they had done in several other villages.

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<sup>1</sup>James Jones, a man of some property, travelled for a time as one of JW's preachers, starting in 1743. He eventually restricted his work to Staffordshire where he was a greatly beloved and respected local preacher. Born in Tipton, he died in Birmingham in 1783.

Here also they loaded themselves with clothes and goods of all sorts, as much as they could stand under. They came back through Walsall with their spoils. But the gentlemen of Walsall, being apprised of their coming, raised a body of men, who met them, took what they had away, and laid it up in the town hall. Notice was then sent to Aldridge that every man who had been plundered might come and take his own goods.

Mr. Wood of Wednesbury likewise told several they should have what could be found of their goods, on condition they would promise not to receive or hear those preachers any more. On Friday in the afternoon I went from Birmingham, designing to go to Tipton Green. But finding the mob were still raging up and down, I returned to Birmingham, and soon after (having as yet no more place in these parts) set out for London.

*Source:* published extract; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 18, 1744 (*Works*, 20:10–12).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>The letter is annotated in *Works*, 20.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Newcastle upon Tyne  
March 6, 1744

My objection to your address in the name of the Methodists<sup>1</sup> is that it would constitute us a sect. At least it would *seem to allow* that we are a body distinct from the national Church, whereas we are only a sound part of that Church. Guard against this; and in the name of the Lord, address tomorrow!

*Source:* manuscript transcription; CW, MS Journal.

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<sup>1</sup>CW is referring to a short address that JW wrote on Mar. 5 to King George II affirming the loyalty of Methodists to King George and the Church of England in the context of growing concern about a French invasion in support of Prince Charles Edward Stuart (the 'Young Pretender') and Roman Catholicism; cf. JW, *Works* 26:104–06.

From John Haime

Lisle  
May 1, 1744

May 1. We marched to the camp, near Brussels. There a few of us joined into a society, being sensible, where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is our Lord in the midst of them. Our place of meeting was a small wood near the camp. We remained in this camp eight days and then removed to a place called Assche. Here I began to speak openly, at a small distance from the camp, just in the middle of the English army. And here it pleased God to give me some evidences that my labour was not in vain. We sung an hymn, which drew about two hundred soldiers together, and they all behaved decently. After I had prayed, I begun to exhort them, and though it rained very hard, yet very few went away. Many acknowledged the truth, in particular a young man, John Greenwood by name, who has kept with me ever since, and whom God had lately been pleased to give me for a fellow-labourer. Our society is now increased to upwards of two hundred, and the hearers are frequently more than a thousand, although many say I am mad, and others have endeavoured to incense the Field-Marshal against us. I have been sent for and examined several times, but, blessed be God, he has always delivered me.

Many of the officers have come to hear for themselves, often nine or ten at a time. I endeavour to lose no opportunity. During our abode in the camp at Assche I have preached thirty-five times in seven days. One of those times a soldier who was present called aloud to his comrades to come away and not hear that fool any longer. But it pleased God to send the word spoken to his heart, so that he roared out in the bitterness of his soul, for a considerable time, and then he who never fails those that seek him turned his heaviness into joy. He is now never so happy as when he is proclaiming the loving-kindness of God his Saviour.

I was a little shocked at my first entrance on this great work, because I was alone, having none to help me. But the Lord helped me and soon raised up William Clements and, in June, John Evans, belonging to the train, to my assistance. Since we have been in this camp we have built two small tabernacles, in which we meet at eight in the morning, at three in the afternoon, and seven at night, and commonly two whole nights in each week.

Since I began to write this we are come to our winter quarters, so that our society is now parted. We are some in Bruges, some in Ghent. But it has pleased the Lord to leave neither without a teacher. For John Greenwood and I are in this city, and Brothers [William] Clements<sup>1</sup> and [John] Evans<sup>2</sup> are in Ghent. So that we trust our Lord will carry on his work in both places.

We that are in Bruges have hired a small place, in which we meet. And our dear Lord is in the midst of us. Many times the tears run down every face, and joy reigns in every heart.

I shall conclude with a full assurance of your prayers, with a longing desire to see you. O when will the joyful meeting be? Perhaps not on this side death. If not, my Master's will be done.

Your unworthy brother in the Lord,

J. H.

*Source:* published extract; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 4, 1744 (*Works*, 20:42–43).

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<sup>1</sup>See his letter to JW, dated Oct. 10, 1745, below.

<sup>2</sup>See his letter to JW, dated Nov. 12, 1744, below.

From Sarah Perrin

New Room, Bristol<sup>1</sup>  
May 31, 1744

Dear and Honoured Friend,

I trust, God will enable me to follow thy advice always. I feel no coldness to any person; therefore I do not know that I show any. I endeavour to act according to the light I have, most to the glory of God. But I see my lack of wisdom continually. And from what I hear, my most disinterested designs have a false construction put upon them. The more I desire the good of all, the less I am beloved. But what concerns myself in this matter is nothing. It will, I know, it must work together for my good. For I sought not to please myself by coming here. Neither shall I (if it be his will I should continue) seek to do my own will, but the will of him that placed me here.

Love and harmony, and a regular economy, in this house seem to me a thing of very great importance. But in what way, or who will be the instruments used to bring this to pass, I see not. Therefore I have no choice. Only do I desire that our Lord may take the cause into his own hand, and do with us all as seemeth him good.

I see very clearly sister Williams<sup>2</sup> will, if it is in her power, put Sally Colston<sup>3</sup> from amongst us. She has a deep prejudice against her. I see nothing but what is very inoffensive in Sally's behaviour. But I have reason to think sister Williams thinks nothing will make her easy here, unless we are put out of the house again. I went for ten days to Bradford, and though my aunt parted with me, and with great affection and grief, I was received here with as much coldness. Yet I know it is better for me to be here. And when patience has had its perfect work in me, I shall be taken from the cross, or the cross from me. So God may be glorified. It matters not how long, or how short, I am to endure it.

I find great peace, but not such ardent desire as I did. I move on but slowly; but I have a little sight of the good land, and hope I shall never mistake the borders of the land for Canaan itself. For whoever thinks they have attained what they have not, I know must suffer loss.

My good friend, pray for me. Pray that God may give me wisdom, for I am—indeed I am— very weak in understanding; which, though I feel no condemnation for, yet at times I find deep grief, for fear my ignorance should cause others to err. With duty, I remain,

Thy poor, unworthy friend,

S. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 222–23.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sarah Perrin was now the housekeeper at Bristol.

<sup>2</sup>Anne Williams, the former housekeeper.

<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'Coltson'.

<sup>4</sup>Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:107.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol  
June 10, 1744

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Since I writ last I have had a caution given me not to write so freely (because my affection has been misinterpreted) lest it should hurt the cause of God. But I cannot see, if we feel love and thankfulness for the blessings we receive from your ministry, why we should refrain from speaking of it, whilst the world are so ready to open their mouths against you.

That we shall always find more nearness to some souls than others I am firmly persuaded, even when we are made perfect in love, from the late influence of our brother Charles Jones. In his last moment, after the work was finished and his joy was full, he in a more particular manner prayed for and spoke of the ministers by whom God had brought him to himself. Therefore I think, as my soul prospers, the same love I have always expressed will increase, and I shall speak of it more and more. And I doubt not but the grace of God will preserve me from all affection that is not for my good and his glory.

I see how absolutely necessary it is, with all the light God gives us, to examine every motion of our heart, in order to discover all the deceit that is within us. O that God would thoroughly purge the floor of my heart, that nothing but pure love may be found in me! That, whether I am treated well or ill, perfect charity may be the only motive of all my words and actions! Indeed it would be right, whenever my friends observe these imperfections in me, to speak plainly, that they may appear more odious and I may strive more for the mastery.

I think I may venture to say love abounds more and more amongst us. It seems as if we were now striving which should show the most kindness. I am now so far from thinking it will never be better, that I see it is better and better daily as to peace and concord. Last First Day [i.e., Sunday] every one of us went to sacrament, and I have great hope our lives will adorn the gospel.

I see I am in more danger than I was when my cross was greater. For I then so sensibly felt the necessity of crying to God and keeping close to him in prayer. Whereas now I feel such gladness of heart, health of body, and very little cross, that I fear without great watchfulness I shall suffer loss. I would willingly drink of the cup our Lord drank of, and suffer with his people. But he knoweth best what I am able to bear, and dealeth with me according to his love and kindness.

I hope I shall always take it kind of my friends to discover to me my faults, in any way they judge proper. Thy<sup>1</sup> last message has convinced me I have greatly erred in writing my thoughts of others. Though I can say it always has been with some view of good, and I believe sometimes has prevented the enemy's taking any advantage over me. May God keep your enemies from making an ill use of the writings that have been clandestinely showed unto them. O may the God of our fathers dwell in thee, and the spirit of Elijah rest upon thee. With duty and love unfeigned, I remain

Thy friend,

S. P.

P. S. Pray write to us, and remember me in prayer, for I see I do not long escape without a burden. My heart is knit more and more unto you, and may we be filled with that manner of love wherewith Christ loved us.

*Source:* published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 223–35.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., 'My', corrected in errata. She clearly refers to JW's response to her letter of May 31.

<sup>2</sup>Abridgement published in *Works*, 26:108–09.

From Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright

[Bristol]  
July 13, [1744]

Dear Brother,

I live in hope you won't forget my husband, now [that] brother Charles (to whom I owe eternal gratitude) is absent.<sup>1</sup> I should rejoice to hear you had any hope of him, or that any outward sin was struck off. Yet I must wish with hundreds more to see you here, which I verily believe is exceedingly wanted, and would do infinite good to this church. I continue very weak in mind and body. Instead of deliverance from sin, I am more and more convinced of it, especially of unprofitableness to myself and others. While I see Miss [Sarah] Perrin and some more women highly useful, I cannot help wishing I was good for something, though ever so little. My illness troubles me so little it is truly miraculous. But I'm daily in heaviness through many temptations. Though pretty secure from purple and fine linen, I'm seriously afraid of faring sumptuously every day, your family here putting upon me all manner of courtesy, and the wretched clay which ought to serve with vigour will not bear severity. This leads to innumerable snares to softness and self-indulgence. This remains my greatest cross, the body engrossing the care that I could wish better employed. My brother Charles advises me to go into the bands, which I would willingly, if I thought I should not bring still more disgrace upon you, by being turned out again, having everything to fear from myself. Mrs. Vigor, Miss Stafford, Miss Perrot, and above all dear sister Perrin,<sup>2</sup> load me with obligations and confusion, seeing under all my unworthiness such hourly cause of thankfulness! Miss Nancy Stafford desires to be remembered to my husband, and joins in duty and respect with the above-mentioned persons to you, wishing earnestly for your presence. I desire all your prayers for the spirit of a healthful mind. The body is not worth a thought, yet much at your service, continuing with my whole heart, such as it is,

Your obliged humble servant, and most loving sister,

Mehet. Wright

Pray write when you can.

I forgot to mention Mrs. Burdock and Miss<sup>3</sup> in the list of my new relations, who are extremely civil to me, desirous to see you, and give their duty and respects.

I'm much obliged to Mrs. [Elizabeth] Cart,<sup>4</sup> and would attempt answering hers, if I could cope with her; but she is really above my match. Adieu.

*Address:* 'To / The Revd Mr Wesley'.

*Endorsement:* by JW, 'S[ister] Wright / July 13, 1744 / a[nswere]d 16'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, DDWF 9/3.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mehetabel had been in bad health for a while (see her letter of July 1743), and now the Wesley brothers have arranged for her to spend time in Bristol (likely to benefit from the waters of Hotwells and of Bath nearby). Meanwhile, they were checking in on her husband William Wright. CW had been in London from late March through June, but was now on a preaching trip in Cornwall.

<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor, her sister Ann Stafford, and Sarah Perrin were all of Quaker descent and lived in the Stoke's Croft area of Bristol. So likely was Ann Perrot (1707–88), of whose death JW would inform CW in a letter dated Mar. 2, 1788, *Works*, 30:652–53.

<sup>3</sup>Mrs. Agnes (Hatch) Burdock, wife of Ebenezer Burdock, and their daughter Susanna.

<sup>4</sup>Elizabeth (Smith) Cart a Quaker widow, was now active in the Foundery society in London.

<sup>5</sup>Transcription published in *Works*, 26:112–13.



From the Rev. Henry Piers (?)<sup>1</sup>

[Bexley?]  
August 14, 1744

Reverend Sir,

I was surprised on Sunday, when you was pleased to tell me I carried things to extremes. In denying the lawful pleasures in eating, I denied only self-indulgence in eating. ... All which I advance is that he who will be Christ's disciple must absolutely deny himself. It was once a great self-denial to me not to go to a play, or to other diversions. But this is now no self-denial to me at all. So that if I was now called to deny myself in these things only, I might take up with what is past and now live an agreeable, self-indulgent life. But God forbid. I plainly see every hour produces occasions of self-pleasing. And this I apprehend is a sufficient call for, and rule of, self-denial. For instance, in the morning it is a great self-denial to rise out of a warm bed. But if I do not, I am immediately condemned as a slothful servant. If I do, I find a great inward blessing. Under the preaching it is self-pleasing to see who is here, who there. But if I do let my eye wander, I become cold and lifeless; if I deny myself, I often find even a present reward. In walking the streets I can please myself by looking this way and that—on this chariot, that house, and picture. But if I deny myself for Christ's sake, his consolations abound with me.

But I may deny myself outwardly and yet be self-indulgent, namely by allowing myself in vain and trifling thoughts. Here is a continual fight and an hard struggle I must have before I conquer. But when I do overcome, I lose nothing by it, for my soul is delighted with secret refreshments.

At noon I may find many pleasant things. And of this it was that I said to Mr. [Thomas] Richards, 'If there are two dishes set before you, by the rule of self-denial you ought to eat of that which you like the least.' And this rule I desire to observe myself, always to choose what is least pleasing and cheapest. Therefore I feed much upon milk. It is pleasant enough, and nothing I can find is so cheap. Whereas if one sort of food be dearer than another, and yet I use it, because more agreeable to my appetite, this I apprehend is directly contrary to the discipleship of a self-denying Master. And this kind of self-indulgence (not in food only) is practised by too many that know the truth.

I suppose, sir, you now perceive, I do not condemn all pleasure in eating. But I condemn all self-indulgence, both in that and other things, particularly in talking. Many who think themselves believers please themselves with talking more than is profitable. They talk even of the things of God till they bring a deadness, nay an unaccountable carelessness, over their spirits. I don't say they laugh or talk idly. But still they are not deeply serious, nor is their conversation truly solid. Whereas I should think the conscience of a true believer is tender as the apple of an eye, and that to such a one it would be less pain to suffer the rack than to trifle, either in word or deed.

*Source:* published extract; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 16, 1744 (*Works*, 20:35–36).

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<sup>1</sup>The author is not identified by JW. The suggestion of Piers is based on the fact that Piers had accompanied JW to Shoreham, to introduce him to Rev. Vincent Perronet, on Aug. 12 and likely entertained JW over the previous weekend.

From Henry Millard<sup>1</sup>

[St. Ives, Cornwall]  
c. September 1, 1744

Reverend Sir,

The word of God has free course here. It runs and is glorified. But the devil rages horribly. Even at St. Ives we cannot shut the doors of John Nance's<sup>2</sup> house to meet the society, but the mob immediately threaten to break them open. They now triumph over us more and more, saying it is plain nothing can be done against them. And in other places it is worse. I was going to Crowan<sup>3</sup> on Tuesday was sennight. On the road two of our brothers met me. When we came within a mile of the house we saw a great mob at some distance, but they were going another way. We then left our horses at the house of a friend and went forward on foot. Within a quarter of a mile of the place where I was to preach two persons met us who used to be persecutors. But they now desired me, for God's sake, not to go up, for if I did, they said, there would surely be murder, if there was not already, for many were knocked down before they came away.

By their advice and the entreaties of those that were with me, I turned back to the house where we left our horses. We had been there but a short time when many of the people came, being very bloody and having been beaten very bad. But the main cry of the mob was after the preacher, whom they sought for in every corner of the house, swearing bitterly they only wanted to knock him on the head, and then they should be satisfied.

Not finding me there, they said however they should catch him on Sunday at Camborne. But it was Mr. [Thomas] Westell's turn to go thither on Sunday. While he was preaching there, at Mr. Harris's house,<sup>4</sup> a tall man came in and pulled him down. Mr. Harris demanded his warrant. But he swore, warrant or no warrant, he should go with them. So he carried him out to the mob, who took him away to the church town. They kept him there till Tuesday morning and then carried him to Penzance, where, in the afternoon, he was brought before three Justices and asked abundance of questions, to which they required him to answer upon oath. Then Dr. Borlase<sup>5</sup> wrote his mittimus,<sup>6</sup> by virtue of which he was to be committed to the House of Correction at Bodmin as a vagrant. So they took him as far as Camborne that night, and the next day, on to Bodmin.

I desire your continual prayers for me,  
Your weak servant in Christ,

Henry Millard

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Sept. 16, 1744 (*Works*, 20:40–41).

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Millard was a young man who had recently become one of JW's travelling preachers. He attended the 1745 conference, but caught small pox soon after and was buried Dec. 1, 1745 in Bristol.

<sup>2</sup>John Nance (c. 1717–85), an early Methodist in St. Ives, and later churchwarden there.

<sup>3</sup>Crowan, Cornwall; 3 miles south of Camborne.

<sup>4</sup>Likely the Mr. Harris of Rosewarne; see *WMM* 126 (1903): 504.

<sup>5</sup>Rev. Dr. Walter Borlase (1694–1776) was vicar of Madron and Kenwyn, vice-warden of the tin mines in Cornwall, and a major persecutor of Methodists in Cornwall; cf. JW, *Journal*, Apr. 10, 1744 (*Works*, 20:22–23), and June 19–July 2, 1745 (*ibid.*, 20:69–74).

<sup>6</sup>A court order to escort a convict to prison.

From Henry Millard

[St. Ives, Cornwall]  
September 11, 1744

Reverend Sir,

I am glad to hear from you. I hope all things are well at London, and I should be glad if they were so here. Although brother [Thomas] Westell is bailed out of prison, the devil rages horribly. On the Wednesday after he came home he went to Gwennap. While he was preaching the mob rushed into the house, beat the candles out, and then came up to the desk—but, it being dark, they could not find the way into it. At last, when they had broken it down, they found a little boy in it instead of the preacher. They gave him two or three blows and let him go. Brother Westell stood by them for some time in the dark, with an old woman's hat upon his head, till some of our friends that stood at the window took him out. He went over the hedge, but the mob soon overtook and brought him back again. They cried out, 'We have got the preacher!' Captain Hitchen's two sons,<sup>7</sup> hearing them, ran to them and bid them let him go. There being but two that had hold of him, they let him go. And while they went to call more of the mob to their assistance brother Westell ran over two hedges into a standing field of oats. There he lay. The mob, being busy in breaking the partition and seats to pieces, did not follow him presently, and when they did they could not find him. So they went away for that time.

The Saturday following, which was Saturday last, it being my turn to go, I met one of Captain Hitchen's sons and other of our Gwennap brethren. They told me it was not best for me to come there, for the mob said they would have me, if they pulled down every house in the town. About three o'clock I went to preach at Stithians. When I was going to preach I was told the mob was coming from Gwennap after me. But I preached very peaceably and met the society, and the Lord was with us of a truth. As we were going to Gwennap we saw the mob on the top of the downs. They had been to Gwennap and pulled down the house where the society was kept. When they found me not there, they pursued after me, thinking to meet me on the way or to catch me in Stithians. Meantime we went over a friend's hedge to his garden. It was but a short time before the mob came down, horsemen and footmen. Speaking moderately, they were betwixt three and four hundred. One in the village told them that I was gone forward, so they went on in haste. When they were gone, we went over the hedge and crossed the fields, and so escaped out of their hands.

They said they had orders from the gentlemen to pull down any house that I was in, and they do swear they will kill them that receive us. So preaching is over for a season, until there is something done in this matter.

Sir, I desire your prayers and the prayers of all the brethren, whom am  
The least of all your servants in Christ,

Henry Millard

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 230–31.

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<sup>7</sup>Capt. James Hitchens (1699–1752), a leader among the tanners at Gwennap, had four sons, all of whom supported the Wesley brothers. Two would die shortly: Samuel (c. 1725–45) and Thomas (d. 1746). The other two were James Jr. (c. 1723–88) and William (1727–73).

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol  
September 23, 1744<sup>1</sup>

My Very Good Friend,

What shall I say? I have this strong and only proof it is right and good for me to be in this house. The loving kindness of the Lord is very great to me. I find no temptation, but the same moment I see deliverance. Yea, and I am made more than conqueror. The Lord is emptying my soul, and he will fill it. Deeply I feel my wants. Is it possible my desires should be satisfied and I should live? The outward man I know grows weaker. Surely soon I shall be with Christ in glory. But sometimes it appears to me I must suffer more first, and there will be something even for me to do before I go hence. I have no choice in it. I can patiently wait my appointed time.

I can say with sincerity my desire of being dutiful to thee proceeds from no selfish motive. I love the church. I desire to do the will of my Father, and it always appears to me that I cannot serve his people any other way acceptably but by obeying those he has set over us. My mind is enlarged towards you. I find no motion of any affection in my heart but brotherly love. I count nothing my own. I want no respect or ceremony from you, only this freedom. I desire, in every way you think I can be serviceable, you would always speak to me as your servant or friend.

One thing I wish I could conquer. I cannot yet talk to either thy brother or thee on spiritual things with as much freedom as I can to others. The disproportion of our knowledge appears always so very great that I am never with you but I find great backwardness of opening my mouth. I believe there is a mixture of fear and pride in this temptation.

O eternity, eternity! It appears near to me. I have some sight of the glory which shall be revealed in me, and my desire is stronger than I can express. O Lord, set my soul at liberty, that I may fulfill thy will and die!

I feel my own unprofitableness more and more every hour. And every moment I fall short of doing his will whom my soul desireth to love. What grief does this cause? But oh with what love does this tender parent deal with me! When shall my soul praise him!

My dear friend, if thou canst pray for me, do. For I stand in need of the prayers of the faithful. With duty, I remain,

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 225–26.

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., '1743'; corrected in errata.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]  
October 23, 1744

Dear and Honoured Friend,

Great and many are the blessings I now enjoy, but the greatest of all is still lacking. I remain unholy. I desire to be thankful and to praise God. I see his goodness in all things concerning me. But my thoughts still wander from him. O that I was an inhabitant of the land I see before me! I cannot rest on this side [of] Jordan. Sometimes I find a strong desire for thy coming to us, because by no means whatever has God wrought so effectually upon my soul. At other times I fear this desire is wrong, and am ready to think I have some trust in man. O that mine eye was single, that every thought and desire of my heart might be to his glory!

I have great satisfaction, notwithstanding I see many snares attend my situation. I know that nothing but watching unto prayer will keep my soul in safety. But is not he that has kept me unto this hour, willing and able to preserve me unto the end? My dear friend, pray for me. At present it is not the cross I fear, it is being too much at ease in Sion. I want to be stirred up, to be more in earnest after my own salvation and the salvation of others.

Every day seems to bring fresh blessings. I see the loving kindness of the Lord in all things. O why am not I feelingly thankful? Surely I am the most ungrateful of all my Father's children. I have all things added unto me, yet how coolly do I seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness!<sup>1</sup> O that my soul was athirst for God, and my whole heart panting after him! I am not in earnest, yet I long for salvation. It is the Spirit of the Lord that quickeneth, why should I expect it from one instrument more than another? O Lord, send by whom thou wilt send; but send life more abundantly into my soul, that I may live to praise thee!

O may the bishop of our souls enlarge thy borders, increase thy gifts for the perfecting his saints, and hasten the time of thy walking with God and of being perfect. Under a sensible enjoyment of his tender mercies, and the blessing I have received from thy ministry, I conclude

Thy weak unworthy friend,

S. P.

*Source:* published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 226–27.

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<sup>1</sup>See Matt. 6:33.

From William Briggs<sup>1</sup>

[London]  
[November?] 1744

Honourable Sir,

I beg leave to give you a short account of my experience, from the time I can remember.

In my childhood, confused convictions often passed through my mind, so that I had almost always had the fear of God before my eyes and a sense of his seeing me, and I frequently used to abstain from sin upon that account. When I did sin, I was immediately checked and grieved, so that I generally was serious, nothing like any of my other brothers, and was on that account esteemed a good child and greatly caressed. I constantly said my prayers and was much given to reading, but it was chiefly plays and romances, of which I was as fond as I was of cards, shows, races, feasts, and whatever are called innocent diversions. Yet even these were always a burden to me when over, so that I was forced to own all these are vanity.

At about sixteen I was sent to Yarmouth, where I fell twice or thrice into intemperance, for which I was severely reprov'd in my conscience, but I used to make up matters by going oftener to church. And having good health and no care, I was generally easy in my mind, and gay and jocose in my conversation.

In this temper, after about six months, I returned home. But a severe temptation soon following, and a severe illness in my head made me think more and more of what is beyond the grave. This also made me exceeding diligent in prayer, till God not only restored my bodily health but also gave me power against my inward enemy and peace to my troubled soul.

In half a year after I was called to London, where for the first year I had little religion left, only that I never missed church. But after I was settled, conviction began to revive, particularly for sins of omission. I prayed three times in a day, and I was uneasy if I missed once. I read all books of religion that came in my way. And now, because I prayed and read so much, and went constantly to church and sometimes to the sacrament, I thought myself in a right good way. And yet I was continually uneasy, though I knew not why, till one day I lit on Thomas à Kempis<sup>2</sup>. The more I read, the more I liked it. I bought one of the books and read it over and over. I was more convinced of sin than ever, and had more power against it. I forsook many things which I allowed myself in before, though I still allowed myself to see a play once a month. But the last I saw, I felt a hell in my conscience for a week after. So that I determin'd, even for ease, never to go again.

I was now well settled in the form of godliness, and I knew a little of the power of it, when I was press'd by a relation to pay him a visit at Oxford, which I did at Whitsuntide 1742. But here I soon lost both power and form. I saw many places, was much in company, and grew more dead to the things of God every day than other. I was truly glad to see London again, and the very first night began to consider how I might recover my peace. But before I had executed anything I was seized with a fever. I looked up to God. But all was dark. With the trouble both of my body and mind I really thought I should have gone distracted. Yet I was too self-righteous to beg for mere mercy. All my cry was, 'Lord give me health, and I will obey thee.' God did give me health, and I was more diligent than ever in going to church and sacrament, insomuch that on a week-day I have gone four or five times to church in an afternoon. Yet sin was my master, although every time I fell into it I was condemn'd exceedingly. I began now to see that my laughter and jesting were wrong. But I thought if I left them, my friends would cast me off. So I went

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<sup>1</sup>William Briggs (c. 1722–88) was the son of the Rev. Henry Briggs, D.D., rector of Holt, Norfolk and Chaplain to George II. He worked at the custom house (and later the Ordnance Office) in London. He wrote CW on Nov. 22, 1742, seeking membership in the Methodist society, and appears as an unmarried man in the Foundery Band Lists from Mar. 1743 and as leader of his band from Jan. 1744. He was also a member of the Select Society from its initiation in Dec. 1743.

<sup>2</sup>He may have been reading John Wesley's abridged republication of this spiritual classic, titled *The Christian Pattern* (1735).

on, sinning against light and never finding peace for one whole day together.

One day, being in great trouble of mind and thinking, 'Where shall I find a man who lives up to the rules given by Kempis?', it came strongly into my mind, 'Go to the Foundery.' Immediately I went, but with fear and trembling. Here I continued a constant hearer for above two months before I spoke to one person belonging to it; which I purposely abstained from, that I might the more exactly observe the whole behaviour both of yourself and those that heard you. And the more closely I examined, the more clearly I was convinced these are the men I have been seeking so long.

At last I was admitted into the society and, after the usual trial, into the bands. I was now continually walking upon the wings of love. The life and power of religion was all my talk. I was not ashamed to declare it before all men, for the candle of the Lord constantly shone upon my head.

At present, I find my soul continually hungering and thirsting after the Spirit's indwelling in me. I often find a solid peace, a serious watchfulness, a presence of mind, never confused or hurried; a sweet communion with God, goodwill toward all men, with much grief at their misery, but no fear. I can, with unaccountable boldness, yet with meekness and love, reprove the most daring sinner. And the more I obey this Spirit, the more of it I feel—the more sensible I am of my own weakness, and at the same time filled with praise and amazement to feel my strength in the Lord.

W. B.

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Dec. 27, 1744 (*Works*, 20:47–49).

From John Evans<sup>1</sup>

Ghent  
November 12 (O.S.), 1744

Reverend Sir,

I make bold to trouble you with this letter, to acquaint you with some of the Lord's dealings with us here. The Lord has ordered it so that, as his little flock is divided into two parts, so are his poor instruments also. For brother [John] Haime and brother [John] Greenwood are at Bruges, and brother [William] Clements and I at Ghent. We thought proper to divide the United Society into bands. Our manner of meeting at Ghent is this: we hired two rooms, one a small one wherein one of the bands do meet every day at one o'clock; and another large one for public meeting, where we meet twice a day, at nine in the morning and four in the afternoon. The hand of the Omnipotent God is mighty with us, to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan. I hope there is such a work begun in Flanders as will (as they say) infect the whole army. While we were at camp, between hard duty and marching and other fatigues, the people had not time to attend on the word. Therefore they that were weak were kept so. But since we have been in quarters, they gather strength apace. The Saviour feeds them with the milk of his word and causeth them to rejoice daily.

The seventh instant, when we were met together in the evening, as I was at prayer one that kneeled down by me cried out (like a woman in travail) 'My Redeemer! my Redeemer!' which continued about ten minutes. When he was asked what was the matter, he said he had found that which he had often heard of—that is, an heaven upon earth. Some others told me afterwards they had much ado to forbear crying out in the same manner. So wondrously is the love of God manifested amongst us that it fills me with wonder and amazement.

Dear sir, I am a stranger to you in the flesh, and know not if I have seen you above once. You was then preaching at Kennington Common, and I hated you as much as now (by the grace of God) I love you. May I acquaint you with some of the Lord's dealings with my soul?

He pursued me with convictions from my infancy, yet I stifled them all, and grieved his Holy Spirit. Indeed, while my conscience was tearing me, I made resolutions. But as oft as I made them I broke them. Why was this? Because I would do all by my own strength, therefore all came to nothing. When I found this I gave over all strivings and gave myself over to all manner of wickedness—and so continued for some years, until the year 1743. June 16th we had an engagement with the French.<sup>2</sup> There the Lord of his infinite mercy was please to spare me. The cannon balls came very thick about me, but I was not hurt, although my comrades fell on every side. A few days after, the Lord was pleased to visit me again. The terrors of a just God began to trouble me. The pains of hell got hold of me, and the snares of the devil encompassed me round about. I was so terrified that I durst not commit any gross sin. I prayed God to be merciful to my soul.

Now I was at a loss for books to read, but he that provideth all things provided that also, for one day I found an old Bible in one of the train wagons. Now I was set up. I forsook my old companions—except one. I could not forsake him. But it was not long before he sickened and died, and his death was a spur to drive me on the faster. But I could not find one to be like-minded with me. I went up and down by myself, lamenting and mourning like a dove. My Bible was now become my only companion, with which I used to get in some corner to lament my misery and to cry to God for mercy. In a few weeks the Lord was pleased to ease me greatly. But I now depended upon my own performances, making them my ground of acceptance with God.

So I remained for some months, till I came to winter quarters, where the Lord was pleased to direct me to brother [John] Haime. Being one morning at church, I heard him talk about some spiritual things. I immediately felled into discourse with him, but soon was sick of his company, because he

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<sup>1</sup>A note in *AM* says that he died at the battle of Fontenoy.

<sup>2</sup>In his *Journal*, JW identifies this as the Battle of Dettingen.



robbed me of my treasure and stole away my gods—for, being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, I went about to establish my own righteousness. My poor brother was so perplexed with me that sometimes (as he told me afterwards) he was resolved to forbid me to come any more. And I, on the other side, was often tempted not to come any more near him. But the Lord raised him up for an instrument of my conversion.

When the Lord had opened my eyes to see the right way to salvation, which is by the blood of Christ alone,<sup>3</sup> I was resolved by his strength to publish and declare it to others. Though I had not as yet found this salvation experimentally in my heart, yet I knew every true believer must have this witness in himself, and taught others so, until I got it myself. The Scripture saith our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,<sup>4</sup> which I found to be true, for my dear Redeemer wrought in me and by me. October 23, in the evening, when we were gathered together and brother [William] Clements was at prayer, I felt on a sudden a great alteration in my soul. My eyes overflowed with tears of love to him whom my soul loveth. Then was the love of God revealed to me, in saving the world by his Son. It was shown unto me also their complete happiness who through Christ were reconciled to God, which kindled my love and inflamed my soul with fervent zeal for him, whom I then saw was my complete Redeemer. O amazing love. It ravisheth my heart when I think how he has brought me from being a captive to the devil to be an heir of everlasting glory.<sup>5</sup>

Pray for me, that my faith fail not. From him who is not worthy to be a doorkeeper to the least of my Master's servants,

John Evans

Gunner, belonging to the English artillery lying now in Ghent, in Captain Desaguliers's company.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778), 277–80.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>In his abridgement of this letter for his *Journal*, published at the height of his concern to distance his teachings from those of the Moravians, JW rewrote this to read 'shown me that "by grace we are saved, through faith".'

<sup>4</sup>See 1 Cor. 15:58.

<sup>5</sup>JW's extract in the *Journal* contains two lines at this point not found in *AM*: 'O the tender care of Almighty God in bringing up his children! How are we bound to love so indulgent a Father and to fall down in wonder and adoration of his great and glorious name for his tender mercies!'

<sup>6</sup>JW also published an abridged and polished version in *Journal*, Dec. 3, 1744, *Works*, 20:45–46.

From Thomas Willis<sup>1</sup>

[Bristol]

November 13, 1744

Reverend Sir,

If any man should ask me whether I am in the band society I should answer, Yes. And should he ask me if I did follow all the directions given to the band societies, I must answer, No. For I believe one general rule for all sorts of people, in all conditions of life, though all seeking salvation, cannot be performed without some exception. But I believe that general rule which our Saviour gave in his Sermon on the Mount can be performed by all people, in whatsoever condition of life, if they have faith. And that is, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.'<sup>2</sup> And this was one of the decrees that St. Paul gave to the churches, as he passed through the cities, as it is in the margin of the Old Bible.<sup>3</sup> Now if any man should say he does follow the directions given to the band society, and by his life and conversation does not follow this rule given by our Saviour, I cannot believe him. Now I can say, by the grace of God, that I do follow this rule given by our Saviour very near to perfection. Though I cannot say I do follow all the directions given to the band societies in the strict sense as they are penned. But through the grace which God hath bestowed upon me, my whole desire and the bent of my heart is that whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I may do it all to the glory of God.<sup>4</sup> Now sir, I will tell you as plain and short as I can how far I do keep the rules, and where I do err.

[I.] 1. 'Neither to buy nor sell anything at all on the Lord's day.' I do perform this rule exactly, except selling milk on Sunday mornings, which I believe is a work of necessity and mercy. But if it is not, I could easily strike all that off at one stroke. But there are some people in our class which make it their business to sell milk, and to carry it to Bristol Sunday mornings. The cross seems to lie heavy upon them since these rules are given out. The laws of the nation do allow selling milk on Sunday mornings. The cows must be milked on Sundays. Children must be fed with the milk, and if it is not used it will not keep good from Sunday morning till Monday.<sup>5</sup>

2. 'To taste no spirituous liquor, no dram of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician.' I can very safely follow this direction, for I neither love the smell nor taste of spirituous liquors. But I do use it as a medicine in cases of necessity.

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<sup>1</sup>Little is known of Thomas Willis in addition to what may be gleaned from this letter and from JW's prefatory remarks: 'See a pattern of true Christian simplicity! His name is still precious to all that knew him. He was for many years an ornament of the Church of England and of the society in Kingswood.' In addition to being a farmer he seems to have owned some coal-pits, and gathered his colliers and their wives together at his home for communion administered by the Wesley brothers.

On Dec. 25, 1738, Wesley had drawn up *Rules of the Band Societies*—the small confessional groups of the same sex and marital status which met weekly as small units and monthly or quarterly as a complete body. In 1744 he added further *Directions*, possibly at first on an experimental basis. These were selected from the *General Rules*, and like them were divided into three main categories: avoiding evil, doing good, and engaging in religious exercises (see *Works*, 9:79). This letter contains Willis's reactions to the new directions, which were finally authorized by JW on Dec. 25, 1744, in the same form as Willis lists them. JW adds his own comments to Willis's observations on directions 1, 3, and 4 of the first division, but whether these summarized a written reply at the time or were inserted only when JW prepared the letter for publication remains uncertain.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 7:12.

<sup>3</sup>I.e., the Geneva Bible (1560).

<sup>4</sup>See 1 Cor. 10:13.

<sup>5</sup>JW adds the comment: 'Quite right'.

3. 'To be at a word both in buying and selling.' I make very few words both in buying and selling, and do always endeavour to speak truth with my neighbour. But in country business buying and selling cannot be at one word. In shops it may, but in markets goods rise and fall. For as the old word is, 'a man must be governed as the times go'. For a man cannot tell what he shall have for his goods before he goes to market, neither can he tell what he shall give for goods till he come there.<sup>6</sup>

4. 'To pawn nothing; no, not to save life.' This rule I keep to perfection, for I hate extortion of any kind. But I believe it is better to save life than to destroy. We read what David did, and they that were with him, and what Christ's disciples did to save life, and both were blameless.<sup>7</sup>

5. 'Not to mention the fault of any behind their back, and to stop those that do.' Here I must confess I am guilty. But when I do mention the faults of another it is, as I think, for edification, either to show the sins that they fell into by being off their watch, or to show how the devil gets advantage against such persons, by walking in his ground, that others may take warning and be more careful for the future.

6. 'To wear no needless ornaments, such as rings, necklaces, lace, ruffles.' This rule I can very easily keep.

7. 'To use no needless self-indulgence, such as taking snuff or tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician.' I do not know that I use any needless indulgence. I take no snuff. Sometimes I do smoke a little tobacco, the last thing going to bed, but at no other time. This I had rather leave off, but I was advised to it for an infirmity, and I find benefit in it.

[II.] 1. 'To give alms of such things as you possess, and that to the uttermost of your power.' I remember some time ago I heard you tell of a young man at Newcastle that got but three shillings a week, and he paid threepence a week to the poor or charitable uses, which is one-twelfth part of his clear profit. Now I do pay above one-sixth part of my clear profit to the poor or charitable uses, notwithstanding that I have seven in family to provide for—and yet that is not to the uttermost of my power. To give alms is our bounden duty, and not to let any person want the necessaries of life, except them that will not work. I take a master of a family to be a steward over that family that God has put under his care. But it is required of stewards to be faithful, for Abraham was faithful over his house. St. Paul says if any man may be at liberty from being a servant, to choose it.<sup>8</sup> Now, certainly, if any man choose it for himself, it is his duty to choose it for his children. Then according to St. Paul's advice the parents ought to lay up for their children—that is, so much as will carry on that business which they are placed in, without being servants to any man. But to lay up riches for children to keep them in idleness is a great error. So I believe to give away all that God hath put in a man's power from children is an error on the other side.

2. 'To reprove all that sin in your sight, and that in love and meekness of wisdom.' There I must confess I am guilty—for being about in the world I see little else but sin, for the whole world lieth in wickedness, and the works of their father they will do. But by the grace of God I have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather than have any fellowship or conversation I do reprove them.

3. 'To be patterns of diligence and frugality, of self-denial, and taking up the cross daily.' These many years I have been a pattern of diligence and frugality. Self-denial and taking up the cross I knew nothing of; but by the grace of God now I know it, and do practise it.

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<sup>6</sup>JW adds the comment: 'All right'.

<sup>7</sup>JW adds the comment: 'You need not take the phrase literally' (orig. omits 'not', which was restored in the errata issued in 1786).

<sup>8</sup>See 1 Cor. 7:21.

[III.] 1. 'To be at church, and at the Lord's table, every week, and at every public meeting of the bands.' I am at church, or the place appointed to worship God, several times in the week; and at every public meeting of the bands, except anything extraordinary prevent; and I go to the Lord's table once a month, in my own parish church, which is as often as it is administered there.

2. 'To attend the ministry of the Word every morning, unless distance, business, or sickness prevent.' My distance, business, and other inconveniences hinder me from attending mornings, except sometimes in the summer.

3. 'To use private prayer every day, and family prayer if you are the head of a family.' This I do always perform in the weak manner I am able.

4. 'To read the Scriptures, and meditate thereon, at every vacant hour.' This I often do, but I cannot say I do it every vacant hour, but I do very seldom spend one hour in idleness.

5. 'To observe as days of fasting, or abstinence, all Fridays in the year.' This rule I always observe.

Now, sir, I have told you simply and plainly in what manner I perform these rules. In what I am wrong I should be very thankful to be advised, for I firmly believe I shall grow in grace, and in the knowledge of my Saviour Jesus Christ, until I do come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of Christ Jesus my Lord. I am

Your unworthy servant,

Thomas Willis

*Source:* published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 273–77.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:116–18.

From Thomas Williams

[London?]  
December 2, 1744

After having often declared the same thing before many witnesses, this day Mr. Williams wrote a solemn retraction of the gross slanders he had been propagating for several months concerning my brother and me.<sup>1</sup> This he concluded in these words:

Though I doubt not but you can forgive me, yet I can hardly forgive myself, I have been so ungrateful and disobedient to the tenderest of friends, who, through the power of God, were my succour in all my temptations....

I entreat your prayers in my behalf, that God may restore, strengthen, stablish, and settle me in the grace to which I have been called ... that God may bless you and your dear brother, and that we may be all united again in one fellowship, is the prayer of him, who for the future, hopes to be

Your obedient son and servant, for Christ's sake,

Thomas Williams

*Source:* published extract; JW, *Journal*, Dec. 2, 1744 (*Works*, 20:44).

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<sup>1</sup>Williams started travelling with both Wesley brothers in 1742. In 1743 he ran afoul of Church of England clergy in Darlaston and Walsall, and was criticized by JW for his 'inexcusable folly' at Wednesbury. These events fostered estrangement between Williams and the Wesley brothers, leading him to seek ordination in the Church of England in 1744. Rather than support Williams in this attempt (which was not successful), CW in particular chastised him for being 'too hasty', in part because Williams lacked a university degree. Resentment over this matter inclined Williams to accept and publicize some (unfounded) allegations of immoral conduct by CW (see MS Journal, May 12–13, 1744).

From William Briggs

Newcastle  
December 28, 1744

Honoured Sir,

I have, since yesterday morning, had close conversation with thirty-six of the women, and nine of the young men here. Such a company of earnest souls I hardly ever met with together. One and all seem to have freedom from all outward sin, and are greatly desirous of being delivered entirely from all sin. Most of them are truly blessed mourners, and hungerers and thirsters after spiritual life and power and in much misery without it, and seem resolutely bent to forsake all other comforts to enjoy the abiding Spirit of Christ dwelling in them. Those who seem less in earnest are often under strong convictions. All seem very steadfast in coming in the mornings and evenings, and most of them break through the various and odd obstacles which are set against their praying at the hour<sup>1</sup> appointed, in which they find great power, and many blessings. All (except about three or four) opened their hearts to me, only not as freely, I believe, as they would do to God himself, and in great simplicity told me of all their troubles. And nothing seems so grievous to them as the evil of their own hearts, their unfaithfulness to the grace given, and their want of love to God. I was amazed that people whom I never saw before should be so wonderfully plain and open to me, a stranger.<sup>2</sup>

The Lord has wonderfully manifested his convincing power whilst and since Mr. Charles was here.<sup>3</sup> Many told me weeping that they were going careless, and back into the world again, before he came; and now they were earnestly seeking the work of God to be finished in their souls. Though many of them are in exceeding great perplexity, and suffering great temptation, yet are they very willing to endure, so that they may but hold out to the end.

I fully intended to have come away next Monday. But through the earnest request of brother [John] Nelson I am constrained to stay and visit the classes with him. By the return of the post we should be glad of your advice whom to put out and whom to take in. O pray for us all!

All join with me in duty to yourself and Mr. Charles [Wesley], and love to all the church. I am,  
sir,

Your son and servant in the Lord,

W. Briggs

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 232–33.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*AM* adds within square brackets, 'five'.

<sup>2</sup>Briggs was by this point a band leader in the Foundery. This is apparently his first time being sent out by JW to another society.

<sup>3</sup>CW had been in Newcastle the first two weeks of December.

<sup>4</sup>Slightly abridged republication in *Works*, 26:120–21.

From Walter Sellon<sup>1</sup>

December 31, 1744

Reverend Sir,

Like too many others in the world, who are apt to take up things upon trust, without inquiring into the truth of them, I must confess I was very much prejudiced against you, condemned you, as others did, for an innovator, and pitied those who followed you. But after having seen in print your *Scriptural Christianity*,<sup>2</sup> and having heard from your own mouth a doctrine so plain and agreeable to the sacred writings, I am forced to confess myself happily deceived in you, and to bless God that he has yet one prophet left who will boldly rebuke vice, and show the people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

I would to God that every minister would, as I have great confidence you are, be an ambassador for Christ. But to the shame of the generality of our clergy be it spoken, their dissolute lives and negligence in their duty tend more to the disadvantage of Christianity than their weekly preaching for a quarter of an hour, and that of something little or nothing to the purpose, can possibly promote it in the world. I do not, however, condemn all of that sacred order. There are still, I hope, many pious and good pastors among us. May God daily increase the number of them!

But even of those who have obtained the reputation of good men, how few are there that take the pains to promote the salvation of mankind, which their office requires! Alas! what will a sermon once in a week, that is scarcely heard, and much less pressed home to the conscience, avail an audience hardened in impiety? Sure, frequent, private admonitions to such are highly necessary. But how seldom are they used! And when they are, they are generally sent by some other hand—as if he whose duty it is to rebuke and exhort either disdained or was afraid to do it, which too often makes him the ridicule of the profane and his admonitions useless. Thus impiety and profaneness daily gain ground and Christianity, though much talked of, is very little practised. And how is this tide of wickedness to be stemmed? Those that should rebuke vice wink at it; and magistrates, that should punish it, not only commit it themselves but actually encourage it in others. It is some one like yourself, that courts not the smiles of the great nor fears the scoffs of the vulgar, that must do this great, this charitable work.

You profess with St. Paul that you will willingly spend and be spent for the gospel's sake.<sup>3</sup> I would then beg this favour, for God's sake and the sake of many unhappy souls that are posting to destruction, that you would imitate your great Master, our blessed Lord Jesus, in doing good. When you have opportunity let Maidenhead (that declares her sin as Sodom, where drunkenness, adultery, profaneness, gaming, and almost every abominable vice, are not only committed with greediness, but gloried in, and boasted of) come in for a share of your goodwill to the souls of men. Let her hear her danger from your mouth. Dissuade her from those crimes which more especially make her appear scandalous in the eyes of all good men—that so, if she will amend, iniquity may not be her ruin. This, through the grace of God, may be a means to awaken some from their lethargy of sin, and they a means of reforming others. For surely whoever considers the worth of his own soul cannot but be equally desirous

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Sellon (1715–92), grandson of a Huguenot minister, was a quiet scholarly man. JW appointed him in 1748 as classics master for Kingswood School. In 1750 Sellon left to become a protégé of Lady Huntingdon, who secured episcopal ordination for him in Sept. 1759. He became curate of Smisby and Breedon, in Leicestershire, where crowds attended his evangelical ministry. For a time in 1765 he exchanged pulpits with John Fletcher of Madeley. From 1770 until his death he was vicar of Ledsham, Yorkshire. His major impact on the Methodist revival was probably by means of five works published between 1766 and 1771 defending (anonymously) JW's doctrinal positions.

<sup>2</sup>JW's university sermon preached in St. Mary's, Oxford, and published in 1744; see Sermon 4, *Scriptural Christianity, Works*, 1:159–80.

<sup>3</sup>See 2 Cor. 12:15.

that all should be saved. This one reflection is a sufficient apology for the trouble I have here given you, and which I further desire to give you, though I am utterly unknown to you, any further than by my name, which I here subscribe,

Walter Sellon

*Source:* published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 326–28.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Abridged republication in *Works*, 26:121–22.



From William Briggs

[London]

c. February 17, 1745

Dear Sir,

For some time past I have been very negligent of coming in a morning, though I have been often severely reprov'd in my own mind for omitting that which I knew was my duty both to God and my brethren. And from time to time, when you have exhorted us to partake of so useful a privilege, I have always been condemn'd.

A few days ago I set myself to consider whence this slackness must proceed. And I soon saw the root of it was an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God and therefore from his service. The pernicious branches of this I found to be ignorance and sloth. It was ignorance of myself that caused me to cry, 'Peace, peace', and to say within myself, 'I know enough and am satisfied'. And while I was in this state, pride, anger, lust, worldly-mindedness, levity, and carelessness toward God and man successively got the dominion over me, so that I was no more like a Christian than like an angel. Yet I felt but little trouble for it (save at times), and thereby I sunk into a gulf of sloth, which got the dominion over me in such a manner that I not only was content frequently to lie in bed till eight, but in the daytime did not care to stir one step forward, especially if it was to visit the sick or distressed. I was forced to drag myself to and fro, and a heavy load I was to myself. And yet my eyes were so blinded that I was scarce sensible of my sin. The cross I could hardly bear naming—for being so used to shun it at all times, it became a very harsh word to me, and I did not love to hear of it. But glory be to God, ever since this examination I have been a little stirr'd up, though still I am in danger of this evil or any other. Lord, leave me not! For without thee I can do nothing.

I find, whenever I know myself poor, and miserable, and blind, and foolish, and while I have a deep sense of my want of love, humility, meekness, seriousness, and wisdom, I then am in earnest in every duty, particularly rising in the morning. But when I am inwardly careless and proud, full and wise enough, then I can very quietly neglect not only this but every help which God has given me.

And yet (to speak the whole truth) I am apt to attribute some part of my late sloth and slackness to too smooth a doctrine which it seems to me has been lately preach'd among us. I thought the doctrine of perfection in all its parts (perfect love, meekness, humility, resignation) has not been so strenuously insisted on as in times past, but only now and then mentioned in general terms. And hereby I was encouraged to be content in this grovelling state, hanging between nature and grace, flesh and spirit. Then it was suggest'd, 'lying in bed is not expressly forbidden in Scripture, nor is rising early expressly command'd'. Yet, glory be to God, I had power from him to resist and overcome this thought, and, being earnest with the Lord last night, this morning he did give me both a will and a power to break through, which I thankfully used, and came to meet my brethren at five with primitive joy and satisfaction.

W. B.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 17, 1745 (*Works*, 20:52–53).

From John Haime

Bruges  
March 6, [1745]

Dear Brothers,

Having received so many instances of your love and friendship, of your sincere regard for the promulgation of the gospel and for the eternal good and welfare of my soul, I think myself in duty bound to acquaint you that Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all who will believe, is daily offered in this garrison with great success. Our number daily increases. And the Lamb smiles upon our meetings. The cross is bore with greatest fortitude, being strengthened by the invisible operations of undistinguished grace. In short, the work is carried on throughout the army in a surprising manner.

The little flock in Ghent flourishes, and they have almost a perpetual addition. A regiment which marched from this place to Audenard,<sup>1</sup> having almost all of this society in it, has been highly favoured. In so much that the number is now upwards of 40, in the space of eight weeks. So boundless is the free grace of God to a rebellious army. And though I am sensible you cannot be ignorant of our proceedings, and what opposition this doctrine of justification by faith alone meets with in a Romish country, by reason of the natives speaking English (a great many of them) tolerably well. As also the number of British Romish clergy which are residing in Flanders. Yet our Saviour crowns us with wonderful success. In so much that our own chaplains are turned our persecutors, and the scourge of their tongues is a constant dish. But the roaring lion is obliged to quit the field and give way to the Lion of the tribes of Judah.

I am lost in admiration that such a poor unworthy, illiterate<sup>2</sup> wretch as I should be made of instrument, the first instrument, in so glorious a work. Yet thanks be to my exalted Saviour. My strength is self-proportioned to my day. And I find my faith daily stronger. The house of Saul is still waxing weaker, but the house of David prospers and flourishes. How shall I praise my God for all his mercies unto me?

We received the books you sent us, and are bound to pray for you, which is the most suitable return we can make. In the meantime we humbly desire the prayers of all the children of God under your care. Sister Thompson is safe arrived. And we rejoice to hear of the glorious success the gospel meets with in our native country. My kind love to Mrs. Cleaver. In my last letter except one I made mention of my being pressed in spirit to come over to England. But there is no possibility in me of getting my discharge, though I am persuaded the Lord has something for me to do there. And what to do in it I cannot tell, but shall wait your advice. And, my dear brothers, let me entreat you to favour me with a letter, which may be (through the blessing of God) a means to establish and confirm this little branch of the church. From

Your unworthy brother,

John Haime

I have been sore chastised by sickness, but it has pleased the Lord to raise me up again. Since this wonderful work has begun in the army, the Lord has raised up six labourers in his vineyard besides myself, one of which has been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.<sup>3</sup> But it has pleased the Lord to cast down all his worldly wisdom, and also to take away the fear of man from him. So that he now preaches free grace boldly—but writes all his sermons.

*Address:* 'To The Rever'nd / Mr John or Charles Wesley / at the Foundry / near Upper Moorfields / London'.

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<sup>1</sup>I.e., Oudenarde, Belgium.

<sup>2</sup>Haime may mean that he lacks a formal degree. His spelling and grammar are fairly standard.

<sup>3</sup>I.e., has a formal theological education; see Acts 22:3.

*Postmarks:* 'BRUGES', '18/MR'.

*Endorsement:* by CW, 'Haynes [[March]] 6, 1745 / Success in Flanders' .

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/69.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Transcription published in *WMM* 73 (1850): 1273–74; excerpt included in *Works*, 26:123.

From James Erskine, Lord Grange<sup>1</sup>

[Westminster?]  
c. March 10, 1745

[Erskine included an excerpt of a letter from the Rev. James Robe<sup>2</sup> commending the work of the Wesley brothers:]

I was much pleased with what you wrote to me of the Messrs. Wesleys. I rejoice that justification, the imputed righteousness of Jehovah our righteousness, received by faith alone, and gospel holiness, are the subjects of their sermons, and the debated points ... are laid aside. I embrace fellowship with them, and pray that the Lord of the vineyard may give them success in preaching the faith of Christ, so much needed in England.... I learned something new as to the exhorters from the account you gave of them. I look upon them as so many licensed probationers. It provides me with an answer to objections, besides that of the extraordinary circumstances of the Established Church. I beg you to salute the two brothers for me, much in the Lord. I wrote to my correspondents formerly, upon yours to me from Newcastle, that there were hopes of their joining in our concert for prayer and praise, for the revival of real Christianity. Now I can write that they have acceded; and I hope we shall expressly remember one another before the throne of grace.

[Then Erskine asked:]

Are the points which give the different denominations (to Christians), and from whence proceed separate communions, animosities, evil-speakings, surmises, and at least coolness of affection, aptness to misconstrue, slowness to think well of others, stiffness in one's own conceits, and over-valuing one's own opinions, etc., etc.—are these points (at least among the far greatest part of Protestants) as important, as clearly revealed, and as essential, or as closely connected with the essentials of practical Christianity, as the loving of one another with a pure heart fervently, and not forsaking, much less refusing, the assembling of ourselves *together*, as the manner of some was, and now of almost all is?<sup>3</sup>

*Source:* published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:194–95.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>James Erskine (1679–1754) trained for law. His career advanced rapidly. He was made a Lord of Justiciary in 1706, taking the title of Lord Grange, and raised to the bench the same year. In 1710 Erskine succeeded Adam Cockburn of Ormiston as Lord Justice Clerk. When Robert Walpole succeeded in excluding Scottish judges from sitting in the British House of Commons, Erskine resigned his judgeship and was elected a Member of Parliament in 1734. Erskine was drawn into Methodist circles in the early 1740s by George Whitefield, who introduced him to JW and CW. Erskine was soon offering legal advice to both brothers on Methodist matters, and his irenic spirit led them to seek his advice in attempts to hold the Calvinist and Wesleyan wings of the revival together.

<sup>2</sup>James Robe (1688–1753), was ordained to the Presbyterian parish of Kilsyth in 1713. This became one of the centres (along with Cambuslang) of the religious awakening in 1740 described by Robe in his *Faithful Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Kilsyth ...* (1742).

<sup>3</sup>For JW's reply, see Mar. 16, 1745 (*Works*, 26:128).

<sup>4</sup>Reprinted in *Works*, 26:124.

From Thomas Meyrick<sup>1</sup>

St. Ives  
March 16, 1745

Dear Sir,

I am fully convinced your fear concerning me proceeds entirely from your love to my soul, and therefore I should think myself guilty of the greatest ingratitude if I did not look upon you as my sincere friend, and endeavour to make a proper use of your kind reproof.<sup>2</sup>

I know my soul has not prospered. I know my conversation has not always been as in the presence of God. I know I have not been, nor yet am, as I (God is my witness!) desire to be, a serious, lowly follower of Christ. I do condemn myself. Lord grant that I may not be condemned! But I do, whenever I speak of the things of God in public or private (as far as I know them), speak agreeable to the sacred oracles. And if in any thing I am mistaken, or pass a wrong judgment, I should be glad to be informed. I am convinced I have not been so exemplary in my behaviour as was consistent with the important work in which I was employed. But dear sir, let me beseech you in God's name tell me if you really think that, instead of profiting, I do help to destroy others; that so (which, if this be the case, I would immediately do) by desisting to act as a guide to others, I may at least perish alone, and not the people perish with me. O sir, if you love me, can you let me be an instrument in the devil's hand to destroy the souls for whom Christ died, and thereby a thousand-fold increase my damnation? Shall I labour and spend my time and strength *thus*, and be all the time serving the devil and aggravating my misery? God forbid! O that my tongue may cleave to the roof of my mouth, rather than I should continue to do this great evil! And yet have I so offended! O Lord be merciful unto me and forgive my sin, for it is great!

I am not guiltless. But blessed be God, I have lately discovered, or rather *felt*, many things which I know were hindrances of the work of God in my soul (and trust, in some measure been delivered from them). For indeed I saw them before, but saw in vain. I was not restless to be delivered from them, and therefore they still continued as so many unsurmountable barriers in my way. I have been lately in great trouble and heaviness of mind, the reproofs I received, through the blessing of God, causing me to have recourse to as narrow an examination as I could make into the present condition of my soul, where I soon found many things wrong. And they lay so heavy upon me that I went mourning all the day long. God only knows the uneasiness I felt. But blessed be God, he did not leave me in distress, but in the midst of trouble sent me comfort. O may my soul for ever praise him!

I have long been in a kind of dead, lifeless state, and have seldom had any sensible impressions of the love of God. I have indeed, through his grace, been kept from outward sin, and that was all, but had lost those pleasing tastes of God's love which I once enjoyed. I could find no delight in prayer, nor could I pray from my heart. If I *forced* myself to pray (for it was a grievous cross), shame covered my face and I durst scarce lift up my eyes to heaven, conscious of my unfaithfulness to God and my negligence in watching. All intercourse seemed to be stopped between God and my soul. Oftentimes indeed, when I have been praying with or speaking to others, I have found the Spirit of God enlivening my dead soul. But when I came before God in secret, with an intent to pour out my complaints unto him, my mouth has

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Meyrick (or Merrick), a Cornishman trained for the law, was a member of a band for single men at the Foundery 1742–43 (see Foundery Band Lists). He seems also to have been JW's business manager or 'steward' at that time. Now he was one of JW's travelling preachers. In 1750, having secured episcopal ordination, he foreswore the Methodists and became curate of St. Ann's chapel, Halifax, Yorkshire, where he served until 1767 (and died there in 1770, partly from abuse of alcohol). Thus, JW prefaced the publication of this letter in *AM*: 'The following letter was wrote by one who was then deeply convinced of backsliding from God. He died some years ago in Yorkshire; but I am afraid, not in peace.'

<sup>2</sup>JW's letter of reproof is not known to have survived.

been stopped. And then the devil would presently whisper, 'What profit is it that you pray?' And when I have endeavoured to force myself to pray, he has filled my mind with a thousand wandering, impertinent thoughts. So that I have been, as it were (I know not how to express it), irresistibly forced from my knees, or would only sigh or groan underneath my misery. My heart seemed to grow hard and stubborn, and I verily thought I should become a castaway, insomuch that I had scarce any heart to do any thing. I thought, and sighing said, 'Surely none is so miserable, so wretched as me! I wish<sup>3</sup> I could shed tears, and found my heart soft and tender; but *now* the stone seemed quite relentless!'

But blessed be God, I have for some time past found a greater revival of the love of God, and have had more communion with him than I have long before experienced. O may my humbled soul ever gratefully think upon his love! And may my future constant care be to watch and pray! The neglect of which, I believe, has been the chief cause of my former deadness. I find that *levity* and *inconstancy* of mind are greatly taken away, which used to oppress me. And at present (God grant it may always continue) the remembrance of it is grievous to me. The love of God seems to be softening my hard heart. I oftentimes find great sweetness in my soul, and can weep for my past ingratitude to God, and think upon his love with pleasure. O pray for me, dear sir, if you love me, that I may never more resist his grace.

I cannot tell you how much I think myself obliged to you, under God, for all your care, reproofs, and kindnesses. May God reward you! And may I never, never make an ill use of them, but love and reverence you, and praise God for his love in making you an happy instrument of good to my soul!

When I survey with a mind unbiassed by irregular passions, and free from all the fatal force of prejudice, how graciously the merciful God has dealt with me, an ungrateful creature, I cannot refrain from crying out, 'Whence is so much love!' I formerly 'lived in pleasure', but yet knew not what pleasure meant, being an utter stranger to true peace. And now God by his grace hath given me to see the vanity of all worldly delights, and hath given me to taste and feel his love. I was seeking after a substance here, and forgetting the 'one thing needful'.<sup>4</sup> And now God, of his infinite mercy, hath saved me from this snare and brought me to seek after an enduring substance, a treasure in the heavens that fadeth not away. I was following the counsels of seeming *friends*—though *enemies* in reality—and now God, in love and pity to my soul, hath snatched me out of their hands, who only cared for my body, and given me friends far more dear, who kindly care for my body and soul. Thus merciful hath the Lord been to me, though unworthy of any mercy. And yet my corrupt heart is often ready to complain, as though my lot was not cast in a 'fair ground'.<sup>5</sup> O this wretched, cursed heart! When shall the *deadly mischief* be rooted out, or brought to its original rectitude?

Dear sir, pray remember in your prayers,  
Yours affectionately,

T. Meyrick

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 328–31.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'used'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

<sup>4</sup>Luke 10:42.

<sup>5</sup>See Ps. 16:7 (BCP).

<sup>6</sup>JW earlier published an abridged version of the letter in *Journal*, Apr. 19, 1745 (*Works*, 20:61–62).

From James Erskine, Lord Grange

Westminster  
April 3[–4],<sup>1</sup> 1745

Dear Sir,

I ought to have mentioned sooner my receiving yours concerning Mr. [Jonathan] Edwards of New England.<sup>2</sup> I desired to look into his books for that which you observe from them, that I might the better notice it to Mr. [James] Robe, but I have them not at hand. Perhaps Mr. Robe has not observed it in them, being of his opinion as to the thing, though not so as to the absolute necessity of believing either the one or the other side of the question. And it is the maintaining the necessity of Mr. Edward's side of the question that you justly blame. And for the same reason, I suppose, you would blame the maintaining the necessity of your own side of the question.

On whatsoever side of the question one be, I apprehend that the mistake of the necessity of it proceeds from what Mr. [John] Locke, in the last chapter of the second book of his *Human Understanding*, calls 'the association of ideas'. People long accustomed to explain the essential things of Christianity in such a way, and never having observed how they can be explained in any other, they transfer their zeal for these essential things to their own way of explication, and believe there is a necessary connection between them, when there is not. This has produced many mischiefs, errors, animosities, and schisms among Christians and all sorts of people. A necessary connection with a truth proves the thing so connected to be also true. But a connection only in our heads (and though sinking down to our hearts) proves no such thing. I would take my ground to stand on for clearing this on what you say so well in that same letter to me: 'Whosoever agrees with us in that account of practical religion given in the *Character of a Methodist*, I regard not what his other opinions are—the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. *I am more assured that love is of God than that any opinion whatsoever is so.*' Therein may we increase more and more!

I have many times thought on this since I was favoured with that letter from you, and considered how far it natively and clearly went as to many things that occasion contentions and schisms, even among real Christians; and what natively and clearly follows from this good principle, what our practice ought to be with regard to brethren differing in opinion, and to those they instruct and teach.

One effect of this has been to make me think (what I have strongly suspected before) that I have not yet met with, nor heard or read of, that party or set of people whose practice is not in several remarkable particulars inconsistent, directly or by plain consequence, with this good principle. But I will not suffer myself to be fully persuaded of this, and especially as to *one* set of men, till I have the happiness to meet with your brother and you, and talk over some particulars, which I hope you will allow me seriously, calmly, and impartially to lay before you. May the Holy Ghost lead us into all truth, and into every right way! Dear sir,

Your most faithful, affectionate, humble servant,

James Erskine

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<sup>1</sup>An inventory of James Erskine's manuscripts in The National Archives of Scotland (ref. GD 124/15/1642) lists a draft of a letter dated Apr. 1, which it describes as 'relative to Mr. Edward's treatise on redemption, and citing instances of the natural tendency of sectarian and particular views of religious subjects to bias the judgment, confirm men in error, and produce schisms, etc. — examples Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine in Scotland'. Unfortunately, the current location of this draft is unknown. Either James Erskine omitted these examples from the final draft, or they were omitted by both JW in his extract in his *Journal* and the editors of *Collection* (1797).

<sup>2</sup>An excerpt of a letter that mentions Edwards, mailed on Mar. 16, 1745 is reproduced in *Works*, 26:128 (the location/survival of the full letter is not known). JW had read Jonathan Edwards (1703–58), *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of many hundred Souls in Northampton* (1737) in 1738, and published in abridged form in 1744.

April 4, 1745

P. S. As to outward communion with such in whom your characteristic is found:

1. Is it not our duty and theirs to keep such communion together, as far as we can without sin? And except in that case, is not separation in outward communion from one another a sin? And consequently, it is not a sin in any of us to set outward communion on such a foot, or so to manage it, that others who have your characteristic cannot join with us in outward communion, *without sin in them*? And is it not also our duty not to stumble them by *our* way of insisting on our particular opinions or practices? And is it not a sin in them to be too scrupulously stumbled at us on that account? And

2. Is it not far wrong (and therefore a sin) in *any*, so to *teach* our particular opinions or practices (and especially to such as we are employed to instruct savingly in the great essentials and the first principles of the oracles of God), so as to lead them into such an association of ideas between them and our particular opinions and practices, which weakness and want of judgment, narrowness of thought and superficialness, self-conceit and impatience of spirit, are so apt to lead even the *strong* into? And do we not very often see how (almost) incurably this prejudices the *weak* against their brethren in Christ, and takes up and perplexes their own minds with particular opinions and practices, so far carries them off from the serious consideration and application of the essentials and their exercise of soul and heart about them? And hence, have we not seen even the strong in grace and able in knowledge (and also in learning) mistake the Lord's shining on the souls on account of the receiving and having applied to them the essentials, and imputed it to their bigotry for particular opinions and practices? And have we not seen such hereby led with great zeal to bear persecution from, and in their turn to inflict it upon, their brethren in Christ? Almost everyone cries out against the dismal consequences of this, which have made even saints act like the most fierce, cruel, and unforgiving, proud, domineering sinner. But few seem to dive into the cause of it, or heartily to seek after and *follow* the effectual cure. And therefore,

3. Is it not the duty of ministers of the gospel in the exercise of their respective offices, and of private Christians in their private brotherly intercourse, to insist upon and show that even our particular opinions and practices are not such but that opinions and practices disagreeable and contrary unto them may be in one who is truly in Christ, and in whom your characteristic is found? Is it not their duty, each in their several situations, to prevent and dissolve that groundless association of ideas? And yet to show the dangerous tendency of any particular opinions and practice *in itself*, to carry us from or into mistakes about the essentials and characteristic? But do we not see the quite contrary done by almost all? Do they not proceed as if they were desirous to establish that association of ideas in favour of their own particular opinions and practices, and thereby (as is too probable, though perhaps their own hearts secretly hide it from them) to establish their own particular party and to fix their adherents unto them? And have we not hence seen actual schisms, and thence farther separation of heart, opinion, and practice? And have we not thence seen even farther very bad consequences?

4. Since, as you justly say, 'We are more assured that love is of God than that any opinion whatsoever is so', is it not our duty to follow that love with all our brethren in Christ, and the native effect and consequence of it, outward communion, in so far as that communion does not lead us into, or clearly imply, our owning an opinion as true, or a practice as lawful and right, which yet we do not believe to be true or lawful and right? For so far as we do so, as to any opinion or practice, be it more or less important or trifling, so far we lie—which in all cases is a sin and unworthy.

5. Yet may there not sometimes be exceptions from this general rule of actual outward communion, even where love and unity of heart is preserved? As when one is of (what is called) a national church, or in any society which, being too bigoted or haughty, would take such offence at this communion as by entertaining it to break their own fellowship in pieces, and occasion debarring and the lesser (perhaps even the highest) excommunication, and greatly stumble and offend and even make to fall some good but mistaken souls in that church or society? May not in such case actual outward communion be kept with brethren in Christ in some instances, when not in others? Is it not our duty to use all the Christian prudence, wisdom, and diligence we can, in the Lord's strength, to bring all the Lord's people from this bigotry, and to bring them to that universal mutual dear love, and the native consequence thereof, in actual outward communion? And though all cases cannot be foreseen, nor therefore be



determined beforehand, yet is it not our duty to endeavour now, with prayer and supplication and much and deep meditation and study, in the name of Jesus, through the Holy Ghost, to enquire into the grounds and scriptural Christian reasons of our conduct in such cases, and so as to be applicable to particular and various cases as they occur?

6. Are not the true scriptural grounds of firmness and earnestness for every one of the Lord's truths, whosoever differ from them; and at the same time of keeping communion in heart, and also outwardly, with differing brethren; and yet of sometimes separating from the outward communion of some churches and societies wherein some real Christians do still remain—are not the true scriptural grounds for all these three contained in the following texts and others: Jude 3, Phil. 3:15ff, 2 Cor. 6:19ff, Rev. 18:4–5? O what solid Christian grounds, and with what solid scriptural evidence, may we reduce to each of these heads such things and cases as do belong to them respectively!

*Source:* published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 37–40.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>JW earlier published an abridged version in *Journal*, May 29, 1745 (20:66–68); an even more abridged version appears in *Works*, 26:129–30.

From James Erskine, Lord Grange<sup>1</sup>

Westminster  
April 23, 1745

Of outward Christian Communion between Messrs. John and Charles Wesley  
and such as, agreeing with them in the essentials of real Christianity, do  
yet differ from them as to all or any of the three points underwritten.

I meddle not at present with the truth or falsehood of doctrines, but whether those after-mentioned are maintained by my friends to be terms of communion, private (and, as it is called, lay communion) or ministerial, and whether their practice answers to what they do herein maintain.

These doctrines are chiefly three: absolute predestination, universal or general redemption, and that sinless perfection in holiness is attainable in this life by a true believer in Jesus. The first they deny; the other two they affirm. But they do not maintain that their opinion of all or any of these should be a term of communion, either lay or ministerial. For

1. None of these are asserted in their pamphlet *The Character of a Methodist*, and they profess that whosoever agrees to that character is their brother, sister, and mother, whatever their other opinions be.

2. They openly declare their desire of a reunion with Messrs. [George] Whitefield, [Howell] Harris, etc.; and of union with many of the Church of Scotland and churches in America who are not of their opinion in the foresaid three points; and I never observed nor heard that they restrict this declaration with the condition that Messrs. Whitefield, etc., should embrace their opinion of these three points. I did indeed hear *one* say that they did insist of something like this when a reunion with Mr. Whitefield was talked of some time before he last sailed to America. But I have heard this from *one only*. And this were to be more rigid than the Church of England itself, which admits even into ministerial communion with her some of both sides of these questions. And I am sure they do not make it a term of lay communion, because I every day see them very willingly admit into such communion with them persons who are not, and whom they know not to be, of their opinion in these three points.

3. It would very ill agree, and I humbly think would be inconsistent, with what Mr. John Wesley writes concerning the experiences of the late Mr. Thomas Halyburton, in his preface to the extract he has published thereof—viz., that the work of God in the soul of man is so described therein as he had not 'seen it in any other ancient or modern, in our own or any other language, so that I' (says Mr. John Wesley) 'cannot but value it, next to the Holy Scriptures, above any other human composition, excepting only the *Christian Pattern*, and the small remains of Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, and Ignatius'.<sup>2</sup> Now

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<sup>1</sup> In his eagerness to secure closer co-operation among Christians, Erskine felt that he had found a kindred spirit in JW, though he confessed to some reservations. In his letter of Apr. 3 he expressed a desire to 'talk over some particulars, which I hope you will allow me ... to lay before you'. For JW's consideration he prepared a document in the form of a legal brief, a corrected draft on eight pages of foolscap paper folded into four and docketed on the outside. It is clearly a personal communication, found among JW's papers. Erskine probably left it with CW, who had returned from Bristol on Apr. 9 and would pass it on to JW after he arrived from visiting the societies en route from Newcastle, on May 11. The journal of neither brother contains explicit reference to the letter or the probable discussion with Erskine. The only clue to its influence upon JW's thinking is in his introduction to the extract of Erskine's letter of Apr. 3–4, which JW published in his *Journal* (on May 29, 1745): 'I would wish all to observe that the points in question between us and either the German or English antinomians are not points of opinion, but of practice. We break with no man for his opinion. We think, and let think. I cannot better express my sense of this than it is done by a serious man in the following letter.'

<sup>2</sup>JW, Preface, §3, *Abstract of the Life and Death of ... Halyburton* (1739), *Works*, 13:28–29.

Mr. Wesley could not but know that this eminent saint was of the opinion of the Church of Scotland in all these three points, which is the reverse of his. Farther, Mr. John Wesley blames Mr. Jonathan Edwards of New England for seeming in his books to be of opinion that there cannot be any work of God carried on by any who do not hold absolute predestination, and for being so vehemently attached to his own opinion, not only as to their truth (for so every honest earnest man is, though not in the same degree), but even as to the necessity of adhering thereto in order to the knowledge of God in Christ. And whatever is said in this respect as to absolute predestination is applicable to particular redemption. For though it would humbly appear that we may possibly be either for general or particular redemption, and yet be an absolute predestinarian; yet it would also humbly appear that an absolute predestinarian must be for particular and not for general redemption, taking these things according to the rigour. But that neither Mr. John nor Charles Wesley hold their opinions to be so necessary appears from their openly owning many of those who are of the contrary opinions to be eminent instruments in carrying on the work of God and to be eminently the children of God—as the foresaid Whitefield, Harris, Halyburton, etc.

4. If they did otherwise it would drive them to hold no communion at all with any almost but their own particular disciples, or with such whose communion on other accounts they reject, and not with such whose communion on other accounts they prize or wish for. Papists, Socinians, and the grossest Remonstrants or Arminians (i.e., Pelagians) maintain my friends' opinions on all these three points. But none of the Reformed churches maintain any of them—except that the followers of Camero[n],<sup>3</sup> Amyraldus,<sup>4</sup> and Le Blanc<sup>5</sup> in the French church (among whom were the famous Daillé,<sup>6</sup> Claude,<sup>7</sup> etc.) and those in Britain called Baxterians<sup>8</sup> went a sort of middle way as to the two first of these three points, which seems to be much the same with the way of my two friends. But very few of the Reformed, nor so far as I know of the Lutherans, agree with them as to the third point—viz., the attainableness of sinless perfection in holiness during this life. And the Moravians, who agree not with them as to the third, yet *now* agree with them as to the two first, which yet they did not agree with them in at their first setting up at Herrnhut. On the whole it would appear that they do not require agreement in opinion with them as to all or any of these three things as a term of lay or ministerial communion.

And their practice *in the main* is answerable to this, as appears from what I have already said.

But I want to be cleared whether it be so in such particulars as I shall beg leave now to mention.

And since they do not make their own opinions thereof to be terms of communion, therefore should they not, in every ordinance wherein they wish their differing brethren to hold communion with them, to abstain from such things concerning the points in difference which they know such brethren cannot join with them in according to their *present conscience*? And is it not to mock me, instead of testifying brotherly love and union, to invite and urge them to join with what it is known they cannot at present join with *salva conscientia*?<sup>9</sup>

Hence it follows that there should be nothing of these points in public prayers or praise or celebration of the Lord's Supper which differing brethren cannot join with, and which yet their joining in these ordinances supposes they go along with. Therefore the observing directly, or by necessary obvious consequence, universal redemption or sinless perfection should in these public ordinances be abstained from. Or at least differing brethren should be warned to abstain from their communion at such times (and this would be a very odd warning, and shock more people at the warners).

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<sup>3</sup>John Cameron (c. 1579–1625), Scottish theologian, who spent time in France.

<sup>4</sup>Moyses Amyraldus (Latin); or Moïse Amyraut (1596–1664), French Protestant theologian.

<sup>5</sup>Louis Le Blanc De Beaulieu (1614–75).

<sup>6</sup>Jean Daillé (1594–1670).

<sup>7</sup>Jean Claude (1619–87).

<sup>8</sup>I.e., those who imitate the irenic spirit of Richard Baxter (1615–91).

<sup>9</sup>Latin: 'with a safe conscience'.

When a sincere soul is drawing near to God in Christ Jesus in prayer or praise, etc., and that something is said which he thinks is not the truth, it strikes him down as a clap of thunder and puts him in terror of sinning against the God he seeks after and was drawing near unto. And when a faithful minister of Jesus, sent to his people, reflects on this with seriousness and in hearty tender love of him who sends and those he is sent unto, can he bear to be the instrument of thus driving back any of them that are approaching to God in Jesus Christ? Or does he diminish his office and restrict his commission so much as to think he is only sent to those who agree with him in these particular opinions? That his business is only to bring *them* near to God in Christ Jesus, but that he may be the active instrument of causing *all others* to stumble and of driving them back from God in their sincere and earnest approaches to him in the Lord Jesus?

Was this minded in the prayer after forenoon's sermon at the chapel in West Street,<sup>10</sup> April 21, 1745, with respect to sinless perfection?<sup>11</sup> And was that the *only* time it was forgot? I fear it was not!

And therefore the same caution should be used in hymns for public use. And it is easy, even for such as are much less masters of language than the composers of the hymns for the Foundery and [West Street] chapel, to use such words as those of both sides of the question in these three points may conscientiously concur in without prejudice to the edification of any. And if the composers know that in writing them they intended to express their own particular opinions, must not the differing brethren in singing them know that they express what is not their own opinion—consequently that they presume to offer in praise to the God of truth what they believe to be a falsehood, and so go to God with what is a lie to them?

I was going to give instances of this from the two volumes of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*,<sup>12</sup> and from the *Collection of Hymns and Psalms* (not to mention others), which are in common use. But they are so frequent that it were quite needless. I wish there may be none such in the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, soon to be published.<sup>13</sup> And it grieves one's soul to find in hymns otherwise so excellent and delightful what may stumble and drive back such as are real believers, and love Jesus in sincerity, and are rich in faith and experience, and favourites of their Lord and love. Why will you have public hymns that a Halyburton, a Whitefield, etc., cannot, and but very few of the Reformed churches can, join with? Is not this *in fact* to form yourselves into a sect, a party, and to distinguish and restrict yourselves from the Catholic church of Christ? Some passages that would stumble many who are indeed of the Lord's people may be altered very easily. For example, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, p. 9, Hymn 10, st. 3, 'The death sustain'd for *all* mankind' — [which could be rendered instead] 'The death sustained for mankind'.

Some who are less scrupulous, and which many call more strong, may satisfy themselves by being silent at such passages, or in prayer abstaining in their own minds to join with such. But, 1) this will not appear enough to very many most worthy Christians, whom the Lord receives. 2) It is a hardship, and inwardly grieves and offends even the less scrupulous, and greatly disturbs them, and mars their joy in drawing near to God in their Lord and Love, Jesus Christ. And [3)] it occasions debate, for their seeming in time of worship to go along with what they do not go along with makes them take occasion at times when it does not create so public disturbance to testify their dissent, which brings on disputes when otherwise there would not have been any.

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<sup>10</sup>This was a former Huguenot chapel, which JW had rented, at the intersection of West Street and St. Martin's Lane in London.

<sup>11</sup>CW preached on 1 John 5:6, but gives no indication in his account in MS Journal that he touched on the subject of sinless perfection.

<sup>12</sup>After *HSP* (1742) was published, the two earlier volumes — *HSP* (1739) and *HSP* (1740) were combined and issued as a single volume in 1743. So by 1744 there were only 'two volumes' of *HSP*.

<sup>13</sup>*Hymns on the Lord's Supper* was published in late Mar. 1745. Since Erskine quotes from it later in this paragraph, he must have had access to at least the final galleys, if not a published volume.

I have seen another expedient used, and it was at Newcastle some years ago,<sup>14</sup> the first time I heard Mr. John Wesley preach. He, being to sing a hymn that was express on his own opinion of some of these three points, desired all such as could not join with it to hold their peace. But this is not an expedient for joining in communion real Christians differing in opinions as to these three points. It was to warn one side not to join in communion at all, though bodily present. And therefore such did but misspend their time, by being in the company but not in the communion of the rest. And it led them not to communion with the Lord, but to abstain from his worship lest they should speak to him things against their consciences, and so sin. And this natively leads them to think they had better not be where such stumbling blocks are layed in their ways. And this again tends to separation, and to differing and separate societies or churches. And for what is Christ's seamless coat thus rent in pieces? Why, it is for different opinions, though either side is consistent with real and very eminent degrees of grace. And though it be acknowledged openly that those of the opposite opinions have been saints of the first magnitude, and whom the Lord has countenanced and honoured above most of his servants in advancing his Kingdom, and separating from whom is of the greatest disservice thereto.

All resolves plainly into this question: whether it be most for our Lord's service and honour, whether it be most in the spirit of fervent love to blessed Jesus and our brethren in him, not to bring our own opinions as to the three points expressly into the acts of our joint worship, and so to unite cordially therein, and send up our hearts and souls together in him in the same outgoings of faith and flames of love? Or, by bringing our own opinions as to the three points expressly into the acts of what otherwise would be our joint worship, to divide and separate from our brethren (such as above) and not to send up our hearts and souls together to our common dear Lord, in the same outgoings of faith and flames of love? With all possible esteem and regard to others, very much my superiors in knowledge and grace (and God forbid I should be so presumptuously vain as to fancy I could in the least compare with them) I do not see that it can be doubted by a real lively Christian but that the affirmative of the first of these questions is indeed the truth as it is in Jesus. And by what I have said and argued about the beginning of this paper it would humbly appear that the worthy persons I have in my eye must herein be of the same mind to be consistent with themselves.

One cannot on any account own the smallest thing to be true which he believes to be false, nor to practice the smallest thing which he thinks to be sinful. But he can bear with what he takes to be considerable errors and bad practices in his brethren in Christ who are not of his judgment about them. And it is not he who leaves the outward communion on account of such opinions or practices who is the separatist, but he who imposes his own as necessary when they are not, even supposing them true. This is an old and common and a just remark, and I hardly know an exception to in churches not of the legal establishment, if it be not this one—viz., when whatever you do, some or other will not join with you, and even out of conscience. For example, if Messrs. Wesley layed aside the liturgy of the Church of England, some might join with them who now cannot. But on the other hand, there are some who could not in that case join with them, and these they ought to regard, being of the same church. But this touches not the question as to communion or non-communion on account of the three points aforesaid. And I know of no exception to the foresaid remark, applicable to their case on account of the said three points.

To make men acknowledge opinions they do not believe in praying to and praising God is an imposition, as well as to make them subscribe such opinions. And whatever way some may fall on to satisfy themselves that they do not acknowledge these opinions, though joining in prayers or praises wherein they are acknowledged, yet it is a great hardship on them and straitens them, and keeps them back in the approaches to the Lord. And it tends not to the real edification of the rest, but to foster them in a conceit that these opinions are more necessary than indeed they are, which is downright bigotry. And it is a great sin to render people bigots, and to turn aside their zeal for Christ to bigotry. Whatever lays more stress on anything than is due to it is a degree of bigotry. And whoever does so, or leads others to do it, is in so far a bigot.

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<sup>14</sup>JW's first extended preaching stint in Newcastle was mid-Nov. through Dec. 1742.

The case, as I humbly conceive, is different as to preaching, at least as to one sort of it. When preaching is used to warm and enliven, and to lead directly to actual communion with the Lord (and blessed be his dear name it sometimes does so, and I hope not seldom) the difference is less. But when it is mainly intended for mere teaching and instruction I suppose the difference is considerable. For then the preacher, if he finds it needful to instruct his hearers in such or such things, must teach what he takes to be truth, whether his hearers be of his mind or not. And the rather that they are not of his mind as to materials points which he preaches of, he is to labour to persuade them to be of his mind. But this brings not the hearers into the former strait, for the hearing such things asserted in a preaching does not import your being of that opinion, as their being asserted in a prayer or hymn you join in seems to do. It is supposed when you hear [a sermon] that you are to search the Scriptures whether it be so or not, as the Bereans did of hearing Paul, the extraordinary apostle of Christ.<sup>15</sup> If on search, you think it is not so, yet you are to bear with diversity of opinion in the preacher as well as in another brother. This is not generally the practice, but it ought to be. And on the other hand, it seems to be incumbent on the preacher, in duty as well as prudence, so to manage his preaching on such points as not to give just offence to his dissentient hearers.

But is it so managed when in a sermon harshness is used rather than arguments (or mixed with arguments) in the spirit of meekness? When the arts of politically disputing for victory seem to be used in misrepresenting and straining the opposite opinion, and putting odious colours on it and the maintainers thereof, which nevertheless do not belong to them? And when the preacher confines not himself to solid argument that convinces and enlightens the mind, and fills it not with mere prejudices?

I most earnestly and humbly entreat and beg that offence may not be taken at my giving instances of this kind, as they appear to me to be, though I'm persuaded that the preachers were led into it by earnestness for what they believed to be true, without the least intending to mislead, or to wrong or be harsh to any on the other side of the question. This happens so frequently in controversy, that though it is certainly very far wrong in itself, yet should be the more readily overlooked in good men who are betrayed into it. And the Lord who knows my heart knows this to be my disposition of spirit towards the preachers I have in my eye, whom I honour and love most heartily as the Lord's instruments for good to many hundreds, and I humbly hope to my poor unworthy self also. My end and design in frankly noticing these things, as well as what is above, is that being favoured by them to be admitted into (I may say, full) communion with them and their dear people, what grieves and offends me (and perhaps may grieve, offend, and stumble others much more worthy) may be brought under their serious consideration and review. If I err, most gladly will I be corrected and set right.

In the above-mentioned sermon at Newcastle by Mr. John Wesley on the attainableness of sinless perfection in this life, he said to this purpose: 'Others may plead for sin and Satan, but let us stand for Christ and for holiness.' And Mr. Charles Wesley in his sermon at the [West Street] chapel Sunday forenoon 21 Apr. 1745 said to the same purpose. And in the first sermon (as if I remember well it was) which Mr. John Wesley preached after his coming to London in the spring 1744,<sup>16</sup> he said to this purpose, 'that in the last age many had preached and printed worthily on justification, but almost none on sanctification, nor had been for strict, absolute holiness, nor attaining to perfection in sanctification.' And he particularly instanced Dr. John Owen. To the same purpose spoke Mr. Charles Wesley in the foresaid sermon 21 Apr. 1745, and he charged the same on the worthies after the Reformation who were called Puritans. And why is this charged on them? For no other reason but because they said that the perfection of holiness could not be arrived at in this life. Do therefore all of this opinion plead for sin and Satan, and are not for strict holiness? It by no means follows, and it is a begging of the question. And if it were so with those of that opinion, they could not be real Christians. For whoever is for sin and not for strict absolute holiness is not, and cannot possibly be, a real Christian. Is not this to offend against the generation of God's children (to use the expression of Ps. 73:15), both by thus maintaining the higher

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<sup>15</sup>See Acts 17:11.

<sup>16</sup>This would be JW's sermon on Ps. 18:1, preached Feb. 1, 1744 at the West Street chapel.

necessity of this opinion and by being injurious to them and reducing the most worthy and eminent of them to be children of the devil, patrons of sin, and enemies of holiness? What worse could be said of the most black gross antinomian in principle and practice? If you do not think so of them, why do you say it? And if you mean not to say it, why do you use words which seem naturally to import it, and which everybody will readily take in that meaning? And is not this to strain their opinions into a bad sense, and to represent them in wrong and odious colours? And does not everybody blame such turns in controversy as unfair, and proper only to create prejudices and ill-founded aversions in the minds of people unacquainted with these injured godly men and their writings? For those who know them cannot think so of them, contrary to what they see with their own eyes in their books. And they will rather be offended at such who thus misrepresent them, or use such words and expressions as naturally tend to it.

To allege that they plead for sin because they say it cannot be fully conquered in this life is injurious to them. For to plead for sin seems plainly to import that they approve of sin. But this is a mere clinch. One is not an usurping tyrant because he says it is not possible for some time to shake his yoke and get fully free from him. Who can, with common justice, say that herein one pleads for the usurping tyrant, whom yet he tells you that you are never to be at peace with but to fight against him without ceasing? And that though by your fighting you cannot fully prevail for a time, yet if you continue to fight manfully all that time, you shall then fully conquer; but never overcome if you give over fighting. And who could justly say that then your fighting was in vain? So it is here according to the doctrine of these worthy men. Sin is the usurping tyrant. The time of your fighting without fully prevailing against him is this life. But you shall completely conquer in the next, if you cease not to fight in this; and otherwise you shall never overcome. All these men, from the old Puritans and downwards to this very day, have thus taught. They have uniformly condemned all sin, and declared (as in the Confession of Sin in the Communion Office of the English Liturgy) that they do earnestly repent of it, that the remembrance of it is grievous to them, and the burden of it is intolerable; and that a great reason of their so ardently longing for heaven is that they may be fully free from it. And they pray not only against the guilt, but pray and wrestle all they possibly can against the power of it. They plead not at all for sin, nor that they may commit it, but plead that they themselves are vile and abominable because they cannot get fully the better of it here. They plead not to approve of sin, but to disapprove of themselves because of sin. How can this with justice be called a pleading for sin in any sense whatsoever? Is it not, very clearly and plainly and obviously to common sense, to plead expressly against all sin?

And all these men have uniformly given it as an infallible mark of a child of the devil to allow of any known sin, and not to fight against it with hatred and abhorrence continually! And as a mark of true saving faith, that it produces hearty approbation of all the commands [of] God, and delight in them and in universal and constant obedience so far as they possibly can attain in continual struggling for it, and to grow in grace and in holiness in all manner of conversation, and in heart, lip, and life. This we find in all their books. As a sample I name only Dr. [John] Owen's *Evidences of the Faith of God's Elect*, and the ninth book of his *Discourse on the Holy Spirit*. Mr. William Guthrie's *Christian's Great Interest, or the Trial of a saving Interest in Christ*. And see the same fully though briefly in Mr. John Wesley's *Extract of the Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Halyburton*, Pt. I, Chap. 2, §5, 6, at pp. 31–32; Pt. 2, Chap. 1, §7, at p. 38 [and as to his Law, etc.] and Pt. 4, ch. 3d, §6 [Thirdly] at pp. 65–65. Who can consider all this and yet say that these men did plead for sin, and were not for strict absolute holiness, though they did not maintain that perfection in holiness could be attained in this life?

I cannot wilfully mistake or misconstrue what my dear friend Mr. Charles Wesley says, because anything he should say that I thought far wrong would give me pain. If I did not misapprehend him in his sermon aforesaid 21 April, 1745, he seemed to speak as if a true believer not only could, but would, attain to perfect holiness before he went out of this life, because otherwise he could not be made meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. And I do not remember that he insinuated any other reason for it. But for the same reason it was that the late Dr. Hicks and other considerable men asserted a middle state between the state of a saint in this life and in the state of glory, in the immediate presence of God—a middle state wherein such perfection is attained unto and renders the saint meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. And according to this doctrine the argument proves not that such

perfection must be attained in this life. Nor yet according to the common doctrine of all Protestants, which I take to be that when the body is dropped all imperfection is also dropped, and none of it carried into the next state of the saints. Thus perfection is not attained in this present state, but immediately on going out of it, and before or immediately at entering on the next state. And I do not remember any scripture that says otherwise. But I have heard of such as (by all that could be observed of them) did die in the Lord (and therefore are blessed, for 'blessed are the dead who die in the Lord' Rev. 14:13) and yet had not at their last attained to perfection in holiness. And if what I apprehended my dear friend did say be true, it will bring into question the eternal blessedness of many who seemed to die in the faith, and so destroy the comfort of their surviving friends and incline them to sorrow as others who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

I have explained my poor thoughts frankly and sincerely; but if offensively, it was far contrary to my design. And I humbly beg I may, and hope I shall, be pardoned for what I have been led into, not by ill will, or pride, or any by-view, but only by frankness, sincerity, love, and desire of profiting, which are the only motives which I think worthy of Christian friendship, and that do not disgrace it and render it noxious.

*Endorsement:* by Erskine on outside cover, 'Of outward Christian communion between Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, and such as agreeing with them in the essentials of real Christianity, do yet differ from them as to all or any of the points within written. Westminster, 23 April, 1745'.

*Source:* holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 19.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:132–36.



From 'John Smith'<sup>1</sup>

May 1745

Reverend Sir,

The 'labouring to bring all the world to solid, inward, vital religion'<sup>2</sup> is a work so truly Christian and laudable that I shall ever highly esteem those who attempt this great work, even though they should appear to me to be under some errors in doctrine, some mistakes in their conduct, and some excess in their zeal. You may expect therefore in me a candid adversary, a contender for truth, and not for victory, one who would be glad to convince you of any error which he apprehends himself to have discovered in you, but who will be abundantly more glad to be convinced of errors in himself. Now the best way to enable you to set me right wherever I may be wrong will be by pointing out to you what I have to object to those works of yours which have fallen into my hands; and for order[']s sake I shall reduce my objections to matter of doctrine, to matter of phraseology, and to matter of fact.

1. As to matter of doctrine, I shall choose to express what I take to be your doctrine in my own words rather than in your words, that you may the more readily perceive whether I at any time mistake you. You seem then to me to contend with great earnestness<sup>3</sup> for the following system—viz., that faith (instead of being a rational assent and moral virtue for the attainment of which men ought to yield the utmost attention and industry) is altogether a divine and supernatural illapse from heaven, the immediate gift of God, the mere work of Omnipotence, given instantaneously and arbitrarily, not with any regard to the fitness of the recipient, but the absolute will of the Donor. That the moment this faith is received the recipient's pardon is signed in heaven, or he is justified. This pardon or justification is immediately notified to him by the Holy Ghost, and that (not by his imperceptibly working a godly assurance, but) by such a perceptible, such a glaring attestation as is as easily discernible from the dictates of reason or suggestions of fancy as light is discernible from darkness. Upon this perceptible and infallible notification the recipient is saved (i.e., as you explain yourself, is sanctified); he has immediately the mind and the power to walk as Christ walked, and is become perfect; he has a perfection, indeed, admitting of degrees, yet such a perfection that he cannot sin. Thus he is in a moment regenerate, upon the first sowing of the seed of faith, which you say you cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous, whether you consider experience, or the Word of God, or the very nature of the thing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This letter from 'John Smith' opens a correspondence of twelve letters extending over almost three years between JW and a devout and scholarly churchman who challenged JW's belief that his doctrine and Methodist practices were in line with the teaching of the Bible and the Church of England, and a genuine demonstration of the operation of the Holy Spirit. This opening letter (the longest but one of the correspondence) was based upon a study of JW's writings, especially his *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* and his *Farther Appeal*, Pt. I.

So far there is only internal evidence about the identity of 'John Smith'. He was a devout member of the Church of England, born about 1691, and confirmed about 1706 after a religious upbringing. He maintained a strong belief in the value of learning, of virtue, and of piety, and was probably (but not certainly) a clergyman. Occasionally he travelled away from home, and on one such journey (probably to the Bristol area, about 1743), heard of the stir made by Methodism, so that he began to read Wesley's *Appeals*. He had met only one Methodist lay preacher, Thomas Williams. It has too easily been accepted that he was in fact Thomas Secker (1693–1768), Bishop of Oxford at the time, and later Archbishop of Canterbury, although it seems clear that Secker was brought up as a dissenter, and was almost certainly not confirmed at fourteen or thereabouts.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. JW, *Earnest Appeal*, §67, *Works*, 11:73.

<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'earnestly', underlined for omission, probably as an error.

<sup>4</sup>JW, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, I.4–5 (11:106–07).

Now so various are men's understandings, or so unenlightened am I still as to spiritual affairs, that it appears quite manifest to me that experience, the Word of God, and the nature of the thing plainly evince the exact contrary. As to my own experience, my parents and instructors from my first infancy carefully instilled into me such an amiable idea of God that I cannot remember any time when I had 'no more love of God than a stone'.<sup>5</sup> Consequently I cannot go so far back as the time 'when God first lifted up the light of his countenance upon me', nor the day of my 'eating butter and honey', of 'soaring upon eagles' wings', or of 'riding upon the sky'.<sup>6</sup> These (I had like to have said 'enthusiastic', but I would willingly avoid all offensive words; these) rapturous expressions may pass sometimes in poetry, but are too flighty, methinks, for plain prose. Neither can I remember the exact day of my 'espousals', as you call it. But yet I am not so carnal a person as to have no perception of things spiritual. I have a taste for divine intercourse, a relish for the pleasures of devotion; so high a relish as to think all other pleasures low and insipid things compared to those happy moments when we get disentangled from the world, and lift our souls up unto the calm regions of heaven. I hope and believe myself to have as steady a faith in a pardoning God as you can have. But my faith came by hearing, by hearing the Word of God soberly and consistently explained, and not from any momentaneous illapse from heaven. Thus stands my own experience. Then, sir, if I appeal to the experience of all around me, they assure me that the case is the same with them, insomuch that I am not acquainted with one pious person in the world whose experience (upon being consulted) is not flatly against you.

As to the Word of God, let me observe to you, it is not the sound of particular texts but the general tenor of the whole on which we are to frame doctrines. There are texts whose sounds may favour quite contrary doctrines. Thus St. John says in one place, 'Whosoever is born of God cannot sin';<sup>7</sup> in another, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'<sup>8</sup> Now no doctrine of perfection or imperfection should be founded on the sound of either of these texts. But from both of them, and the whole tenor of Scripture, we are to collect the true Scripture doctrine. In like manner there are Scriptures which declare we are 'saved by faith'; others that we are 'saved by hope'; others again that we are 'saved by repentance, obedience, holiness', and many principal *parts* of religion, which by a common synecdoche of *pars pro toto*<sup>9</sup> are put for the *whole* of it. Here again we are not to be carried away with the sound of particular texts, maintaining that we are saved by faith alone, or hope alone, or obedience alone; but we are to construe one text so as to be consistent with all the rest, and to make one complete body or system of religion. Again, *faith* is said in Scripture to be 'the gift of God', and so *riches* are said to be 'the gift of God'—and indeed every other good thing, whether spiritual or temporal, is said to descend from him from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. But then whether they descend merely as an illapse from heaven, or as God's blessing on human industry, this cannot be collected from the sound of these texts (though ever so often or ever so emphatically repeated), but must be gathered from the general scope, drift, and tenor of Scripture. Once more, if there be some texts which seem to favour God's arbitrary rule of mankind, and his dispensing his grace and favours promiscuously to the just and unjust, and without any regard to the fitness of the recipients; and if there be other texts which seem to favour the contrary doctrine, of his dealing with his creatures according to their works, of his conferring grace and pardon on those who sinned through *ignorance and unbelief* preferably to more knowing and more audacious transgressors; then we must not hang upon the sound of either of these sort of texts, but pick out a sense at once consistent with both, and with the known attributes of Almighty God. Lastly, if the human mind be sometimes termed the candle of the Lord, if in some places God's

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. *Earnest Appeal*, §48 (11:63).

<sup>6</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, §54 (11:65–66).

<sup>7</sup>1 John 3:9.

<sup>8</sup>1 John 1:8.

<sup>9</sup>A part for the whole.

Word is said to be his lantern, and in others the Holy Ghost is represented as the light of God; then we must interpret all these places consistently, and walk by this joint light as children of the light, without pretending prismatically to separate its rays, or dogmatically asserting which is which. We must not single out a few texts of Scripture of one particular cast or sound, and then call these the Word of God, but from a careful attention to every part of the sacred volume collect what is the general tenor and consistent meaning of the whole. The whole thus soberly studied and consistently interpreted I call the Word of God; and this Word of God appears to me to be manifestly against you. It speaks of growth in grace, in faith, and in religious knowledge, as owing to the slow methods of instruction, not to momentaneous inspiration. It directs the gentle instilling the sacred science by long labour and pious industry, the advancing line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. It compares even God's part of the work to his slow and imperceptible produce of vegetables, that whilst one planteth and another watereth it is God all the while who goes on giving the increase.

Then lastly, the nature of the thing (which is the third witness you appeal to) seems to testify as clearly against you as the former two. It is the nature of faith to be a full and practical assent to truth. But such assent arises not momentaneously but by the slow steps of ratiocination, by attending to the evidence, weighing the objections, and solving the difficulties. In short, the experience of mankind, the general tenor of the Word of God, and the nature of the thing, all in my opinion make evidently and flatly against you. If you shall answer that this my opinion is not by me sufficiently supported and proved, I readily grant you that it is not, neither do I intend to enter further into the proof of it. The controversies of the last century occasioned such a thorough discussion of the Calvinistical points as settled those debates to the satisfaction of most men of learning and piety, and if young persons of the present age, instead of too hastily enter(ing on the)<sup>10</sup> teaching others, would but first give themselves the (trouble) to make themselves thorough masters of the points t(hen settled,) we should not have seen many of those crudities atte(mpted to) be revived at this time of day. To those writings I therefore refer you. For my present intention is not to collect a body of divinity from the general tenor of Scripture, a work much too long for this letter, on the one hand; nor yet to cap a few texts of a contrary sound to those produced by you, a task too trifling and insignificant, on the other; but my whole meaning is this, to state the case fairly between you and your adversaries. You have appealed to men of reason and religion. I have read your *Appeals* and I shall impartially give you my sentiments as to your conduct.

We are at present upon the article of doctrine. Now your doctrine of momentaneous illapse, etc., as above related (without entering at present into the truth or falsehood of it) is represented by your adversaries as having something of singularity in it, unsupported by Scripture or the received doctrine of the Church of England. That these singularities are your most beloved opinions and favourite tenets, more insisted upon by you than the general and uncontroverted truths of Christianity. This is their charge. Now what is your defence? I was all attention to learn how you would maintain these singularities, these beloved opinions and favourite tenets. But what was my surprise when I found you answering that you had no singularities at all. That your notions are: true religion is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. That these are your favourite tenets, and have been so for many years. So that, in short, instead of having any peculiar doctrines which distinguish you from other Christians, you seem to suggest that you preach nothing but what is common to all mankind. For, say you, (‘Are) not my doctrines yours too? Do you say that any man (can) be a true Christian without loving God and his neigh(bour?)’<sup>11</sup> So then, sir, it seems you teach nothing more singular than the love of God and man. Was it then for preaching this doctrine that the London clergy forbade you their pulpits? If so, I think you have had very hard usage. But if it be notorious that you frequently insist on other beloved opinions, and on other controverted favourite tenets, then I fear your adversaries will think that you have given but a shuffling and evasive answer.

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<sup>10</sup>A few small portions of the Drew manuscript are torn away; but the missing material is supplied by the later copy in MARC.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. *Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, III.8 (11:129).

Nay, I think it will appear that you yourself were not fully satisfied with this answer of no singularities, from the texts which you elsewhere quote as carrying a sound in favour of your distinguishing singularities. But this is another objection which I have to make to your manner of treating your antagonists—you seem to think that you sufficiently answer your adversary if you put together a number of naked Scriptures that sound in your favour. But please to remember, sir, that the question between you and them is not whether such words are Scripture, but whether (both parties admitting the words) the words are to be so or so interpreted. Should a papist in disputing with you entrench himself in Scripture words, quote upon you ‘This is my body’, insist upon it that they were the words of him who could not lie, and in a declamatory way undertake to prove all gainsayers to be infidels; I suppose you would tell him that he was spending his zeal impertinently, for that you were as fully convinced as he that the words were the words of Christ but that the naked quotation of those words made nothing for his purpose, since the whole dispute between you was not whether those words were Christ’s but whether those words of Christ were most truly and most agreeably to the whole tenor of Scripture interpreted by him in a literal or by you in a figurative way. In like manner, if sell all and give to the poor be understood by Mr. Law as a precept directed to all Christians, and by you as limited to one particular person, then the naked quotation of those words of Scripture is not gaining any ground at all, but leaves the difference between you just as it found it. Once more, if a Churchman and a Quaker both allow that all God’s children are led by the Spirit of God, but if the Churchman maintains that this leading is by that written Word and by the gentle and imperceptible influence of the Divine Spirit on the human mind, and the Quaker on the other hand insists that we are to be led by sudden instantaneous inspirations, by such perceptible movements of the Spirit as are as distinguishable from the dictates of reason or suggestions of fancy as light is from darkness; if this be the difference between them, this difference is in no sort adjusted by barely quoting ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God’,<sup>12</sup> for both acknowledge this Scripture but differ as to their manner of interpreting it. Now, sir, you often appear to me as attempting to adjust controversies by a bare quotation of the controverted texts.

And as you thereby fail of proving your singularities to be consistent with Scripture, so I must add in the next place you fail likewise of showing them consistent with the received doctrines of the Church of England—when your adversaries tax you with differing from the Church, not as it was a little before the Reformation, or as it was a little after the Reformation, but as it is at this day. And when you profess great deference and veneration for the Church of England, you cannot naturally be supposed to mean that much reverence was due to the Church and its doctors and pastors in the year 1545, and that in the year 1745 no reverence is due at all. If then by the Church of England be meant (as ought to be meant) the present Church, I presume it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church. But here perhaps you will ask me, What then, does the present Church of England differ in doctrines from the Church at the time of the Reformation? I answer, I assert no such thing. But were it so, the presumption would lie<sup>13</sup> in favour of the modern church, for it would be much more probable that some truths might be brought to light, and some first hasty errors rectified, upon the increase of learning and growth of criticism, than that everything should at once be brought to perfection upon the first dawn of light into the regions of darkness and superstition, and that too amidst the sparks and heats of a warmly agitated controversy. Bishop [John] Jewel was a wise and good man, and so was Archbishop [James] Sharp. Now if it had so happened that there was some difference of doctrine between them, the reasonable presumption would have been in favour of that latter, who had abundantly the best means of being accurate. Whatever partiality you, as a subscribing clergyman, may have for ancient sermons published formerly under the name of Homilies, others free from all bias must be allowed to judge quite impartially between the more ancient and more modern sermons, and to prefer those, whichever they be, which shall appear most consistent with the general tenor of Scripture. But I am not a-going to examine which appear most so. We will suppose both the ancient and modern reformed

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<sup>12</sup>Rom. 8:14.

<sup>13</sup>Orig., ‘lay’.

Church of England, under some variety of phrase, to teach one and the selfsame doctrine. The Catechism (phrase and all) is the doctrine both of the ancient and modern church. Now that teaches repentance, faith, and obedience, as conditions of salvation. No, say you, we are saved by faith alone. In order to maintain this you first give us to understand that you mean by the word 'salvation' what other people mean by the word 'holiness', and that you mean by *faith alone*, faith preceded by *repentance* and accompanied by *obedience*. Now may not your adversaries reply in your own words, 'Alas! What trifling is this! What a mere playing upon words!'<sup>14</sup> If you will explain yourself after this manner nobody, I think, can have any further difference with you as to matter of doctrine, but the dispute between you will be reduced to matter of mere phraseology.

2. As to phraseology, every man is at liberty to use what phrases he likes best, provided he uses them according to their common acceptation, or else gives notice that he puts upon them a singular meaning of his own. If you chose to call that 'faith' which other people commonly note by the word 'grace', or to term that 'salvation' which everybody else styles 'holiness', provided you give notice of this peculiar use of the words we may make a tolerable shift to understand you. Though in my opinion you would have done much better to have kept to the obvious and common sense. You may urge perhaps that your phraseology comes nearer to that of Scripture and the original reformed Church of England, and therefore is better than that in common use. Now though some question may be made as to the absolute truth of the antecedent, yet granting the antecedent I deny the consequence. For that phraseology may be quite proper at some times and on some occasions which may become highly improper upon a change of circumstances. To judge, therefore, of your propriety as to this matter, we must look back to the time of the apostles, and the time of the Reformation, and carefully consider what was the state of affairs both at the time of the first spreading and at the time of the late revival of the gospel. At the time of the first preaching of the gospel both Jews and Gentiles were very negligent as to internal holiness. They made light of the laws of piety and morality, but laid great stress upon external rites, and certain atoning actions such as sacrifices, washings, lustrations, and other expiatory works, which if they performed according to the due form of their respective religions they doubted not but those works would render them acceptable to God, how free soever they made with the laws of morality and righteousness. The apostles therefore thought they could not express themselves too warmly against so wicked a persuasion, and often declare that we cannot be made righteous 'by works' (by which they always meant such outward works as were intended to commute for inward holiness), 'but by faith in Christ'<sup>15</sup> (by which they as constantly meant by becoming Christians both in principle and practice). In like manner, at the time of the Reformation, when popery had corrupted Christianity and made a religion most of all other calculated for promoting moral goodness, really to subvert it by substituting in the place of true holiness certain trifling tricks such as endowments, penances, and pilgrimages, to which they gave the emphatical name of 'good works', as if nothing else were good in comparison of them; and to which they ascribed such merit that a man might thereby not only merit heaven for himself, but have too such a surplusage of merit to spare as might be laid up in the storehouse of the Church to be sold out by the pope to those who had no merit of their own; when these foolish and wicked doctrines had made men look out for other means of recommending themselves to God than by a faithful and holy life, our reformers attacked those tenets with a becoming warmth, teaching that such fopperies were far from being good works, and that our best works were far from meriting heaven; that we were not to be justified by such outward trumperies, or by believing in saints or angels, but by faith alone in Jesus Christ. If in the heat of the argument some crude things had been vented, it would have been no more than what usually happens in strenuous oppositions. The main of their argument was certainly pious and right. But the strong phrases which the reformers made use of to guard against the popish doctrine of justification *by good works* gave occasion to antinomians to run into a worse doctrine if possible than the former—viz., that of being justified and saved *without good works*. Now, sir, supposing the ancient and modern reformed Church of England always to have

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<sup>14</sup>See *Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, I.5 (11:107).

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Eph. 2:8.

maintained one and the same uniform doctrine, still every sensible man must allow that the phraseology which was proper to express this doctrine at the one time would be highly improper at the other. And the modern church is as much to be commended for avoiding all phrases that might countenance antinomianism as the ancient church was for avoiding those which favoured popery. And consequently that if the dispute between you and your adversaries be reduced to matter of phraseology, they have greatly the advantage of you in point of propriety. But as things of this nature are still liable to much altercation, I am for reducing this controversy to a much narrower compass, namely to the third thing I at first proposed to object to, even one plain matter of fact.

3. If in fact sir, you can work such signs and wonders as were worked by the apostles, if the Holy Ghost bears witness to your doctrines as he did to theirs, by divers miracles and visible supernatural gifts; if, I say, you can thus do the work of an apostle, you are in my account (notwithstanding what I might otherwise object to your doctrines or phrases) entitled to the implicit faith which is due to one of that order. You relate of yourself many strange and wonderful things, but I will rest the whole affair upon this one fact, your casting out devils. Now, sir, if one or two persons who appeared to be 'lunatic', and were actually 'sore vexed and torn of the devil', upon your praying God to bruise Satan under their feet, were instantly dispossessed of that evil spirit, 'vehemently crying out, He is gone! He is gone!', and straightway 'filled with the spirit of love and a sound mind'; if they were so divinely enlightened and made so 'strong in the Lord' as to acquire at once a *contempt* of all worldly things and a temper quite unprovokable;<sup>16</sup> if, I say, you prove this to be the fact to the satisfaction of wise and good men, then I believe no wise and good men will oppose you any longer. Let me therefore rest it upon your conscience either to prove this matter of fact or to retract it. If upon mature examination it shall appear that designing *people* imposed upon you, or that hysterical women were imposed upon themselves, acknowledge fairly that your zeal outran your wisdom, that your colourings are sometimes too strong, and your expressions too rapturous and glowing.

Having now freely told you what I take to be wrong in you, I shall readily and thankfully attend to whatever you shall point out as amiss in me. I am desirous to retract and amend whatever is wrong. To your general design of promoting true religion I am a hearty friend. Nay, to your particular scheme and singularity I am no enemy—so far from it that I should rejoice greatly to become your convert, and instead of living as I now do in hopes of salvation I should be much better pleased to obtain certainty of it by the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost. If I come not fully into your scheme, it is not for want of goodwill, but for want of evidence and conviction that it is true. I pray God to grant me all needful illumination, and I pray you to tell me what is still lacking on my part.

P. S. As I live out a considerable distance from London, I have no convenience of a personal conference with you, but a letter will find me directed to John Smith, at Mr. Richard Mead's<sup>17</sup> at the Golden Cross in Cheapside.

*Source:* manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 1–13.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>See *ibid.*, III.4 (11:124); quoting JW, *Journal*, Oct. 12, 1739.

<sup>17</sup>Possibly the son of the famous Dr. Richard Mead (1673–1754), who lived in Great Ormond Street, London.

<sup>18</sup>This full transcription published in *Works*, 26:138–46.

From an Unidentified London Leader

London  
May 25, 1745

Reverend Sir,

Mary Cook, who had been ill for above six months, grew much worse a week or two ago. She had been long remarkably serious and greatly desirous of knowing her interest in Christ, but then her desires were much increased, and she had no rest in her spirit but cried unto him day and night. On Monday last she mourned more than ever and would not be comforted. Then she lay still a while and on a sudden broke out,

Praise God from whom pure blessings flow.<sup>1</sup>

Her mother asked her the cause of this. She said, 'O mother, I am happy, I am happy. I shall soon go to heaven'; and many more words she spoke to the same effect. I called upon her a few hours after and found her still in a settled peace. She told me, 'I am assured of God's love to my soul. I am not afraid to die. I know the Lord will take me to himself. Lord, hasten the time. I long to be with thee.' On Tuesday and Wednesday she spoke little, being exceeding weak, but continued instant in prayer. On Wednesday about noon she desired her mother to get her up into the chair, which she did. A little before three, her mother holding her in her arms, she desired her to let her go. Then placing herself upright in the chair, with her hands laid in her lap and a calm majesty in her countenance, she said, 'Lord, receive my soul,' and expired.

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 12, 1745 (*Works*, 20:82); and *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 20–21.

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<sup>1</sup>CW, 'Gloria Patri V', in *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1742), 56.

From Sarah Colston

Bristol  
June 6, 1745

I have delivered another of my charge to the Lord. On Saturday night Molly Thomas<sup>1</sup> was taken home. She was always constant in the use of all the means and behaved well both at home and abroad. After she was taken ill she was distressed indeed, between the pain of her body and the anguish of her soul. But where is all pain gone when Jesus comes? When he manifests himself to the heart? In that hour she cried out, 'Christ is mine! I know my sins are forgiven me.' Then she sung praise to him that loved her and bought her with his own blood. The fear of death was gone, and she longed to leave her father, her mother, and all her friends. She said, 'I am almost at the top of the ladder. Now I see the towers before me and a large company coming up behind me. I shall soon go. Tis but for Christ to speak the word, and I am gone. I only wait for that word, "Rise up, my love, and come away."' <sup>2</sup>

When they thought her strength was gone, she broke out again:

Christ hath the foundation laid,  
And Christ shall build me up:  
Surely I shall soon be made  
Partaker of my hope.  
Author of my faith he is,  
He its finisher shall be:  
Perfect love shall seal me his  
To all eternity.<sup>3</sup>

So she fell asleep. O Lord, my God, glory be to thee for all things. I feel such desires in my soul after God that my strength goes away. I feel there is not a moment's time to spare, and yet how many do I lose! Lord Jesus, give me to be more and more diligent and watchful in all things. It is no matter to me how I was an hour ago. Is my soul now waiting upon God? O that I may in all things, and through all things, see nothing but Christ. O that when he comes, he may find me watching!

Sarah Colston

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 12, 1745 (*Works*, 20:82–83), and *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 21–22.

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<sup>1</sup>Mary ('Molly') Thomas (c. 1695–1745) was active in the Bristol society; see her spiritual account, addressed to CW, dated May 24, 1742 (MARC, MA 1977/501/128).

<sup>2</sup>Song of Sol. 2:10.

<sup>3</sup>CW, 'Zechariah 4:7ff.', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 235.



From an Unidentified Leader in Bristol

Bristol  
June 27, 1745

Dear Sir,

I sat up with Isaac Kilby three nights and, being greatly comforted by many of his expressions, I believed it would not be losing time to set a few of them down.

On Wednesday, June 18, when I came into the house, he was supposed to be near his end. His body was in great pain and just gasping for breath. But his mind was in perfect peace.

He had little strength to speak. But when he did (which was now and then on a sudden, as if immediately supported for that purpose) his words were strangely powerful, just as if they came from one who was now before the throne of glory.

When he had just drank something, I said, 'All may drink of the water of life freely.'<sup>1</sup> He lifted up his hands in great love and said, 'Yea, all, all; all the world.'

After long silence he suddenly asked me how I felt myself. I replied, 'I find great consolation from the Lord.' He said, 'How strange it is that such a rebel as I should bring glory to God.'

When dozing his mind would rove, but even then his discourse consisted chiefly of strong exhortations to some of his acquaintance to repent and persevere in the ways of God.

On Friday I called and found him in the same spirit, full of pain, yet full of joy unspeakable. I could not forbear sitting up with him again. All his words were full of divine wisdom, expressing a deep sense of the presence and mercy of God, and of his own unworthiness.

Mention being made concerning his burial (in the beginning of his sickness he had desired that Mr. Wesley might bury him<sup>2</sup> and preach a sermon from that text, 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth'<sup>3</sup>), he said, 'Now I do not think of such things. Bury me as you will. Yet I should be glad to have a sermon preached. But just as Mr. Wesley pleases.'

He said to me, 'O go on, and you will rejoice as I do, in the like condition.' He prayed that he might die before the morning, but added, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt.'<sup>4</sup>

Thus he continued till Wednesday, June 25, when I sat up with him again. Being now much weaker, he roved more than ever. Yet when I asked, 'Isaac, how do you find your soul?' he answered, 'I rejoice in God my Saviour. I am as clay in the hands of the potter.' And about half an hour after twelve he went to sing praise to God and the Lamb for ever.

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 12, 1745 (*Works*, 20:83–84), and *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 22–23.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Rev. 22:17.

<sup>2</sup>Neither Wesley brother was in Bristol at the time, but it was known that they were both coming by the end of the month, for the second 'annual conference' with their preachers, beginning Aug. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Eccles. 12:1.

<sup>4</sup>Matt. 26:39 and parallels.

From Richard Moss<sup>1</sup>

Bristol  
June 28, 1745

Reverend Sir,

On May 31, I went to Sykehouse and exhorted the people at all opportunities. On Monday, June 3, about 3:00 in the morning, William Holmes<sup>2</sup> came to me and said, 'Brother Moss, I have been just awaked by a dream that the constables and churchwardens came to press you for a soldier. I would have you get up and go to Norton.' I did so, and he walked with me about half a mile. At his return the constables and churchwardens were come. They asked him, 'Where is the preacher?' He said, 'I have just carried him away. But have you a warrant to press such men as these?' They answered, 'Yes, we have, and will press him if we see him here again.' He replied, 'You shall see him again in that day when the Lord shall judge the world in righteousness.'

He came and told me, and advised me to go thence. So I went to Epworth on Tuesday. On Wednesday night I had spoke about a quarter of an hour when the churchwardens and constables came. They bade me stop. I told them, 'I will, when I have delivered my message.' They cried, 'Bring him away, bring him away.' I thought, 'But they cannot, unless the Lord will.' The constable coming up to me, I looked him in the face, and he shrunk back and said, 'I cannot take him.' His companions swore, 'But we will fetch him soon.' As they were pressing on, many of the people got between and kept so close together that for near half an hour they could get no further. Glory be to God, my soul all the time was rather in heaven than on earth.

They went out to consult what to do, and soon returned with great staves, wherewith they beat down several that stood in their way. But still they could not make their passage through, till Mr. Maw<sup>3</sup> came (the chief gentleman in the town) and sent for me into the house. There we prayed and sung hymns till about eleven o'clock. He then advised me to go out of the town. So many of our brethren went with me to Robert Taylor's house at Burnham, where we continued praying and praising God till about four o'clock in the morning. I then rode back to Norton and from thence, by Leeds, Birstall, and Barley Hall, to Sheffield.

On Wednesday evening, June 12, as I was privately conversing with a few of the people, the constables and churchwardens came up and dragged me downstairs. But quickly one of them listened a little and cried out, 'They are at prayers. I will have nothing to do in this matter.' The rest began to look at one another, took their hands off me, and went their way. I went from Sheffield through Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire, to Birmingham; and so on by Evesham and Stanley. In most places I was threatened. But out of all dangers, the Lord delivered me. ... I remain

Your child and servant in Christ,

Richard Moss

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 12, 1745 (*Works*, 20:84–85).

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Moss (1718–84), apprenticed as a tailor, appears in a trial band for single men at the Foundry in March 1743 and eventually a band leader (see Foundry Band Lists). By 1744 Moss was living at the Foundry and accompanying JW on preaching trips. While mainly a servant, Moss preached occasionally on these trips, and was listed in 1747 as one of JW's Assistants. In 1748 JW made Moss master at Kingswood School.

<sup>2</sup>William Holmes (d. 1747), a farmer at Sykehouse, opened his home to the Methodist society and preachers, was a local preacher, and is remembered for his exemplary death; *AM* 1 (1778): 530–31.

<sup>3</sup>John Maw (c.1677–1753), of Epworth, was one of the primary landholders in the Isle of Axholme. Samuel Wesley Sr. considered him one of his best parishioners. While not a convert to Methodism, he did seek to ensure they were treated justly. See *WHS* 5 (1906): 201.

From an Unidentified London Member

London  
July 10, 1745

Dear Sir,

The faith you mention I have experienced much of, though not continually. But [I] am groaning for all the glorious privileges of the children of God. And I really believe the greater part of us are earnestly seeking, and patiently aspiring after, this full redemption.

Heavenly meetings we have had on Wednesday evenings, since we have opened our minds freely to each other. No one speaks but in the fear of God, so that what is spoke by any is felt by all the rest. And if anyone begins to tell an unprofitable tale there is a stop put to it without offence. So that since I have belonged to the society I never found so great love and unity in this meeting. Indeed, so awful it sometimes is that I seem to be little less than a spirit casting down my crown before the throne.

I find it necessary to follow after perfection in everything, in every place, and in every hour. There are many thoughts I think, many words I speak, and many of my works I find, are now perfect in their kind—i.e., thought, spoke, and done with a single eye to the glory of God. I cannot think I ought to look for perfection in the future, and so sit still and idle at present. I received the grace of God, which I now must occupy, or suffer loss.

Certainly God is pleased or displeased with all my thoughts, words, and actions, which is manifested to me by the convictions of his Holy Spirit. And the more I obey God, the more holy I am. And the more holy I am, the more I please God. Or, as one expresses it, 'The more I deny myself in thought, word, and deed, of pride, lust, anger, self-will, worldly-mindedness, the more the good Spirit will dwell and abide in me. For where sin is, it drives the good Spirit away.' When my conscience is void of offence, I enjoy a continual sense of my justification, from which flows unspeakable peace, love, and happiness.

I find more and more I must deny myself. Whatever others may do, I find no peace (nor do I desire it) while my thoughts, words, or actions are agreeable to nature. This is my misfortune. Nature has still a part in me, and I often yield to evil thoughts, trifling words, or foolish actions; works done not in faith, which grieve the Spirit of God and bring me into misery and trouble. Yet I have a good hope I shall go on from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer.

All is peaceable in this great city. How long it will remain so is known only to him that knows all things.<sup>1</sup> My soul seems preparing for a storm, and the Spirit of truth is continually teaching me to divest myself of all things, that being in readiness that hour may not come upon me unawares. I have nothing outwardly, glory be to God, that keeps me confined to the earth. And I hope what is still in me contrary to the purity of him before whom I must shortly stand without a covering, will be taken away, before I depart hence to be no more seen.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 12, 1745 (*Works*, 20:85–86).

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<sup>1</sup>This foreboding reflects the second Jacobite Rebellion in 1745. The allies had suffered defeat by the French at the Battle of Fontenoy on May 11, and Charles Edward Stuart ('the Young Pretender') had landed with some supporting troops in Scotland on July 25, where he enjoyed some initial victories over the British forces.

From James Hutton<sup>1</sup>

To the Author of the *Daily Post*<sup>2</sup>

Fetter Lane [London]

July 24, 1745

Sir,

I find in your paper, in an article dated Copenhagen, March the 20th, two things said about which I wish you were *disabused*.<sup>3</sup> First, you say that the King of Denmark published an edict [on] March 4 to extirpate the Herrnhuters out of the Danish domains. Secondly, you say that the Herrnhuters, the Moravians, the Whitefieldites, and the Wesleyans in this country are all the same and much of a piece.

I have the edict by me and do not find therein the Herrnhuters once named, but rather other persons. And the matters specified in the edict which the King is displeased with, and resolved not to suffer, are such as are nowhere to be found either among the Herrnhuters of anywhere else among the Moravian Brethren.

As to the second point, whosoever reckons that those persons in England who are usually called Moravians and those who are called Methodists are the same, he is mistaken. That they are not the same people is manifest enough out of the declaration of Louis, late Bishop and Trustee of the Brethren's Church, dated at London, March 1743, which I here send you as I find it printed in a collection of original papers of the Brethren, printed at Budingen in the Wetterau, called the *Budingen Sammlung*, vol. III, p. 852.

I find myself at this time under an obligation of withholding no longer my declaration that, in my opinion, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. Charles his brother, though very learned and gifted men, are both in the plain way of false teaching and deceiving souls.

As I have no other view by this, my declaration, but to preserve the little flock of sinners who love their Saviour from being confounded with pretenders to such perfection, of whom I cannot but be suspicious that in the same time that they preach perfection they are willful servants of sin, and who I fear I shall see sooner or later running with their heads against the wall for a punishment of their high spirits which (for want of public and seasonable disavowing them) would involve all the servants of Christ in the same scandal.

So I declare at the same time that if a controversy should arise from this declaration, I will not meddle with it in any way.

If those gentlemen, or any of the people, become humbled in the principle point, the rest of their unusual conduct shall not hinder me from embracing them with candour and love.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

James Hutton

*Source*: published transcription; *Daily Advertiser* (Aug. 2, 1745), p. 1.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>While not addressed to JW, this public letter moved JW to publish in the same newspaper a reply dated Sept. 6, 1745 (*Works*, 26:150–51).

<sup>2</sup>If Hutton sent this to the *Daily Post*, they chose to ignore it.

<sup>3</sup>This brief note appeared in the *Daily Post*, Mar. 28, 1745, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>A translation in Latin of the opening section is held at London, Moravian Library and Archives. JW included a partial transcription in *Journal*, Sept. 30, 1749 (*Works*, 20:305).

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Fonman Castle, near Cardiff, Wales]

August 23, 1745

Once more hear my raven's note—and despise it. I look most assuredly, unless general repentance prevent it, for the day of visitation.<sup>1</sup> Whether my apprehensions have aught divine in them, I never presume to say. Neither am I concerned for the credit of my prophecy, or conjecture. But none of you all will more rejoice at my proving what you may call a false prophet than I. For should I prove a true one, I expect Balaam's fate.<sup>2</sup> In great weariness of flesh and spirit I conclude

Your Μάντις κακῶν.<sup>3</sup>

Source: ms transcription; CW, MS Journal.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>CW felt deeply the foreboding common to many of the English in 1745. The allies had suffered defeat by the French at the Battle of Fontenoy on May 11, and the second Jacobite Rebellion had been launched with the landing of Charles Edward Stuart ('the Young Pretender') in Scotland on July 25, with the threat of an invasion of England by his supporters. Cf. JW's letter to CW of Sept. 22, 1745.

<sup>2</sup>The account of Balaam the prophet begins in Num. 22; his ultimate fate for prophesying doom was death by sword—see Num. 31:8.

<sup>3</sup>'Prophet of bad things'.

<sup>4</sup>Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:150.

From an Unidentified Betley Member

Betley, near Nantwich<sup>1</sup>  
August 24, 1745

I rejoice that the Lord stirs you up more and more to labour in his vineyard. I am persuaded it is not a small matter whether we speak or let it alone. If I go into any company, and there be an opportunity to reprove or exhort, and I come away without using it, I am as much condemned in my own conscience as if I had robbed them. Pray for me, that I may have patience to endure the contradiction of sinners, and that I may always remember, 'the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God'.<sup>2</sup>

Sunday, August 4, we met as usual. As soon as we had begun prayer there came the curate,<sup>3</sup> with a lawyer. He stayed till we had done prayer, and then asked, 'What is the intent of your meeting?' I answered, 'To build each other up in our most holy faith.' He said, 'But what method do you use?' I answered, 'This is the third Sunday that I have met these my brethren. The first Sunday we read the fifth chapter of St. Matthew and exhorted one another to follow after the holiness and happiness there described. Last Sunday we considered the sixth. And now, if we are not hindered, we shall go on to the seventh.' He bade us, 'Go on,' and he would stay a little and hear us. By the desire of the rest I read the chapter, which I had scarce done, when the lawyer began a long harangue concerning the danger we were in of running mad. I answered, 'Sir, as I perceive you have no design to help us, if you will not hinder us we shall take it as a favour.' He went out directly and left the curate with us, who began to exhort us not to be over anxious about our salvation, but to divert ourselves a little. I told him, 'Sir, we desire, whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God.'<sup>4</sup> 'What', said he, 'Do you deny all diversions?' I said, 'All which do not agree with that rule.' He hurried away and said as he went, 'I wish you do not fall into some error.'

The following week grievous threatenings were given out of what we should suffer if we met again. On Friday, [August] 9, a gentleman sent for me and told me he would hire a mob to pull the house down, for we were the most disturbing dogs in the nation. I said, 'Sir, if there be a disturbance now, it will lie at your door. A few of us intend to meet on Sunday, after sermon, to encourage one another in serving God. You say, if we do, you will have the house pulled down. And then you will say we have made the disturbance!' He said he would send for me another time and have an hour's discourse with me.

On Sunday the man at whose house we were to meet was warned by his landlady not to receive us, for if he did the house would surely be pulled down. However he did receive us. A great many people coming about the house, he told them if they had a mind they might come in. So they came in, as many as the house would hold. I told them all the design of our meeting. Then we prayed, and I read the first chapter of St. James and spoke a little on those words, 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.'<sup>5</sup> And two more of our brethren testified, by their own experience, that he is a God of truth. They stood as dumb men till we had done, nor did one afterward open his mouth against us.

From this time we have been threatened more and more, especially by the gentry, who say they will send us all for soldiers. Nevertheless on Sunday, [August] 18, we had a quiet and comfortable meeting. We considered the third chapter of the First Epistle of St. Peter, which was the Evening Lesson for the day. We were thankful for the record that is there left us of the treatment we are to meet with. And

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., 'Betly, near Namptwich'; Betley, Staffordshire is midway between Stoke-on Trent and Nantwich.

<sup>2</sup>James 1:20.

<sup>3</sup>Brian Wharton (d. 1750) was perpetual curate of Betley from 1742 to his death.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. 1 Cor. 10:31.

<sup>5</sup>James 1:5.

we are all much humbled that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Christ.

I have been ill this fortnight, having got a great cold, but am obliged to keep it to myself as much as I can, because a person here cannot have the very form of godliness, but if he is sick that is the cause of it. I seem not to desire life or death, but that the will of God may be done.

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Sept. 3, 1745 (*Works*, 20:87–88).

From James Erskine, Lord Grange

Westminster  
September 4, 1745

Dear Sir,

I am sorry I cannot get to the [West Street] chapel tonight. I believe you will not take it amiss my writing to make a proposal to you, for my meaning is only to suggest it to your thoughts that you may consider it and, under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, do what you shall think best.

I ardently wish for union and Christian fellowship among all who love, and obey, and really believe in our Lord Jesus; and particularly between such in England and Scotland, though of different denominations, and of various opinions even concerning material points not inconsistent with that blessed love, and faith, and obedience. The animosity among so many of them, and their bigotry, mistaken for zeal for truth, that reigns among them and prevails in practice, where yet the principle is against it, is a grief to my soul.

Your labours have been blessed at Newcastle—a town so full of Scots, and to which so many of them annually resort, and which is so near to Scotland that it naturally introduces some connection between that people and yours.

You have some sentiments and ways of speaking different from the generality, and almost from all the real Christians of the Presbyterian persuasion in Scotland—among whom, from my long acquaintance among my countrymen, I cannot help thinking are about five-eighths of the real Christians there. And to my great regret, of these worthy people I fear three-fifths are woefully bigoted; a vice too natural to all of us Scots, from what our eminent countryman George Buchanan wrote was our temper, *perfervidum Scoturum ingenium*.<sup>1</sup> And some of you English have as much of it as any Scot, but it is not so national with you as among the Scots.

I think both you and your brother have of late expressed a great desire to be useful to the Scots in the gospel, and to preach it in Scotland.

You would have the same prejudices to struggle with among the Presbyterians that Mr. [George] Whitefield had—viz., that you are of the Church of England and use the liturgy. And you would have more to struggle with, because of the difference of sentiments and ways of speaking as to some doctrines about which his opinions and expressions were the same as theirs. And though this might make you more acceptable to most of the Episcopal persuasion, yet your way of speaking about Christian Perfection would make them fly far from you; as well as what they call ‘church-order’ and ‘regularity’. For which last, the Presbyterians would not be so offended at you. And your urging so strict holiness in practice would recommend you to the Presbyterians, but I am afraid not to the most part of the Episcopalians. And your doctrine of man’s utter ruin by the fall, and utter inability to do any thing for his own recovery; and the necessity of regeneration; and of an interest in Christ by faith only, that works by love, and produces universal holiness in heart, lip, and life; and all by the operation of the Holy Spirit, etc., would be sweet to the Presbyterians, but not to many of the Episcopalians.

Mr. Whitefield, in a very short time, and in fewer months than one would have thought could have been done in as many decades of years, overcame the prejudices of the far greatest part of the Presbyterians, and especially of the most religious, only by preaching that faith and holiness which you preach and meddling with no debates, and by the power of the Lord signally accompanying his ministrations, awakening, converting, and building up many, almost wherever he went, in many places remote from one another. And bigotry and party-spirit opposed this blessed work in vain. Hardly any of the Episcopal party, though he always owned and professed himself of the Church of England, did give him any countenance. And the few who inclined to do it were so taken to task for it by their clergy (even to threatening them with debarring from the sacrament) that only four or five, that I could hear of, did any where venture to hear him. And some of their clergy, I was told, did say that the Bishop of London wrote

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<sup>1</sup>‘The distinctive character of the Scot is to be extremely eager or zealous.’



to them to do so.

The same evangelical doctrine of faith, holiness, regeneration, influence of the Holy Spirit, etc.; and such blessed divine power on your ministrations, managed with Christian prudence and simplicity, and that wisdom from above which is profitable to direct; would likewise overcome the stronger prejudices against you and your brother.

But Mr. Whitefield had another advantage which you would not have at present. The sermons and other things he had printed, and were earnestly read by the Presbyterians, were to their taste, as well as his sermons, conversations, and prayers among themselves. And there is hardly any thing printed by your brother and you in which, I fear, they would not find some thought or expression that would stumble and offend them.

If therefore you could publish something really worthy and good, and on the life of Christianity, which would be to their taste, might not that contribute much to remove their prejudices and bring them to listen to the gospel preached by you, which is the same (notwithstanding all the little varieties) that they love, and receive in their hearts?

It was in this view that I entreated you to read and consider *The Sum of Saving Knowledge, and the Practical Use Thereof*.<sup>2</sup> We know already it is to their taste, and in great esteem among all, and has surely been blessed by our Lord to great numbers of his people there for more than four-score years.

I see you seek not fame by publishing only things of your own, but as gladly publish what was wrote by others, when you see it may do good. And this little piece abstains more than anything almost I have hitherto met with from all disputed points of any sort, and keeps nearer to the great foundations only of real Christianity in head and heart, and in so plain words and manners that the meanest capacity is not too weak for it.

If you see fit to publish this, in a little cheap pamphlet, with a proper preface recommending it to the Scotch Presbyterians, who (as their predecessors did) do so much value it and have found a blessing in it, they would at once see your soundness in the faith of Jesus and gladly hear you. And it would give exceeding joy to that honest successful minister of Christ who already loves you, Mr. James Robe of Killisyth.<sup>3</sup> And so would it do to such ministers as he, and to all in particular friendship with him. Where you might think that some things wanted a little explication, so as you might venture publicly to recommend it, I humbly incline to think it might be done by short notes on such words or passages as would answer your purpose, and yet not offend those whom you chiefly design the publication for. But for me to mention such in writing would be inexpedient. And had you once read and considered the little piece, it would be profitable to me if you will be pleased to point out to me in conversation such passages as you thought required such notes.

And besides the advantage of this were you in Scotland, it would greatly induce the Scots who go to Newcastle to join with you, and not be deterred from it by the Scotch seceders lately come to that place.

May our dear Lord direct you to what is most for his own most worthy glory and the good of souls. May these most blessed ends be obtained. And that being my only aim, I hope you will pardon this trouble, from reverend and dear sir,

Your affectionate and most faithful humble servant,

James Erskine

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 40–43.

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<sup>2</sup>David Dickson, *The Summe of Saving Knowledge, with the Practical Use Thereof* (1671).

<sup>3</sup>See the excerpt of James Robe quoted in Erskine's letter to JW of Mar. 10, 1745 (above).

From 'M. F.'

c. September 20, 1745

Dear Sir,

For more than three years I walked clearly in the light of God's countenance. Nothing could interrupt my peace, nor did I find the least rising of any evil temper, so that I believed I was in the full sense born of God. But at last I found I had been mistaken. It is now about a year since I found I could not bear all things—I could not bear to be slighted by those I loved. This occasioned pride and resentment to rise in my heart, so that I was forced to own, 'I have still an evil heart.' Then I was tempted to despair. But the Lord was still nigh me and lifted up my head. He showed me my sin. Yet did he not hide himself from me, but I could still call him, 'My Lord and my God'.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear to me that there is any need for us, in this case, to try to pull down one another. For though a person does think he has attained, when he has not, yet if he be simple and sincere, and desires to know himself, God will show him in the time and manner that seemeth him best.

As to myself, I often think, had I been faithful to the grace of God, I never had needed to know trouble more. For I believe he would have carried me on from grace to grace, till he had made me meet for glory. But I know not if it is needful that I should see more of my heart. May his will be done! Only make me faithful in the fight, and then do what seemeth thee good.

I find a great difference between what I once felt in myself and what I feel now. Then I felt nothing but love, and peace, and joy in believing. Now, though I feel a measure of all these heavenly tempers, yet I feel other tempers also, and if I do not continually fight against them, I am overcome. The devil tempted me then, but it was as nothing, for he seemed to have no part in me. But now I find an enemy in my own bosom, that is ready to betray me every moment. I believe, did I not yet expect a full deliverance from sin, I should grow faint and weary. But the hope of that gives me fresh courage to go on. For I cannot doubt but I shall be a living witness of it. O may the Lord hasten the time!

Dear sir, do not fail to pray that he may fulfil that great work in  
Your daughter in Christ,

M. F.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 3, 1745 (*Works*, 20:99–100).

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<sup>1</sup>John 20:28.

From an Unidentified Woman

[London]

September 21, 1745

Dear Sir,

I will let you know, as near as I can, how the Lord hath dealt with me ever since I can remember. When I was five or six years old, I had many serious thoughts about death and judgment. I wanted to be good, but I knew not how. I was often in great trouble for fear I should die and go to hell. If at any time I told a lie, I was like one in hell. I was afraid to be one moment by myself, for I thought the devil would come and tear me in pieces. And so I continued till I was about eight years old. Then I received a measure of the love of God. I loved Jesus Christ, so that I thought I could suffer anything for his sake. I could not bear to be with other children, but when I was from school I would go by myself, and pray, and read. I prayed much for death, for I wanted to be with Christ. And I thought if I lived, I should sin and offend God.

I continued in this temper till I went to a boarding-school. There I soon trifled away all the grace of God and could play as well as the rest, though not without convictions. But I soon stifled them. As I grew in years, I grew in sin and delighted more and more in vanity till I was fourteen or fifteen years old. I had then a severe fit of illness, in which I made many good resolutions, and when I recovered I began to be more strict in outward duties. I went constantly to church and sacrament, but I had the same heart still, that could not forsake my bosom sins, such as dancing, going to plays, and reading trifling books. The Spirit of the Lord often reprov'd me for these things, but I stifled it by thinking, 'Such and such an one does so, and they are very good people.'

When Mr. Whitefield first preached I went to hear him, and I found great drawings from God. But till I heard your brother and you, I did not know myself. Then I found I was an unbeliever, and that none could help me but Christ. I cried unto him, and he heard me and spoke those words with power to my heart, 'Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee.'<sup>1</sup> I was in great ecstasy of joy and love, and cried out, 'I shall never sin no more.' This continued about two months. But having no acquaintance with any person of experience, I was ignorant of Satan's devices when he transformed himself into an angel of light. He suggested, 'Christ has fulfilled the law for you. You are no longer a subject to ordinances. You are now to "be still" and "wait" upon God.' So I did not go to the sacrament for two months. Neither did I kneel down to pray, or use any other ordinance—unless I was moved to it. At first God strove with me, but the devil told me it was the spirit of bondage, and I must resist it, for I was free from the law. In a little time he left off striving, and I grew quite easy and satisfied, but withal quite dead and cold. I could now hear idle talking without any pain; nay, and my heart began to join with it. Then I awoke, as one out of sleep, and looked for the Lord, but he was departed from me. Just then the Brethren at Fetter Lane began to preach 'stillness'. I cried out, 'This doctrine is not right, for by yielding to this, I have lost all my peace and love.' I was now in great distress. The devil told me it was impossible to renew me again to repentance, so that I fell into utter despair, and all my friends believed me to be quite distracted.

I was in this dark state for more than a year. It was at the sacrament the Lord returned to me. The love and joy were the same I felt when I received remission of sins, only much greater. I was in a new world. My heart was so filled with love to God and to all mankind that I thought all old things were passed away, and all things in me become new. For near four years I felt no evil in my heart, nor any desire but in submission to the will of God. But all this time I prayed to God that I might know myself as I was known of him. And in his time he showed me that the evil of my heart was not taken away but only covered.

I still retain a sense of the love of God to me, and a power to love him at all times. Other desires are often ready to creep in, but through the Lord strengthening me I am more than conqueror. I find a thirst in my soul which nothing short of the fullness of God can satisfy. O may the Lord hasten that time

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 7:50.

when my whole soul shall be filled with God!

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 3, 1745 (*Works*, 20:100–01).

From Jane Bate<sup>1</sup>

Leeds  
September 30, 1745

Reverend Sir,

The first sight of you at Wakefield sunk my proud spirits, and I believe, had I not gone upstairs to harden my heart against the truth, what you said would have made a deeper impression upon me. I often afterwards thought, 'These things are true, but why does nobody understand them but my husband and Frank Scott?'<sup>2</sup> Then the rich clave to me and advised me to use my husband ill and see if that would not drive him from this way. And sometimes I used fair means. But this was dangerous, for then he could speak freely to me and I found it stole upon me. But I took great care he should not perceive it, lest he should follow on and make me like himself. Then I went to the vicar,<sup>3</sup> who said my husband was mad and there were no such things as he pretended to. Hereby my heart was hardened more and more, till I resolved to go away and leave him. So I told him, which made him weep much and strive to show me the wickedness of my resolution. However, by the advice of my old friend the vicar I got over that doubt, took about sixty pounds of my husband's money and fixed the time of my privately setting out for London. But God prevented me, for I found myself with child. So that design was at an end.

Soon after, as few in Wakefield would employ my husband, he was obliged to remove to Leeds. What I now feared was that they of the society would come and talk to me. But I soon forced them to stay away, I was so sharp and abusive to any that came. Yet my heart began to soften, and when I spoke things of them which I thought were false, I was afterwards checked in my own mind. I began to like that my husband should overcome, when talking to gainsayers. I went more to church and sacrament. And the time you was here before, when my husband said you should come and see me, it pleased me much, though I hid it from him; and when he said you were gone, it grieved me sore. Then being uneasy, I went to Mr. M——d.<sup>4</sup> He said you were all wrong. And that if I went to church and sacrament and did as I would be done by, all would be well. So my wound was healed, and I was easy.

On Sunday, June 22, about midnight, I was taken ill of a fever but thought nothing of death till Thursday, when the doctor and apothecary declared my danger—which, with my husband's home speeches, sunk my spirits. And I promised God how good I would be if he would spare me, but yet could not abide the Methodists. On Friday, while my husband was talking with the apothecary of the wickedness of flattering people with the hopes of life till they died and dropped into hell, my mother brought in the vicar. He asked the apothecary how I did, who said I was very ill. But my husband made me worse by talking of my dying out of Christ and being damned. The vicar flew vehemently at my husband and said many warm things. My husband answered, 'Speak agreeably to Scripture and the doctrine of our Church, or I will not hear you.' 'What?', said he, 'Are you inspired?' 'Are not you, sir?' said my husband. '[Turn] to the Articles of the Church: "Before the grace of God and the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, can no good work be done."' <sup>5</sup> He made no answer but left the room in haste.

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur and Jane Bate were living in Wakefield when JW came through Yorkshire on a preaching tour in late 1743. Arthur was already a committed Methodist, and induced JW to visit his wife Jane, to try to persuade her of the cause. JW records his visit with Jane Bate in *Journal*, Nov. 25, 1743, *Works*, 20:5.

<sup>2</sup>Francis ('Frank') Scott was a joiner and local preacher, a room in whose shop was used as a place of worship for the society in Wakefield; see *WMM* 61 (1838): 555.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. George Arnet was vicar of Wakefield, 1729–51.

<sup>4</sup>Rev. John Murgatroyd (c. 1703–68), curate of St. John's Chapel in Leeds, Old Ainstie, 1731–68.

<sup>5</sup>A loose summary of Articles X and XII.

On Saturday my mother brought the Reverend Mr. S.,<sup>6</sup> who said, 'I suppose you are one of those perfection-men?' 'Sir', said my husband, 'Are not you? Do you not pray, every Sunday, that you may perfectly love God?' He was going away, but my mother begged him to see me and asked if there was any such thing as knowing one's sins forgiven. He said, some might, but I might be saved without. My husband said, 'Sir, the Homilies speak otherwise,' and added a few words from them. Mr. S. answered, 'You want your head breaking,' which surprised me much. However, he went to prayers, but in such a flutter, he forgot I was a woman and prayed for a man, and then went away.

I was sometimes more, sometimes less, serious, till Monday afternoon, when an old acquaintance from Wakefield came to see me—a poor, drunken, idle, talking man. When he was gone my husband said he would suffer no more of such as him to come near me. I flew into a great rage, on which he went into another room and poured out his soul before God for me. The Lord hearkened, and heard, and sent his Holy Spirit, who gave me to think what I had been doing all my life and to resolve to give up all for Christ. Immediately I felt a strong love to God and a steadfast hope that if I cried to him, I should have the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of my sins. When my husband came into the room, I called him to me and told him how I was. He could hardly believe it, and to try me asked if John Nelson should come and pray with me. I said, Yes, or any of the children of God. Then he took courage and we wept on each other's neck. When John Nelson came he strengthened me much. He came a second time between nine and ten. After he went, my husband and sister Fenton prayed with me till they were quite spent; but I thought, if they were, I must not. So I looked to God for strength and he gave it, and I prayed without ceasing till that text came fresh into my mind, 'There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance.'<sup>7</sup> I was then I know not how. I thought Christ stood in the front, and all the angels behind and on each side of him, rejoicing over me. But still I had not a clear sight that my sins were forgiven. However, I now ventured to take a little sleep. I slept from two till five. When I awaked, I began to cry out for help. I thought his chariots were long a-coming. I continued in prayer till my husband, who sat by me, perceived my prayers were swallowed up in praise. Indeed I was lost in Christ. I knew not where I was. My burden was quite gone, and I found my nature quite changed and my affections carried away to heaven. Then I broke out into such expressions as I cannot utter now, praising God for what he had done for my soul. My fever also was gone. As soon as I was assured of his love, I was healed both in body and soul. Which I told the doctor and apothecary in the morning, who stood like men in amaze and confessed they had never seen such a thing before. A deal of people came all that week. On Wednesday, in particular, I was talking to them, without any time for breakfast or dinner, from six in the morning to six at night.

Dear sir, pray for me, that God may keep me, who am  
Your unworthy sister,

Jane Bate

*Source:* published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 3, 1745 (*Works*, 20:102–04).

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<sup>6</sup>Apparently Rev. John Scott (c. 1705–66), son of John Scott of Wakefield, pleb. He was licensed as curate of Horbury and a lecturer of Wakefield.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Luke 15:7.

From William Clements

[Belgium]  
October 10, 1745

Reverend Sir,

I shall acquaint you with the Lord's dealings with us since April last. We marched from Ghent to Allest on the 14th, where I met with two or three of our brethren in the fields, and we sung and prayed together and were comforted. On the 15th, I met a small company about three miles from the town, and the Lord filled our hearts with love and peace. On the 17th, we marched to the camp near Brussels. On the 18th, I met a small congregation on the side of a hill, and I spoke from those words, 'Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp, bearing his reproach.'<sup>1</sup> On the 28th, I spoke from those words of Isaiah, 'Thus saith the Lord concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.'<sup>2</sup> On the 29th, we marched close to the enemy, and when I saw them in their camp, my bowels moved toward them, in love and pity for their souls. We lay on our arms all night. In the morning, April 30, the cannon began to play at half an hour after four, and the Lord took away all fear from me, so that I went into the field with joy. The balls flew on either hand, and men fell in abundance, but nothing touched me till about two o'clock. Then I received a ball through my left arm and rejoiced so much the more. Soon after I received another into my right, which obliged me to quit the field. But I scarce knew whether I was on earth or in heaven. It was one of the sweetest days I ever enjoyed.

Wm. Cle[men]ts

*Source:* published transcription; JWJ, Dec. 2, 1745 (*Works*, 20:107).

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<sup>1</sup>Heb. 13:13.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. 29:22.

From John Haime

Lierre<sup>1</sup> near Antwerp  
October 21, 1745

Since I wrote to you last I have gone through great trials. It was not the least that I have lost my dear brother [William] Clements for a season, being shot through both the arms.<sup>2</sup> To try me farther, John Evans and [brother] Bishop were both killed in the battle, as was [John<sup>3</sup>] Greenwood soon after. Two more who did speak boldly in the name of Jesus are fallen into the world again. So I am left alone. But I know it is for my good. Seeing iniquity so much abound and the love of many wax cold, adds wings to my devotion, and my faith grows daily as a plant by the waterside.

April 30,<sup>4</sup> the Lord was pleased to try our little flock and to show them his mighty power. Some days before, one of them standing at his tent door broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand, and was so filled with the love of God that he danced before his comrades. In the battle, before he died, he openly declared, 'I am going to rest from my labours in the bosom of Jesus.' I believe nothing like this was ever heard of before, in the midst of so wicked an army as ours. Some were crying out in their wounds 'I am going to my Beloved'; others, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly'; and many that were not wounded, crying to their Lord to take them to himself. There was such boldness in the battle among this little, despised flock that it made the officers, as well as common soldiers, amazed. And they acknowledge it to this day. As to my own part, I stood the fire of the enemy for above seven hours. Then my horse was shot under me and I was exposed both to the enemy and our own horse. But that did not discourage me at all, for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go, the balls flying on every side, and thousands lay bleeding, groaning, dying, and dead on each hand. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace, but it never singed one hair of my head. The hotter it grew, the more strength was given me. I was full of joy and love, as much as I could well bear. Going on, I met one of our brethren, with a little dish in his hand, seeking for water. He smiled and said he had got a sore wound in his leg. I asked, 'Have you gotten Christ in your heart?' He answered, 'I have, and I have had him all the day. Blessed be God that I ever saw your face.' Lord, what am I, that I should be counted worthy to set my hand to the gospel plough? Lord, humble me and lay me in the dust!

J. H.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Dec. 2, 1745 (*Works*, 20:107–08).

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<sup>1</sup>Orig., 'Leare'.

<sup>2</sup>See immediately previous letter.

<sup>3</sup>Orig., 'C'; either a misreading or perhaps for 'Captain'.

<sup>4</sup>Haime's last letter to JW was in March, so after appraising him of current matters, he provides this intervening note.



From 'John Smith'

[Nov. 27, 1745]

Reverend Sir,

I heartily thank you for your very kind and very handsome letter.<sup>1</sup> I have yielded it that attention which I think it justly deserves, and am now sat down to give you my thoughts upon it. I shall first most readily take notice of those things wherein I stand corrected and am gone over to you, and next I shall with some reluctance proceed to those in which we first seem misfortunately to differ.

1. First, I stand corrected as to my charging your singularities as your *most* beloved opinions, and *more* insisted on, etc.; I retract this comparative and superlative, and hope you will not think I 'greatly wrong you'<sup>2</sup> when I charge you no higher than with their being your *beloved* opinions, *much* insisted on.

2. By saying that you seem to think you sufficiently answer your adversary if you put together a number of naked Scriptures that sound in your favour I meant not to say that you do this *always*, but only *sometimes*. It was a fault in me to express this in such general terms, and without some such proper word of restriction.

3. In speaking of the ancient and modern Church of England I was aware I should lay myself open to some such rebuke as that 'How blind was I! etc.'<sup>3</sup> I was to blame, therefore, not to explain myself a little. I know that the written creeds, articles, etc., of a church are commonly spoken of as the whole doctrine of such church. And it would be so, were human language so universal as to admit of some one written form liable to one single sense only. But as this is not the case, the doctrine of any church is really its creeds, articles, etc., as generally understood and interpreted by its living pastors. E.g., 'The body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.' Here is a written form of the Church of England generally understood and interpreted in 1345 as teaching transubstantiation; the very same written words are retained in 1545, but then generally understood and interpreted in a sounder sense. Now should the Duke of Norfolk in 1745<sup>4</sup> insist that he differed not from the doctrine of the Church of England because he abided by that written form, might I not fairly be allowed to tell him, My Lord, if by the Church of England be meant, as ought to be meant, the present Church, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrines differ widely from the doctrines of the Church? The case will be just the same though we go no farther back than 1545. If the written Articles, etc., were then generally understood and interpreted in the Calvinistical sense, and [in] 1745 are generally understood and interpreted in the Arminian sense, then if Mr. Whitefield will at this time of day expound the seventeenth Article<sup>5</sup> in the old justly exploded sense, you may fairly be allowed to show (as you do) the blasphemous consequences of the old exploded sense, and might justly be allowed to tell him, Sir, if this be your interpretation, it will be no hard matter to show that your doctrine differs widely from the doctrine of the present Church. Indeed, should you through either zeal or anger go so much farther as to tax one another with solemnly subscribing to those Articles, etc., which you do not believe in your heart, this would be going much too far. For you do each of you believe the written articles in your hearts, though each of you in a sense very different from the other. These articles of peace admit of this latitude, and the royal authority which enjoins them forbids the cramping it, and speaks of both parties subscribing to the written words. The disbelieving your sense is not disbelieving the Article. And therefore,

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<sup>1</sup>JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, 1745, *Works*, 26:153–61.

<sup>2</sup>See JW to 'John Smith', §17 (p. 159).

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, §20 (p. 161).

<sup>4</sup>Alluding to the defense of transubstantiation by the Duke of Norfolk in championing the 'Six Articles' in 1539.

<sup>5</sup>Article XVII is 'Of Predestination and Election'. Whitefield does cite this article against JW in his letter of Dec. 24, 1740.

notwithstanding the blasphemous consequences of Mr. Whitefield's sense of the seventeenth Article, you still acknowledge him as a child of God. I hope that the pastors of the present age, bishops, priests, and deacons, for differing from you in the sense of the thirteenth Article,<sup>6</sup> are not to be hinted at as unbelievers in their hearts, and children of the devil.

4. Again, I agree with you that the written Word is (now) the whole and sole rule of faith, and that no such implicit faith is due to an apostle or other worker of miracles as that we should admit anything for truth contrary to the written Word. This, I suppose, is all you mean by putting the apostles upon proving their assertions from the written Word. What, from the written Word before they had wrote it? No, but your intention must be that the written Word (i.e., the Old and New Testament as we now have them complete) is such a perfect rule of faith that though an apostle or an angel from heaven were to teach anything contrary thereto, and work ever so many miracles in confirmation of his new doctrine, still we ought not to believe him. This is as true as that God is true, and that he cannot contradict himself. But where there is not such contradiction, these miracles have their weight. Now I supposed you not as teaching some doctrine manifestly contradicted by Scripture, but only as inferring something from thence which others think cannot fairly be inferred. I am attending to the inferences of these serious teachers, and am in some suspense. One of them gives out that the Spirit of God gives visible attestations to his ministry by miraculous works (for surely the casting out of devils may be called so, if anything can); now if this shall appear to be no exaggerated account, but a real fact, am I not justified in saying that I will, on account of this attestation, assent to his set of Scripture inferences? In short, sir, you either did or did not cast out devils. If you did, I am still ready to be your disciple and follower all the world over. If you did not, you ought to say so, and to own your error in having related a *natural* fact in such high terms as unavoidably convey to the reader the idea of a *miraculous* one.

5. I agree too with you that it is (generally) a sufficient defence of any way of speaking whatever that it is scriptural. But this admits of many restrictions and limitations. If, for instance, you relate a *melancholy person's amendment* in the scripture-terms of Christ's 'miraculous healing demoniacs', this, the more scriptural the terms, the more will it be misguiding. If low and common things are told in scripture-phrase it becomes either cant or burlesque. If obsolete words are used familiarly (as 'earing' for 'ploughing'), the discourse grows unintelligible. If words that have shifted and changed their signification are used (as 'let', not for 'suffer', but for its contrary, 'hinder'), then what is said must appear strange and paradoxical. Thus you would make your people start, should you say that all good souls but Christ's are left in hell till the Day of Judgment. If some of the apostles had a sort of *technical term* peculiar to the controversies of those days, yet well understood by those to whom they wrote, it would be an odd kind of affectation to be familiarly using those terms merely because they are scriptural. St. Paul calls Christianity and Judaism 'faith' and 'works', and sometimes 'spirit' and 'flesh'; yet if a man should say that 'flesh' at present loses ground in Spain, and that 'spirit' gains ground in America, he would but ill defend his singularity by urging that the terms are scriptural. The case is the same with many others: 'salvation', 'justification', 'reprobation', 'predestination', and 'election'. It is not therefore the merely being scriptural that makes terms proper, but we must look back to the occasion of their use, and if the circumstances then and now are alike. Then and not otherwise we may pronounce their use alike proper.

6. Well, you are willing to look thus back to the times of the apostles and reformers. And having so done you ask, Are not the same persuasions as common now as then? No, by no means. The persuasion then was that they might commute expiations or penances and such like external works *instead of* internal holiness. But does any Church of England man maintain anything like this? Every wise Churchman uses external rites as *the means* of internal holiness. And the most ignorant and unwise amongst us use them in no worse way than as *acts of goodness*. But as 'commutations in the stead of holiness'?<sup>7</sup> I never heard of

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<sup>6</sup>Article XIII proclaims that attempts at good works before justification are not pleasing to God and have the nature of sin. JW omitted this Article in the list he prepared for the Methodists in North America.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, §8 (p. 156).

one creature amongst us that professed to use them in so gross a way.

Pray, sir, do you know any people amongst us so grossly superstitious as to think that devotion might be put upon God *instead* of honesty? That three frauds might be committed for six paternosters? Or that four sacraments might be taken in order to commit eight adulteries? It is true, 'our churches (to speak a sad truth) afford us abundant instances of those who are negligent of *internal holiness*'.<sup>8</sup> Yes, of the external rites of holiness likewise. Our times therefore are times of *profaneness*, which differ widely from times of *superstition*, and consequently the phraseology which might be proper for the one must needs be highly improper for the other; so improper that possibly the misapplied anti-superstition phrases have contributed to spread not only antinomianism but infidelity too into the bargain.

7. And now that we are upon phraseology, give me leave to observe to you that the insisting too strongly even on Scripture metaphors has something in it misguiding to the reader. At least it gives him a claim to your more ready pardon when he mistakes your sense. Thus the hanging so much on faith being the eye, the ear, the finger, the palate, etc., of the soul, inclines a reader to think that you mean something more than mere metaphor. And the vehemence of your style in general (a vehemence rather to be envied than condemned) has yet as such a tendency to run (if not the writer, at least) the reader into mistakes. Thus when you asserted that faith is the gift of God, which he bestows, 'not on such as are fit to be crowned with his blessings, but on the ungodly and unholy, on those who are fit only for everlasting destruction',<sup>9</sup> I understand (whether by the fault of the writer or the reader I do not say) that this implied *arbitrarily*. You will pardon me, however, that from those warm words I understand you so till you now explain yourself to mean that 'it is not bestowed without any regard to the fitness or previous qualifications of the recipient'.<sup>10</sup> In like manner, when you teach that the pardon of sins in heaven, or justification, is certified to the sinner on earth by the Holy Ghost, and that this certificate or 'testimony is as easily discernible from the suggestions of reason or fancy as light is discernible from darkness',<sup>11</sup> I understood this to amount to the *infallible* testimony of the Holy Ghost. But it seems these phrases do not amount to "'infallible" in that sense that none' (by the wrong deductions of reason, or false suggestions of fancy) 'believe they have it who indeed have not'.<sup>12</sup> In what sense then is it thus plainly discernible and infallible? Is it in this sense, that none (by wrong reasoning or false fancy) 'who indeed have it, believe they have it not'? No, nor in this sense neither (witness the case of Mrs. Hannah Richardson,<sup>13</sup> who for above a year after this attestation of justification continued almost in despair, fancying she should be damned). Now, sir, in what sense is that attestation infallible, and plainly discernible from fancy, which they who have not may fancy they have, and they who really have may fancy they have it not?

8. As to the experience of pious persons concerning the *progressive* or the *instantaneous* gift of faith, you ask me (and I assure you without any offence) 'how many truly pious persons I am so intimately acquainted with as to be able to interrogate them on the subject'.<sup>14</sup> First I must answer that the sentiments of many hundreds may be known from their preachings, writings, or conversations, without any interrogations at all. Next, if you lay an emphasis on the word 'truly', I must remind you that neither I nor they pretend to have inspected the justification roll in heaven, or to have received any supernatural or miraculous attestation on that head on earth. If then by truly pious persons you mean those who appear to be such to a reasonable Christian's charity, I hope I may answer that I have known *thousands* of such in

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., §10 (p. 156).

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Wesley, *Earnest Appeal*, §11 (11:48).

<sup>10</sup>JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, §11 (p. 157).

<sup>11</sup>See 'John Smith' to JW, May 1745; his opening summary of JW's position.

<sup>12</sup>JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, §12 (p. 157).

<sup>13</sup>Alluding to CW, *A Short Account of the Death of Mrs. Hannah Richardson* (1741).

<sup>14</sup>See JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, §13 (pp. 157–58).

the way I mention. If you have known your *ten thousands*<sup>15</sup> in the other way, God forbid I should envy your number. No, would to God all the Lord's people were known to be pious in some way or other. Yet I cannot help suspecting that the experience of your *tens of thousands*, expressed in cool language, will amount to nothing supernatural or miraculous, indeed to no more than this, that they do remember the day when hearing the love of God preached in a more impetuous and energetic manner than they ever heard before, they were more affected than they ever were before. So that this was the first time they ever so warmly felt the divine love shed abroad in their hearts, and the first time they so seriously attended to the witness of God[']s Spirit with their spirit, that they are the children of God. Witness of God's Spirit—how? By an audible voice from heaven, or any other supernatural or miraculous inspiration? No, but by his attestation in the Holy Scriptures. True believers are the children of God—there is the witness of his Spirit. We are now true believers—there is the witness of their spirit. Ergo, we are now the children of God—a conclusion drawn from both the premises in a natural and logical, not a supernatural or miraculous way.

9. As I apprehend much depends on the terms 'natural' and 'supernatural' and their proper use, give me leave to enlarge a little on this head. 'Natural', 'ordinary', and 'common', when spoken of God's actions, I take to be entirely synonymous terms. 'Supernatural', 'miraculous', and 'uncommon' are likewise synonymous. Thus when God by slow and imperceptible degrees increases a field of wheat forty, fifty, or an hundredfold, this (though it be truly God's own work, as if he had poured new-created seed down from heaven) we call 'natural', 'ordinary', and 'common'. But when the same Almighty power does at once in a visible and perceptible manner increase five loaves to the satisfying above five thousand hungry people, this (though in reality not a whit more of a difficulty or miracle, if I may so speak, in itself) we call 'supernatural', 'miraculous', and 'uncommon'. And the case is the same in *spirituals* as in *temporals*. If God calls a sinner to repentance, faith, and obedience, by the ministry of men and by his Holy Spirit's imperceptibly disposing the sinner's faculties to receive the call, this is his 'natural', 'ordinary', or 'common' way of acting. But if he uses the ministry of a visible angel, or calls with an audible voice, 'Soul, soul!' outwardly; or suddenly inspires him inwardly with any immediate testimony from heaven, perceptibly coming from thence, and as easily distinguishable from the suggestions of reason and fancy as light is distinguishable from darkness; then this is his 'supernatural', 'miraculous', or 'uncommon' way.

10. This distinction remembered, let us examine your definition of faith. You condemn mine as defective. But I mean there to speak of faith or belief as a genus, of which Christian saving faith may be considered as a species. Had I confined myself to that species I might perhaps have defined it: a full practical assent to Christian truths, and an inward conviction of things invisible. And this, I apprehend, would perfectly have coincided with St. Paul[']s evidence of things not seen,<sup>16</sup> though not with your supernatural conviction of the things of God. Where does the Scripture say anything like this, or give the least hint of faith's being a *supernatural or miraculous* gift? What, then, 'is faith the gift of God in no higher sense than riches are'?<sup>17</sup> Yes, surely; but in no higher a sense than hope and charity are. Nay, of these three the greatest of these is charity.<sup>18</sup> When I speak of a *full and practical* assent you may be sure I mean such an assent as has (not barely *some* influence, but) its *full and proper* influence on practice. Now how a man can have such a full assent to all Christian truths as is productive of all Christian practice, and yet not have one grain of faith, is I own to me quite incomprehensible.

[11.] I did not intend to refer you to the polemical or systematical writers of the last century, but to their immediate successors, who had well concocted and thoroughly digested the former crudities, and

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<sup>15</sup>Wesley's transcriber had written '13,000' instead of his '1300'; see JW to 'John Smith', Dec. 30, 1745, §8 (*Works*, 26:178).

<sup>16</sup>See Heb. 11:1.

<sup>17</sup>JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, §14 (p. 158).

<sup>18</sup>See 1 Cor. 13:13.

who give occasionally in their writings such solid and consistent expositions of the former controverted texts as seem to have been to the satisfaction of most men of learning and piety; insomuch that I know no divines of the Church of England from [Isaac] Barrow, [John] Sharp, and [John] Tillotson, down to [George] Smalridge, [Samuel] Clark[e], and [Daniel] Waterland, and quite to this very day, who have gone back into the old and exploded expositions, except yourselves and Mr. Whitefield—in which, however, you have not gone such unwarr[ant]able lengths as he.

12. I think I have now touched upon all the points in your letter except your defence of the ‘instantaneous gift of faith’,<sup>19</sup> from its beginning in some one first instant. I know not how to reply to this *pertinently* without appearing to speak *harshly*. The best way I know of doing this is to follow St. Paul’s example, and to transfer the things to myself in a figure. Suppose, then, sir, I had asserted that my friends and I had the *instantaneous gift of tongues*, and you on the other hand had urged that it was not so with you and your friends. If to this I had replied that there is always some one first instant when people begin to apply to the learning any language, that therefore it is ‘instantaneous in its beginning’, and consequently all you had said about the slow use of grammars, lexicons, etc., related not to its beginning but to its ‘progress’ and ‘increase’, and so ‘was wide of the present question’.<sup>20</sup> Would not this have started you, sir? And should I not have expected to be told that this was mere quibbling? Not *only faith*, and *language*, but *everything else* in this sense is *instantaneous* except God himself, who never had any first beginning at all.

13. But I have done with your letter, and begin now to repent that I have run out into so many particulars, and that too without any success as to the main point of my former letter; which was the stating the case between you and your adversaries, to whom you appeared to have given but an evasive answer. To this main point, therefore, we must return again. The Christ Church people gave you the nickname of ‘Methodists’. Now the charge is that the Methodists preach sundry singular and erroneous doctrines. How many perhaps is not easy to say, but for the greater distinctness we will say three—viz., unconditional predestination, perceptible inspiration, and sinless perfection. Now once more, sir, hear your adversaries in their own words: ‘A few young heads set up their own schemes’ (viz., of unconditional predestination, etc.) ‘as the great standard of Christianity, and indulge their own notions’ (viz., those peculiar notions) ‘to such a degree as to perplex, unhinge, terrify, and distract the minds of multitudes—and all this by persuading them that they neither are nor can be true Christians but by adhering to their doctrines.’<sup>21</sup> Now you ask, ‘What do you mean by their own schemes, their own notions, their own doctrines?’ It is plain we mean their distinguishing singularities, their unconditional predestination, their perceptible inspiration, and their sinless perfection. You go on, ‘Are they not yours too?’ No, we are sure they are not. ‘Are they not the schemes, the notions, the doctrines, of Jesus Christ, the great fundamental truths of the gospel?’ No, we think they are not. ‘Can you deny one of them without denying the Bible?’ Yes. Mr. Wesley denies one of them, and we deny the other two, and yet neither he nor we deny the Bible. ‘They persuade’ (so say your adversaries) ‘multitudes of people that they cannot be true Christians but by adhering to their doctrines’ (viz., of predestination, inspiration, and perfection). ‘Why, who say they can?’ say you, ‘Whosoever he be, I will prove him to be an infidel.’ Well then; Mr. Wesley says men may be true Christians without adhering to the first doctrine, and Dr. Berriman<sup>22</sup> says that they may be so without adhering to the second and third; and yet God forbid that either of these gentlemen should be proved to be infidels. You proceed, ‘Do you say that any man can be a true Christian without loving God and his neighbour?’ Surely no, but what is this question to the purpose? Or how does this uncontroverted truth tend to clear the Methodists from teaching controverted

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<sup>19</sup>Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>*Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, III.8, *Works*, 11:129; as are all the succeeding quotations in this section.

<sup>22</sup>William Berriman (1688–1750).

errors? Certainly this was *ad populum*, not *ad clerum*;<sup>23</sup> for he must be a poor *clerk* indeed who could not perceive this shifting of the question. Whether it was an oversight in you, or whether it was an instance of your having not arrived at a more sinless perfection than St. Peter or St. Paul, must be left to the decision of your own breast.

14. Forgive me that I speak thus freely. Whatever error or fault there was in that evasion, I am persuaded you still in the main approve of honest and upright dealings. To deal so with you, I must needs tell you that in my opinion you have no other way of answering the charge of your adversaries but either by showing that the singularities which they charge you with are fundamental and of the essence of Christianity, or else by frankly owning that you have been guilty of an error in preaching them ‘with such diligence and zeal as if the whole of Christianity depended upon them’.<sup>24</sup>

15. This is the point between you and me. If we are to reap any benefit from this correspondence (as God grant we may) it must be by my convincing you that you insist upon things as necessary to final salvation which are not so, or by your convincing me that I neglect things which are. The former is such an error as affects not final happiness, but the latter excludes from heaven and drives to hell. My part then may deserve the name of a *friend*, but yours alone that of a *benefactor*. To enable you to be this benefactor is the *primary* end of this debate; your conviction is but the secondary only. I can think of but one way more of letting you into my wrong state in religion (if such it be), and that is by reminding you of two former states of your own. The first state is that which you mention in the thirteenth section of the sermon of *The Almost Christian*.<sup>25</sup> Now, sir, let me ask you, if you had died suddenly in that state, is it your opinion that you should have gone to hell? Or to heaven? If you shall say to hell, this is running unwittingly into the grossest reprobation scheme; for what can be more so than to suppose a ‘person using his utmost diligence to eschew all evil, and to have a conscience void of offence, redeeming the time, buying up every opportunity of doing all good to all men, constantly and carefully using all the public and all the private means of grace, endeavouring after a steady seriousness of behaviour at all times and in all places, and this in all sincerity, having a real design to serve God, a hearty desire to do his will in all things, to please him by whom he was called to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of eternal life’,<sup>26</sup> and yet consigned over to eternal death by God’s withholding from him that supernatural gift which he alone can give? If, on the other hand, you are of opinion that you should have gone to heaven, then your singularities are not essentially necessary to final salvation. The second of your states upon which I would interrogate you is when you were earnestly employed in preaching the love of God and man before you preached or knew salvation by faith. Here I ask again, if you had died in this state, is it your opinion you should have gone to hell or to heaven? If you should say to hell, then how could Christ say that on those doctrines hang all the law and the prophets? If, on the other hand, you shall say to heaven, then a man may be saved without knowing your doctrine of salvation by faith.

16. In the 78th page of the second *Appeal* you say, ‘Whenever I was desired to preach, salvation by faith was my only theme. ... Things were in this posture when I was told I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church. The reason was usually added without reserve: “Because you preach such doctrine.”’<sup>27</sup> Yet in your letter to me you say: ‘It was for preaching this very doctrine, the love of God and man (*before I preached or knew salvation by faith*) that several of the clergy forbade me their pulpits.’<sup>28</sup> This is no way material in our present debate, but I thought it most candid to note what I could

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<sup>23</sup>Addressed ‘to the people’, not ‘to the clergy’.

<sup>24</sup>*Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, II.7, *Works*, 11:128.

<sup>25</sup>I.e., Sermon 2, *The Almost Christian*, I.13 (*Works*, 1:136–37), where Wesley describes himself as sincerely devout, yet only ‘almost a Christian’.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup>*Farther Appeal*, Pt. I, VI.2, *Works*, 11:177.

<sup>28</sup>JW to ‘John Smith’, Sept. 28, §18 (p. 160), slightly rearranged, and the italics added by ‘Smith’.

not without your help tell how to reconcile.

17. I have now done. If I have convinced you of any error, I dare say you will have candour enough to own it. If I have not, then I am persuaded you will have charity enough to take some further pains to convince me of such vital mistakes as threaten my perdition, and put a bar to our ever meeting at the resurrection of the just.

*Source:* manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 23–35.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Entire transcription published in *Works*, 26:164–72.

From the Rev. Westley Hall<sup>1</sup>

[Salisbury]  
[December 1745]

[summary and quotations in JW's reply of Dec. 27–30]

You think, first, that we undertake to *defend* some things which are not *defensible* by the *Word of God*. You instance in three.

1. 'That the *validity* of our *ministry* depends on a *succession* supposed to be from the apostles, and a *commission* derived from the Pope of Rome and his *successors* or *dependents*.'

2. 'That there is an *outward priesthood*, and consequently an *outward sacrifice*, ordained and offered by the Bishop of Rome and his successors or dependents in the Church of England, as *vicars* and vicegerents of Christ.'

3. 'That this *papal hierarchy* and *prelacy* which still continues in the Church of England is of *apostolical institution*, and authorized thereby, though not by the *written Word*.'

You think, secondly, 'That we ourselves give up some things as *indefensible* which are *defended* by the same law and *authority* that establishes the things above mentioned; such as are many of the *laws*, *customs*, and *practices* of the *ecclesiastical courts*.'

You think, thirdly, 'That there are other things which we *defend* and *practise* in *open contradiction* to the *orders* of the Church of England. And this you judge to be a *just exception* against the *sincerity* of our *professions* to adhere to it.'

Source: published transcription; *Journal*, Dec. 27, 1745 (*Works*, 20:109–11).

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<sup>1</sup> For some years JW's brother-in-law had been disgruntled both with Methodism and the Church of England, and was leaning strongly towards the Moravians. JW describes the letter from which he took the following summary and excerpts as 'long', but it is not known to survive.