

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1746–50)

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From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park, Castle Donington, Leicestershire]

January 15, 1746

My Much Esteemed Friend,

I deferred acknowledging your last kind favour till I could send you the excellent sermon of my good friend, Dr. [Philip] Doddridge, upon the lamented death of that eminent Christian and gallant soldier, Colonel Gardiner.¹ His death is a heavy affliction to good Lady Frances², as well as to all his numerous family and acquaintances. But he is gone to the great Captain of our salvation, to see him as he is, to praise him who covered his head in the day of battle, and has taken him to himself to sing the wonders of the love which hath redeemed him from the earth and made him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Eminently successful in illuminating multitudes in various parts of the country with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, the soul of this excellent minister of Christ is ever burning for a more extensive advancement of religion where it is not yet known or its blessed effects felt by the people. A high degree of praise is due to this devoted man for his exertions in calling sinners to repentance, and stirring up the professors of religion to the spirit of the gospel. He would do honour to any age of the church, and his honesty and zeal entitle him to unqualified praise.

If I mistake not, you will be much delighted with the energy of expression and the evangelical strain which runs through his discourse. Though it may be deficient in vigour, it is rich in the display of gospel truth. No man can be more remote from party spirit, or exhibit more of that love which embraces all who love the Lord Jesus, of every name and sect, than the Doctor does in all his writings. This I record to his honour, while there are but too many of the dissenting denomination very differently minded, who are cold and stand aloof from Christians and fellow-heirs of the same inheritance, because they gather not with them.

Amidst abounding opposition, much good still continues to be done and many poor souls are returning to the fold of the great Shepherd. The hand of a King is amongst us. Many hard-hearted rebels have been subdued by the resistless power of the Word. Many have fled for refuge to the hope set before them. And very many are asking the way to Zion. May the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls give us more abundant increase! The fruits of your ministry yet flourish, and we long for you coming once more amongst us. May your ministry be attended and followed by the blessing of the Holy Ghost, and many be added by your means to the church of such as shall be saved.

I have lately heard from dear Mr. [George] Whitefield. He is making full proof of his ministry in America. Mr. Jones³ has been with me for some weeks, and has been very acceptable and useful to many. I have just seen Mr. West's *Observations on the History and Evidences of Christ's Resurrection*,⁴ but have not yet perused it. Dr. Doddridge has a high opinion of it and thinks it calculated for great and extensive usefulness amongst infidels.

¹Col. James Gardiner (1688–1745) was killed at the Battle of Prestonpans, on Sept. 21, 1745. Philip Doddridge commemorated him with *The Christian Warrior Animated and Crowned; a sermon occasioned by the heroick death of... Col. James Gardiner, ... Preached at Northampton, October 13* (London: J. Waugh, 1745).

²In 1726 James Gardiner married Lady Frances Erskine (1700–66), daughter of David Erskine (1672–1745), 9th Earl of Buchan, and his wife Frances (Fairfax) Erskine (1675–1722).

³This is apparently James Jones (d. 1783), a man of some property, who 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.

⁴Referring to one of the first two editions of Gilbert West, *Observations on the History and Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (3rd edition, London: R. Dodsley, 1747).

And now my good friend, farewell! I heartily commend you to the care and guidance of my adorable Master—him on whom I hang the weight of my eternal interests, and through whose precious blood I hope to be cleansed from all my vileness, my worthlessness and misery, and made a partaker of the blessings of his everlasting covenant.

I am, my worthy and esteemed friend,
Your very obliged,

S. Huntingdon

Source: printed transcription; Seymour, *Huntingdon*, 1:71–72.

From the Rev. John Lewis¹

Holt

February 4, 1745/6

Sir,

I had the favour of your book,² and thank you for it. I have read it over without prejudice or partiality, being determined to hear all you say with an unbiassed mind. You make your appeal therein to reason and religion, and having consulted that small share I have of both, I here send you the result of my thoughts on the principles you defend and the measures you pursue, by which you may see I do not entirely approve of either.

I have no objection to the former part of your book,³ which is a severe satire to the age we live in, for I am afraid your observations and reflections of that head have too much truth in them. It is a melancholy subject that cannot but raise the grief and pity of every considerate person that has a due regard for the glory of God and the good of mankind. I would gladly lend an helping hand, according to my poor abilities, to amend and make it better; but not by irregular methods, as I have reason to think those to be which you have taken.

You seem very sanguine, and talk with great confidence of the work of God in your hands, and how it has prospered there by your own labour and those of your adherents, to the reformation of vast numbers all over the kingdom. But sir, while we are doing God's work, we should be careful to keep in God's way, and not to aim at promoting his glory and the good of our Christian brethren by such ways as are inconsistent with that obedience we owe to his commands. This would be doing evil that good may come, and you know that no intention of any end can justify the choice of wrong means to effect it.

The church of Christ of which you are a member is a society wherein some are to govern and others to be governed. As your station places you among the latter, you are in duty bound to pay obedience to those that have the rule over you. But this obedience you refuse to pay, though an apostle has expressly enjoined it,⁴ and though you bound it on your own soul by a solemn promise at your ordination.⁵ To say that you will obey them in all things of an indifferent nature, but preaching the gospel is not so, is a very fallacious way of arguing.⁶ For who is to be the judge? You, or your spiritual governors, who gave you authority to preach the gospel? And who can give a dispensation for a breach of any of their rules or orders? I cannot see how you can justify your conduct in this point either to God or man.

¹John Lewis (1685–1761), a graduate of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, was master of the school at Tetbury (1705–12); then rector of Great Chalfield and curate of Holt and Atford (or Atworth) in Wiltshire (1712–61). He resided in Holt.

²This letter is prefaced: 'The Revd. Mr. Westley, who is the head of the Methodists, having sent the Revd. Mr. John Lewis of Holt, Wiltshire one of his books entitled *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, he wrote and sent him the following answer.' *Farther Appeal* (London: W. Strahan, 1745) was issued in two volumes (Part I in vol. 1; Parts II to IV in vol. 2). Lewis's page references in this letter are to the second volume.

³That is, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. II (the opening section of vol. 2), *Works*, 11:203–71.

⁴Cf. Heb. 13:7 (which Lewis assumes is by Paul).

⁵The service for ordination in the 1662 BCP includes a required positive response to the question: 'Will you reverently obey your Ordinary, and other chief Ministers, unto whom is committed the charge and government over you; following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, and submitting yourselves to their godly judgments?'

⁶Lewis is alluding to *Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, I.11, *Works*, 11:278.

As little justifiable is that part of your proceeding wherein you authorize or at least permit and encourage a set of illiterate unordained persons to preach the gospel. Nay and now at last you go on (I am sorry to see it) to defend the practice and bring what arguments you can pick up to vindicate their taking upon them the sacred office. St. Paul asks, 'How shall they preach except they be sent?'⁷ But you say they may preach without being sent, without a regular mission by imposition of hands. To say they have an inward call to the work and are well qualified for it is a weak pretence, for who is to be the judge of their qualifications but he who has authority to send them? And you know the church of Christ from the apostles' days down to the present times never allowed an inward call sufficient for the ministry without an outward designation.

Methinks it should make you very cautious how you encourage such doings to consider what terrible consequences followed from it in the last century when persons of all ranks and opinions that had good fronts and voluble tongues set up for teachers in religion and thereby let in such a deluge of errors as overwhelmed the land, overturned the established Church and left the minds of multitudes of well-meaning people under the deepest perplexity, in a maze of errors many of which remain to this day, and may to our latest posterity. I wish this liberty assumed in your way may not produce the same effects and that you may not soon see cause to repent of promoting such a practice.

Again it is the duty of every Christian, especially of every minister of Christ, to study the peace and unity of the church, and promote it by all the ways he can. But do you act in this manner? Do you consult the peace and unity of the church in setting up separate assemblies and thereby drawing people from their own parish churches? And when you and your associates depreciate and vilify the Church [of England] clergy, reproaching them as blind leaders of the blind and dumb dogs that cannot bark, and priests of Baal? When you set up a new scheme of religion and tell your hearers that the true gospel of Christ, the true way of salvation, is not taught in our churches, and that they cannot be true Christians but by adhering to your doctrine and taking you for their guide? Do you consult the peace of the church when you suffer or encourage common mechanics, mere laymen, to preach the gospel without any authority, and thereby break in on its established order? And when you uphold irregular assemblies no way countenanced by the laws of God or man? Is not this an actual breach of the church's peace and is not that a sin? And can such ways be agreeable to the will of God who has declared himself a God of peace and order? This deserves to be well considered by you.

But you seem to think the good effects produced by this new method will justify every thing and answer all objections. There is such a reformation, you say, all over the land that plainly demonstrates it to be the work of God. What may be in other places I cannot say, but when I look round my own neighbourhood I see no such thing. I do not see any notorious ill-livers converted from their wicked ways. And for others of a sober life and serious turn of thought who have gone after you, I shall only make this remark of one of the greatest devotees in that way, that I see her much seldomer in the house of God either on Sundays or holy days than she used to be.

However if there be such a real reformation as you speak of elsewhere, I bless God for it and wish those changes may prove durable and lasting to the saving of souls. But there is room to fear the contrary, since experience has often shown the deceitfulness of such sudden conversions, especially when founded upon imaginary inward feelings, and on transient alarms of conscience.

This would lead me to look into your principles and doctrines. But as you speak of them in general only in your book I shall confine my remarks to two points you mention [on] p. 87,⁸ where you assert that your tenets are thoroughly scriptural and pure from enthusiasm. If they are really grounded on Scripture as you affirm, I should readily submit to them. But my present thoughts are that they have no foundation there. For as to sudden or instantaneous new birth, or conversion (if this be your meaning), and its being wrought on the soul in an irresistible manner; or that faith is given in a moment, and we are

⁷Rom. 10:15.

⁸I.e., JW, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, I.10, *Works*, 11:277. Lewis consistently refers to pages of a book as 'folios' (f.); I have substituted 'page' (p.) as more familiar to modern readers.

justified by it; that a good life is no condition at all of our acceptance with God, or that this faith gives an immediate assurance of pardon and salvation—I do not find any texts of Scripture that assert these doctrines.

But the writers of the New Testament seem to teach us otherwise. When St. Paul says our inner man is renewed day by day,⁹ not in an instant but by gradual steps. And St. Stephen tells the Jews they resisted the Holy Ghost.¹⁰ And St. James assures us that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.¹¹ And accordingly St. Paul commands us to work out our own salvation,¹² though still so as wholly to depend on the merits of that precious blood which was shed on the cross for sin. And if faith gives us the immediate assurance of salvation, St. Paul seems to have been without it about twenty years after his conversion. For in his First Epistle to the Corinthians he is under doubts and fears of becoming a castaway.¹³ And if so great a man as St. Paul dreaded this, what cause have all Christians to work their salvation out with fear and trembling, and not to be overconfident that it is already secured.

As to the point of enthusiasm, I cannot but think the pretences made in yours and Mr. Whitefield's *Journals* to extraordinary presences of God and immediate revelations and directions from him savour strongly of enthusiasm. As do likewise the sudden agonies, agitations, and ecstasies of some of your followers, and their imaginary feelings of the operations of the Spirit within them.

And when you come to clear your principles from this charge [on] p. 87, instead of speaking to these points where the charge lies, you very malapropos¹⁴ ask whether there be any enthusiasm in the love of God, of our neighbour, etc. This, sir, you must own is trifling. And I cannot but conclude you could defend that point no better when I see so shifting and evasive an answer to so material a question¹⁵ from one that can reason well when he has truth on his side.

There are other things liable to exception in your book, such as your notion of schism, your speaking of inspiration in so indeterminate a manner, and your making church order to consist chiefly in discipline rather than in a due subordination of inferiors to superiors. But that which I would principally remark is that you seem to me too censorious and even uncharitable in your bitter reflections on your brethren the clergy, and your making a question whether any of our people are alive unto God (p. 118¹⁶) except such as take you and yours for their guides.

But you are sure the cause you are engaged in is God Almighty's, and you seem to think that will justify everything you do or say. If you really are sent of God, I think you have exceeded your commission. And you would do well calmly and coolly to consider everything that has been urged against your way, remembering what Solomon says in his Proverbs, that a way may seem right unto a man when the end thereof are the ways of death.¹⁷

However I do not say but that God may have raised you up for many wise and good reasons. For I look upon what has been done by you as an alarm to the nation in general to repent and reform and turn from their evil ways and doings. But how? Not by leaving their lawful pastors, that are set over them in the Lord, and running after irregular and unordained teachers, but by applying their minds to practical religion with zeal and a due concern for the saving of their souls.

⁹Cf. 2 Cor. 4:16.

¹⁰Cf. Acts 7:51.

¹¹Cf. James 2:14–17.

¹²Cf. Phil. 2:12.

¹³Cf. 1 Cor. 9:27.

¹⁴I.e., 'inappropriately'.

¹⁵Lewis actually wrote 'an answer'; but surely meant to write 'a question'.

¹⁶I.e., JW, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, III.22, *Works*, 11:305–06.

¹⁷Cf. Prov. 14:12.

And further you may be intended to witness against that deism and Socinianism which has infected great numbers in the nation and was increasing among several of high station in the Church [of England] about the time when you first set out—when many rejected Christ and his religion, and many others disallowed any atonement made for sin by his sufferings, and placed the main of religion in the observance of moral duties. And you might be designed to remonstrate against this growing infidelity, and to call people to an acknowledgment of that faith and that mediation through which alone they can be saved. But still it should have been done with a due regard to your spiritual governors, and no allowance or encouragement should have been given to the laity to invade the ministerial office.

Moreover I look upon what has been done by you as a loud call to the parochial clergy to mind the care of their people more, and to exert themselves with greater zeal and assiduity in promoting the glory of God and salvation of souls. And this is the use that with the help of God I design to make of it.

Thus I have hastily thrown together some of the thoughts that occurred to me upon reading your *Appeal*. By sending it to me you seem to expect my sentiments upon it, and I have given them with that same freedom I would desire others to use toward me. I am sir,

Your affectionate brother and humble servant,

John Lewis

Source: Lewis's transcription in ms notebook; Gloucester, Gloucestershire Archives, D6755/3/1.¹⁸

¹⁸For more details on this notebook, and the first published transcription of this letter, see Randy L. Maddox, 'A Zealous (but Respected) Adversary: John Lewis's Correspondence with John Wesley', *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 7 (2015): 121–48.

From John Bosworth¹

February 22, 1745/46

Dear Sir,

You may remember to have seen me at Oxford once. Since then, by walking somewhat different from the ways of the world, I have incurred the displeasure of the world. And I have gone through many trials. My friends and nearest relations have done their utmost to separate me from God and his children. But blessed be our dear Lord, all their attempts have hitherto been in vain. Of late they have seemed resolved on other measures; namely, to separate me from themselves. But notwithstanding all their threats, I hope, by the power of God, to remain unshaken to the end. I would willingly suffer the loss of all things rather than deny the Lord that bought me. And I am persuaded that neither life nor death shall ever separate me from his love.

The sum of all my desires and hopes in this world, for many years, has been this, to be regularly sent for as an ambassador of Christ. I long to spend and be spent for the best of masters. But I doubt my relations have disappointed me of this, for Oxford knows my place no more.

My uncle sees that nobody can do his business better, or perhaps so well, as myself. But he can't bear a Methodist in his house. He wants to have me of his own taste. But as I have been washed, I cannot, I dare not, I will not, by the grace of God, turn to my former wallowing in the mire.

Dear sir, you see my case. There is nothing I so much long for as to be employed in the Lord's vineyard, though utterly unworthy: I should be glad to be advised and directed by you what to do. I will do whatsoever you judge most proper toward the promoting our Saviour's interest. I am happy in his love, and

Your most obedient servant,

John Bosworth

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 28, 1746 (*Works*, 20:114–15).

¹John Bosworth matriculated at Pembroke College, Oxford on May 19, 1743 (aged 17), and apparently encountered JW during one of JW's visits to Oxford after this date. JW adds after this letter in his *Journal* that Bosworth died a few weeks after writing it.

From 'John Smith'¹

February 26, 1746

Reverend Sir,

I received the favour both of your book² and your letter, for which I had returned my thanks sooner but for the interruption of having been [on] a journey from home.

1. You think the case is quite different with regard to those who subscribe to the eleventh and following Articles from the case of those who subscribe to the seventeenth.³ Now I think the case is exactly the same. Those Articles are equally ambiguous, and I suppose of them, as you do of the seventeenth, that they were contrived so on purpose, in order to give the greater latitude for both parties to subscribe; that in fact they are ambiguous is evident from the various interpretations of the commentators on them, and that they fairly admit of some latitude you show by your practice. For the fifteenth article has these words: 'All we the rest,'⁴ although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things.' Now though the most *obvious*, 'plain, unforced, grammatical' meaning be that the most perfect Christians sin in many things, yet this hinders you not from preaching sinless perfection. You should not then treat others as the children of the devil for taking the same liberty which you and Mr. Whitefield take, who continue notwithstanding the children of God.

2. I would not willingly mistake you on this or any other article. But I must observe to you that you speak so variously on various occasions that it is extremely hard to take your right meaning. Thus sometimes you disclaim all *miraculous* powers and supernatural attestations to your ministry, yet at other times God gives you *extraordinary attestations*, and you allow Averel Spenser's case to be *supernatural*.⁵ In one paragraph you allow it lawful for good people to marry; in another you say *all* should refrain who *can*, and that *all the children of God can*. Sometimes perfection is *instantaneous*, and the newly justified has at once power over *all* sin; at other times this work is represented as slow and *gradually increasing*. Sometimes no one *doubting* of faith can be the child of God; at other times doubting whether they ever had it or no is more or less the case with many of the children of God. Sometimes the newly justified is represented as always receiving in the very moment of his justification an indubitable attestation of it from the Holy Spirit, as perceptible as the sun at noonday; yet at other times the justified person is spoken of as doubting whether she ever had any such *attestation* for many months after her certain *justification*. Now, in order to soften this last case of Hannah Richardson,⁶ you shift the terms, you drop the word 'attestation' of which I was speaking, and substitute the word 'faith' in its stead — a person may have faith today, and be *an infidel tomorrow*, but no one can receive an *attestation today* from some credible and unquestionable authority and yet *doubt tomorrow whether he had any such attestation*.⁷ If the Holy Spirit, the moment a person is justified, certifieth this justification by an 'attestation' as plainly discernible from the suggestions of reason and fancy as light is discernible from darkness, then Hannah Richardson could not possibly doubt whether she had had this attestation or not for above a twelvemonth after her justification; on the other hand, if Hannah Richardson after the attestation of her justification doubted whether ever she had such attestation or not, then this attestation is not such a glaring and manifest sunshine light as you'd elsewhere represent it, nor anyways distinguishable from the suggestions of reason or fancy, since they who never had it may fancy they have it, and they who have had it may

¹Replying to JW's of Dec. 30, 1745–Jan. 3, 1746 (*Works*, 26:175–83).

²*Farther Appeal*, Pts. II and III, *Works*, 11:203–325.

³Cf. Dec. 30, §3 (26:176).

⁴The rest' is erased, though present in Article XV.

⁵See Dec. 30, §4 (26:176).

⁶See 'John Smith' to JW, Nov. 27, 1745, §7.

⁷See Dec. 30, §7 (26:177–78).

fancy they had it not.

3. I know not what kind of proof you expect of St. Paul's technical terms.⁸ I can only say for myself that the proof seems to me convincing even to demonstration that 'justification' was used as technically by the apostles as '*Hasidim*'⁹ was by the Jews, and that 'faith' in some places stands for the *whole complex of Christianity*, and 'works' for the *rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law*. But if the arguments which learned men have used in this matter seem less convincing to you, you are at liberty to reject their interpretation for any other which will make sense of the Apostle's reasoning. This noways affects the main of our debate, and was brought in only obliquely and hypothetically; you had argued for the propriety of using *all* scriptural phrases, upon which I excepted *obsolete* and technical terms, upon supposition that there were any such.

4. Whether for twenty years together you used outward works as commutations instead of inward holiness you are the best and only judge.¹⁰ Everyone knows what passes in his own mind, and must be allowed to be master of his own experience—allow me then capable of telling what I experience. I was confirmed about the age of fourteen. What childish apprehensions I might have before that time I cannot well say, but for about forty years since I have believed that 'without holiness no one shall see the Lord',¹¹ nor did I once, that I know of, entertain so mean an opinion of the Supreme Being as to think he might have anything else put upon him 'in the stead'. Neither did I ever in the whole course of my life meet with any Protestant except yourself that attempted commutations. I have known many Protestants that have leant too much on the *opus operantis*,¹² but on the *opus operatum*¹³ never one. All the *well-instructed* I know receive the sacrament as a *means of goodness*, all the *ill-instructed* as an *act of goodness*; but as a *commutation instead of goodness* surely no Protestant ever did but yourself. The most ignorant I ever met with know better than this. If an unholy and hypocritical communicant is taken in adultery, what is the language of the lowest mob? Do they look on his *worship* as a *mitigation* of his *wickedness*? Do they not all with one mouth declare it an aggravation? Do they say, 'Well, his fault is not so great as another's, for he has been twelve times this year at the sacrament'? No, the most ignorant wretch in the crowd can say, 'What a villain is this, to do thus, and yet to go so often to the sacrament.' So far are the most uninstructed Protestants from thinking that outward acts of worship may be commuted instead of chastity and purity! As to myself, I am very far from the state of a sinless perfection, yet with all my faults and infirmities about me I can truly assert that I am not sensible of the weakness and wickedness of commutation. ... But, alas, this is only prejudicing you more against me, since you seem disposed to believe 'that every Protestant in Europe that is not deeply sensible that he was once thus guilty is so still, to this day'.¹⁴

[5.] I suppose you lay but little stress on any human authority, and less on so flighty and injudicious an author as St. Austin, who on whatever subject he wrote (for instance, whether for or against Pelagianism) was almost always in extremes; the same impetuosity of temper which made him so profligate a rake whilst a sinner made him so flighty and rapturous when he became a saint. Now what is

⁸See 'John Smith to JW, Nov. 27, §5; and JW to 'John Smith', Dec. 30, §5 (26:176–77).

⁹I.e., 'righteous ones'; orig., '*Chisidim*'.

¹⁰Dec. 30, §6 (26:177).

¹¹Cf. Heb. 12:14, thus quoted in Wesley's *Appeals* ('God' here added over 'the Lord').

¹²'The act of the doer', the Protestant view that the efficacy of good works or a sacrament depends upon the character of the participant.

¹³'The act done', the Roman Catholic view that a sacrament confers grace of itself, apart from the worthiness of the priest.

¹⁴Dec. 30, §6 (26:177).

to be gathered from the rhetorical prosopopoeia of such a *valde*¹⁵ man? Only this, that the oratorical flights of devotees would make strange articles put into a creed; almost every error that has crept into the church has owed its rise more or less to rhetorical heightenings: even transubstantiation itself owes its birth to over-zealous orators too rapturously heightening the devotion of the altar. Yet their flights, like this which you quote of St. Austin,¹⁶ when put into cool language, prove just nothing at all!

6. 'By calling faith, hope, or love supernatural you only mean that they are not the effect of any or all of our natural faculties, but are wrought in us by the Spirit of God.'¹⁷ To this I have little to object but the propriety of the language. By terming some of our faculties 'natural' you seem to imply that we have others 'supernatural', which I think we have not; and by making faith, hope, and love the 'effect of God's Spirit' you seem to suggest that there are *other acts* which we can effect *without the concurrence of the divine energy*, which I presume we cannot. We can no more turn ourselves in our bed without his immediate and actual assistance than we can turn ourselves from a course of wickedness to a course of holiness. Instead of setting this matter higher than others, you really set it lower if you imagine God's aid necessary in things *spiritual*, and not in things *physical* likewise. That uniform grasp of Providence which naturalists call attraction is the immediate act of God, and a sparrow can no more fall to the ground without an actual exertion of the divine power than tongues of fire, the instantaneous gift of languages, illumination, sanctification, etc., can descend from heaven without such power. Whatsoever is done in the earth, God doth it himself; yet we are not mere instruments liable only to be acted on, but he hath delegated to us active powers, so that with his concurrence we can become real agents. There is a sense therefore in which we *will* and *act*; and there is a sense too in which God worketh in us both to *will* and to *do*. Our *faculties* (whether you call them *natural* or *supernatural*) are all God's gifts, nor can the meanest be exerted without the assistance of his Spirit.

7. You find men too apt to rest in practice. I find them much more apt to rest *in theory*. There is no *speculation*, how wild or ill-grounded soever, but what the bulk of mankind will more easily give into than into the uniform *practice* of universal piety. To live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world, seems to many a tedious way of getting to the next. But let an antinomian teach that a strong belief will carry men to heaven, and thousands shall readily give into this single senseless *speculation*. In like manner, how many are there who had rather rely on another's righteousness than be at the pains of having any of their own. In short, clerical powers, irresistible decrees, confident assurance, or any groundless *theory* is much oftener and more fatally rested on than the steady *practice* of a holy and a Christian life.

8. I could not help being a little surprised at the offence which was taken at my charge on the Methodists.¹⁸ When it is said, men of such and such a denomination (no matter whether assumed or imposed) hold such or such errors, the meaning is always supposed to be that those errors are held by *some or other* of them, not that *each error* is held by *each*; and I dare say the Quakers would not think you injured them if you produced three tenets as the tenets of the Quakers, though one were a quotation from [George] Fox, another from [James] Naylor, and another from [Robert] Barclay. Had I therefore made the charge indiscriminately there had been nothing so much out of the way in the charge. But that which makes the offence still odder is that I had *carefully distinguished* your supposed errors from Mr. Whitefield's. So far am I from confounding you together that I have often wondered a man of your good sense and sound learning should hold any fellowship with so weak and empty a person as Mr. Whitefield. His unconditional predestination I noted as *his*, and expressly declared *your denial* of it. Methinks therefore the declamatory paragraph about murder and housebreaking¹⁹ might have been spared, since I

¹⁵An intensive Latin adverb apparently used by 'Smith' as a synonym for 'vehement'.

¹⁶Dec. 30, §8 (26:178).

¹⁷Ibid., §10 (26:179).

¹⁸See Dec. 30, §13 (26:180–82).

¹⁹See Dec. 30, §13 (26:181).

have neither indicted the murderer of housebreaking nor the housebreaker of murder, but gave distinctly to each his due—to him, unconditional predestination, to you, sinless perfection and perceptible inspiration. As to the former, ‘you will not enter into any dispute about it, any more than about the millennium’,²⁰ so our debate will be reduced into the shorter compass.

9. ‘We are at length come to the real state of the question between the Methodists and their opponents: *Is there perceptible inspiration or is there not?*’²¹ That there is inspiration, or the influence of the divine Spirit on the human spirit, is agreed by both parties; the whole of the question therefore turns upon the perceptibility of this inspiration. The question then is, does God’s Spirit work perceptibly on our spirit by *direct testimony* (as you elsewhere call it), by such *perceivable impulses* and *dictates* as are as distinguishable from the suggestions of our own faculties as light is distinguishable from darkness (as the Quakers maintain), or does he imperceptibly influence our minds to goodness by gently and insensibly assisting our faculties, and biasing them aright? Here is the whole of the question. Now let us consider how you attempt to divide this question into its parts. ‘Is there such a thing as faith producing peace and joy and love, etc.?’ Yes, and producing a general good life into the bargain. ‘Is that faith which is productive of these fruits wrought in us by the Holy Ghost or no?’ Yes, as all other good things are wrought in us. ‘Is he in whom they (the fruits) are wrought necessarily conscious of them (peace, joy, love, etc.) or is he not?’ Yes, for he who perceives not *joy* has not *joy*. But what is this to perceptibility of *inspiration*? You would not venture to shift terms thus in a *physical* dissertation. Suppose we were disputing about *vegetation*. I maintain that it is a work so slow and gentle as to be altogether imperceptible. You on the contrary assert that it is *a work as perceptible as the sun’s light at noonday*, for, say you, are not these *fruits*, these *apples*, *pears*, and *plums*, things plainly *perceptible*? Yes, indeed they are, but not one whit more perceptible than that you have now entirely *shifted* the question. This shifting quite amazes me, because I take you to have too good an head to do it without design, and to have too good a heart to do it with design; so I must leave this in the dark till you are pleased to give me further light.

10. The question to be debated, then, is not whether the *fruits* of inspiration are things perceptible, but whether *the work* of inspiration itself be so; whether the work of God’s Spirit in us be as easily distinguishable from the working of our own spirit as light is from darkness (as you have elsewhere asserted). If we are in the wrong, confute us by *argumentation*, but not by threatening us with our ‘awaking in hell’.²² The profuse throwing about hell and damnation may have its effects on *weak minds*; it may terrify such into hasty and sudden converts; but on men of ‘reason and religion’, to whom you appeal, it will be apt to have a quite contrary effect. They well know that *that scheme* of religion bids fairest for the *true one* which breathes the largest and most extensive *Christian charity*. I know no stronger presumption against popery itself than its damning all who are not of its persuasion. When Henry IV of France decided in favour of the popish disputants because they denied salvation possible out of their pale, which the Protestants had allowed possible out of theirs, he made a conclusion the very reverse of truth and good sense, as if there were *most safety* where there were *least charity*. Yet by the thunder of their anathemas they terrify weak minds into a submission to them, and to minds less weak they soften their uncharitable doctrines by half allowing that other well-meaning Christians may have some chance of salvation in the case of *invincible ignorance*—but even then it must needs be in their own narrow way of thinking, and by God’s working on the hearts of the well-meaning on their death-beds, that [work] of reconciliation to Holy Church without which none can enter into glory. But these artificial threatenings, I dare say, have no other effect on you or any other man of sense than to move your pity.

11. If then we may expect most *truth* where there is most charity, the presumption will be in our favour till you shall clearly prove the other side of the question in debate. For we by no means exclude

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., §17 (26:183).

²²See Dec. 30, §13, para. 7 (26:182).

you from heaven, even upon supposition that you do hold some wrong and enthusiastical notions. I dare say you mean no harm. Yet suffer me to say frankly, I think you unwittingly do a great deal. Cartwright and the old Puritans, I believe, meant no harm, yet what a scene of disorder did their lectures produce!²³ Strict order once broken, confusion rushes in like a torrent at a trifling breach. You find yourself every day going further and further from the orderly paths. You are now come to approve of lay preachers. Well, if they preach the gospel of peace, where is the harm? But what if, order once broke, unsent persons take upon them to preach all sorts of error, discord, and confusion? God may send, say you, by whom he pleases; and outward mission and order thus once set aside, the devil will send his emissaries fast enough. We are not ignorant of his devices. Your zeal puts you upon preaching in season and out of season; his cunning makes use of your honest zeal to his dishonest and diabolical purposes. He well knows you do him more service by breach of order than ever you can do him disservice by all your laborious industry. I am not making conjectures of what may happen, but relating to you mischiefs which actually have happened. For (not to mention the shameful disorders you have undesignedly given occasion to at Wednesbury, Darlaston, Walsall, etc.) in countries which you have not much frequented there have appeared preachers teaching the grossest *antinomianism* on heaths and commons. These were hardly of your sending, yet have they personated being your disciples by praying for you and your brother by name. Others have come preaching in the street against *prelacy*, and denouncing the bitterest woes and curses against all *bishops, priests, and deacons*. Others have made as free with the lay ministry as these have with the *clerical*, and had not the rebels been driven back we should have had thousands (it is said) pretending a mission from God to preach against the *wickedness of the great*. Thus order, once ever so little set aside, a door is opened to the tempter to drive in his legion of monstrous errors and wickednesses, and throw us back into all the confusion of the last century, into the freakishness of enthusiasm, sedition, murder, treason.

12. I know that you abhor these things, and the devil knows it too. He will therefore no more tempt you to these things than he would tempt you to turn a *rake* or a *stage-player*. But if he tempts you *through an excess of zeal to break in upon order*, he does his work as well. It was past his skill to make Tertullian a *profligate*, but he found the means to make him a *Montanist*. The son of a *Wesley* and an *Annesley* is in no danger of *lukewarmness*, but ought to take great care on the side of *impetuosity* and *zeal*. The tempter will never make you a *saunterer* or a *sluggard*, but if you are not upon your guard may possibly before you are aware make you a Quaker. Nay, *perceptible inspiration* admitted, you ought to be such; for I will be bold to say that, allowing that one false principle, Mr. Barclay's is a very consistent and coherent system.

13. In short, sir, you must either defend *that* system or renounce *this* principle; or if *your* 'perceptible inspiration' any way differs from *that of the Quakers* you will be so kind as to show us wherein. I have no more to add but that I pray God to restrain *your* zeal, if it be *excessive*; and to quicken *mine*, if it be *defective*, as I have too much reason to fear it is.

Source: manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 43–53.²⁴

²³Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603) was expelled from his professorship and fellowship in Cambridge for advocating reform of the Church of England, and became the leading Presbyterian spokesman.

²⁴This full transcription published in *Works*, 26:184–90.

From the Rev. Thomas Wardrobe¹

Hexham
March 4, 1746

Reverend Sir,

I am no Methodist. Neither indeed can I adopt several of the principles that you seem to hold, but must needs judge the truth to be clouded with many erroneous mistakes. Notwithstanding it manifestly appears that a good work has been begun, and carried on, under your ministrations. Should I challenge the wisdom of the Sovereign of heaven, who takes his own method of working?

I should make apology for this trouble from a stranger, but shall make no other than this. That is to desire you not to confine your ministrations to the place where you now are, exclusive of some other parts of the neighbourhood which loudly call for a visit—if, so be, God may thereby think upon them that they perish not. Who knows but even in Hexham some trophies of a redeemer's conquest are by such means to be set up, some poor sinners to be called home to Christ? If one soul might get good, you would not, I am persuaded, judge it lost labour. Nay, methinks you would submit to reproach, to shame, yea, to death.

I am one of the brethren of the non-conformity. It might perhaps raise prejudice in the breasts of those among whom you will have access to preach if you come here, should it be known that I have solicited you. O that they might be caught by guile! I cannot see scarce the shadow of scriptural Christianity in this place, if it be not in their going to [the established] Church on the Lord's Day, and some attending public prayers in the weekdays. The generality of Dissenters are little better, and I should have melancholy days here were I not now and then refreshed among the societies of some praying friends. It would affect any tender heart to pass through this place, to look into houses, to hear their conversation, to see their behaviour, to find in some parts a bare outside civility, but almost no religion. And yet it would be taken very ill to say, 'Is this a Christian town?' Ministers and people are asleep amidst a more terrible storm than that which alarmed the pagan ship-master and crew. What numbers of souls are dying in ignorance and deceit! I see not but people are ready to hear, if Christ was preached, though the many partitions raised by the lust of men's passions hinder their receiving the word gladly, but from the mouth of those of their own denomination; which is a consideration of weight with me, in desiring you to take a tour of Hexham.

Tuesday is the market day in this town. That afternoon, when the market is partly over, might be a suitable opportunity; or if it was on the Lord's day evening, when people plainly give proof of reigning carnality, under the dominion of sin. But I care not when it be, if you do but come. I doubt not but people will hear a stranger any day.

Some, I find in my observations, oppose the Methodists out of ignorance, because they are generally spoke against; others out of strong prejudice; some, because their craft is in danger; and others, because really they neither know or care for the religion of Jesus Christ; and it may be some from conscience. But if Christ be preached, and sinners converted, I shall rejoice, whoever be employed as the instruments. I think I could rejoice to see sinners awakened and seeking after a Saviour, going Zion-ward in crowds, though I should find myself obliged to worship in a manner somewhat different from them. I have wrote you these, when I was musing what might be the most likely methods for reviving and spreading religion. A line by the post would oblige me. In the meantime, I am, reverend sir,

Yours in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

T. Wardrobe

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 375–77.

¹Thomas Wardrobe (c. 1716–56) was minister of the Hallbank Presbyterian Church at Hexham, Northumberland, and connected to the 'praying societies' of the Scottish revival in the mid 1740s. He welcomed JW's renewal efforts in the area of Newcastle.

From the Rev. Dr. Philip Doddridge¹

Northampton
March 15, 1745/6

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am quite grieved and ashamed that any hurry, public or private, should have prevented my answering your very obliging letter from Newcastle, especially as it has a face of disrespect where I am sure I ought to express the very reverse, if I could do justice either to you or to my own heart. But you have been used to forgive greater injuries.

I have just been reading (I will not pretend to tell you with what strong emotion) the fourth edition of your *Farther Appeal*,² concerning which I shall only say that I have written upon the title page, 'How forcible are *right words*!' I am daily hurried by my printer to finish the third volume of my *Family Expositor*.³ And I have unwillingly a secular affair on my hands, in consequence of a guardianship which calls me away from my usual business for some days next week, on which account I must beg your patience for a little while longer as to the list of books you desire me to send you. But if God permit you shall be sure to have it in a few weeks.

I lately published a thanksgiving sermon for the retreat of the rebels,⁴ and if you think worth calling for at Mr. [James] Waugh's at the Turk's Head in Grace Church Street I shall desire you to accept. I was willing to greet the first openings of mercy, and so much the rather as I think with Lord Somerville, who first made the reflection in one of his letters, that had the blow at Falkirk⁵ been pursued our whole army had been destroyed. But it is evident that the clouds return after the rain. The wisest and best of men I know agree to fear. O that they could also agree in their efforts to save! I trust I can call God to record on my soul,⁶ that to bring sinners to believe in Christ and universally to obey him from a principle of grateful love is the reigning desire of my heart, and has been the main business of my life. But alas that it is so unsuccessful a labour! Yet God knows that could I have foreseen only the tenth part of that little success I seem to have had I would have preferred the ministry, with ten time[s] the labours and sorrows I have gone through in it, to any other employment or situation in life. I shall not forget Col. [James] Gardiner's words, speaking of a much despised and persecuted, but very useful minister: 'I had rather be that man than emperor of the world.'

But I must conclude. May God, even your own God, continue and increase all his blessings on your head, heart, and labours, and may he sometimes lead you to remember in your prayers, reverend and dear sir,

¹Philip Doddridge, D.D. (1702–51), was chosen in 1729 (on the recommendation of Isaac Watts) as the first tutor of a new academy for training dissenting ministers. A few months later the institution was moved from Market Harborough to Northampton, where he had accepted a pastorate. His approach to his work was liberal and scholarly, interdenominational and evangelical. So lavishly did Lady Huntingdon sing his praises in her letter to JW on Jan. 15, 1746, that about Feb. 27 JW wrote asking Doddridge's advice on an anthology of evangelical theology which eventually appeared as his *Christian Library* (50 vols., 1749–55).

²I.e., Pts. II and III, of which 1,500 copies had been printed by William Strahan on Mar. 1, 1746.

³Doddridge's *Family Expositor* proved an important resource for JW's *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (1755).

⁴*Deliverance out of the Hands of our Enemies, urged as a motive to obedience in the substance of two sermons, preached at Northampton, February 9, 1745–46. On occasion of the precipitate flight of the rebels from Stirling a few days before* (London: J. Waugh, 1746).

⁵The Battle of Falkirk Moor, Jan. 17, 1746, a Jacobite victory.

⁶Orig., 'souls'.

Your affectionate brother and servant,

P. Doddridge

I presume the list you desire is chiefly theological. Perhaps my desire of making it too particular has hindered me from setting about it till I had a leisure time, which I have not yet found. But under the impression your book made upon me I could not delay writing one post longer. Let me know in one word how you do, what your success is, and what your apprehensions are. I fear we must have some hot flame to melt us. My services attend your brother and Mr. Watkins.⁷

(address leaf missing).

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/53.⁸

⁷Likely Samuel Watkins of London, one of JW's supporters, who had helped him obtain the Foundery as a meeting site.

⁸Transcription published in *Works*, 26:190–92.

From an Unidentified Correspondent in *London Magazine*

[London]
[March 18, 1746¹]

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley,
in relation to some false facts asserted by him
in his *Farther Appeal*

Sir,

Upon looking into your *Farther Appeal* I observe among the faults you lay to the charge of your brethren the clergy one is, 'the not putting a difference between the holy and profane at the table of the Lord, by receiving all who draw near with penitent hearts and lively faith, and utterly rejecting those who testify of themselves that they are without hope and without God in the world'.² Upon this occasion you break out into the following exclamation, p. 49: 'Nay, who dares repel one of the greatest men in his parish from the Lord's table, even though he be a drunkard, or a common swearer? Yea, though he openly deny the Lord who bought him?' And then you proceed thus: 'Mr. [George] Stonehouse did this once. But what was the event? The gentleman brought an action against him, for the terror of all such insolent fellows in succeeding times. And who was able and willing to espouse the cause? He alone who took it into his own hand, and before the day when it should have been tried here, called the plaintiff to answer at an higher bar.'³

Now, sir, though no man can be more averse than I am to the prostitution of that sacred ordinance, yet, as I happen to be pretty well acquainted with the facts you refer to in this passage, which contains almost as many falsehoods as it does lines, I cannot but be greatly scandalized, as well as several other readers, that one who sets up for a reformer, and pretends to bewail the fall of truth and honesty, should himself be guilty of such gross misrepresentations and uncharitable reflections.

Mr. Stonehouse did indeed refuse the sacrament, not once only, but several times, to divers of his parishioners; while, contrary to Canons 28 and 57, he gave it to many who came from other parishes. The reason he assigned was their not having signified their names to him the day before, as required by the rubric prefixed to the communion service. But never did I hear that he gave any of them for reason the being a drunkard or a common swearer. One I know he did refuse on pretence of heterodox notions about the Trinity. But if this be what you mean by 'openly denying the Lord that bought him', it is an unrighteous slander, which calls for your serious repentance and public acknowledgement. I dare say there was no one of his parishioners who 'openly denied the Lord that bought him'; for supposing these words to be meant of Christ (about which commentators differ) yet surely the person you intend was very far from 'denying Christ', whom he *owned* for his Lord and Master, for his Saviour and Redeemer, and to whose laws and government he entirely submitted. With what justice or honesty, then, could you represent him as 'openly denying him'?

If you should be so senseless and uncharitable as to think his opinions infer such a consequence, yet it is very base and unjust to charge anyone with holding, much more with *openly* holding, that consequence which himself does not perceive, and expressly disavows.

¹This letter appeared in the March issue of the *London Magazine*, with no indication of the date of its writing, although one on p. 135 is dated Mar. 17. The specific date comes from Wesley's reply of June 18, 1746, which may have been a guess or an error, or may have been ascertained from the cover or the editor. It refers to an incident involving the Rev. George Stonehouse, vicar of Islington described in JW's *Farther Appeal*, Pts. II and III.

²*Farther Appeal*, Pt. II, II.32, abridged (*Works*, 11:244).

³*Ibid.*

But you say further, 'This gentleman brought an action against Mr. Stonehouse.' This, sir, is a notorious untruth; that gentleman brought no action nor commenced any suit against Mr. Stonehouse. Another, indeed, to whom Mr. Stonehouse had refused the sacrament under pretence of not having signified his name the day before (whose orthodoxy or morality Mr. Stonehouse never called in question), did bring such an action as you mention. But, say you, 'before the day when it should have been tried here, the plaintiff was called to answer at an higher bar'. What an heap of untruths are here crowded into a little room! There was no day appointed for the trial here. For before it proceeded so far Mr. Stonehouse (being advised, as I have been informed, that he could not justify what he had done) thought fit to request it as a favour that the action might be stopped, promising not to do the like any more; in compliance with which request of his the action was dropped, and Mr. Stonehouse soon after parted with the living. But so far is it from truth that the plaintiff's death stopped the action that the plaintiff is still living; and the other gentleman whom you have basely slandered did not decease till long after the action dropped, and even after Mr. Stonehouse had quitted the living. What ground then had you so confidently to assert these things, and thence to insinuate that God had taken Mr. Stonehouse's cause into his own hand? And to interpret the death of that gentleman (who was not the plaintiff, neither) near two years after, as God's interposal in Stonehouse's behalf? These things you might with ease have been better informed of, and should have been so before you had ventured to assert them in print. Though if they had been true, methinks you make very bold with the judgments of God in presuming to apply them in the manner you do. I would willingly hope that you did not deliberately design thus to impose on the world, but that it proceeded from a blind and rash zeal, glad to catch at every pretence of making God the patron and favourer of your cause. If this be the case it will appear so by your taking due shame to yourself, and readily acknowledging the truth in as public a manner as you have spread these falsehoods. But if, on the contrary, you knew these things to be false, and yet for the sake of serving a turn affirmed them to the world for truth, it is much to the disparagement of all your exhortations that while you are declaiming against the vices of the age you are at the same time adding to the number of them. Your own words (p. 41) may then be properly applied to yourself: 'Is not truth fallen in our streets? Who is it makes a conscience of speaking the thing as it is? Who scruples the telling of officious lies, the varying from truth in order to do good?'⁴ What good you had in view I know not. But surely you have made no conscience of speaking the thing as it is. Nor have you scrupled the varying from the truth. If therefore you do not make open confession of your fault, and endeavour, as far as in you lies, to make amends for this injurious treatment of your neighbour, this scandalous imposition on the public, and defamation of the righteous judgments of God, you must be content, whatever professions you make of more than ordinary sanctity, to pass for a reviler and a slanderer; and, I fear, may justly be deemed a denier of the Lord that bought you, not openly in words, but in the sense of St. Paul, who, speaking of immoral Christians, Titus 1:16, says, 'They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.'

As these are notorious facts which you are here charged with misrepresenting, I think it not needful to subscribe my name. But if you require it, and will undertake to justify what you have said, you shall soon be acquainted with it. I am, sir,

yours, etc.

Source: published transcription; *London Magazine* (March 1746), 140–41.⁵

⁴*Farther Appeal*, Pt. II, II.24, abridged (*Works*, 11:236).

⁵Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:192–94.

From John Nelson

Birstall
April 22, 1746

After I left Wednesbury I stayed two nights at Nottingham and had large congregations. But while I was meeting the society the second night there came a mob, raging as if they would pull the house to the ground. As soon as we had done meeting the constable came and seized me, and said I must go before the mayor for making a riot. So he took me by the arm and led me through the streets, the mob accompanying us with curses and huzzas. God gave me, as we went, to speak very plain to the constable and to all that were near me, till one cried out, 'Don't carry him to the mayor, for he is a friend to the Methodists, but to Alderman ——.'¹ Upon this he turned and led me to the alderman's.

When we were brought in he said, 'Sir, I have brought you another Methodist preacher.' He asked my name and then said, 'I wonder you can't stay at home; you see the mob won't suffer you to preach in this town.' I said, 'I did not know this town was governed by the mob. Most towns are governed by the magistrates.' He said, 'What, do you expect us to take your parts, when you take the people from their work?' I said, 'Sir, you are wrong informed. We preach at five in the morning and seven at night. And these are the hours when most people are in their beds in the morning, and at night either at play or at the alehouse.' Then he said, 'I believe you are the cause of all the evil that is fallen upon the nation.' I said, 'What reason have you to believe so? Can you prove that one Methodist in England did assist the rebels,² with either men, money, or arms?' He answered, 'No. But it has been observed that there has been always such a people before any great evil fell on the land.' I said, 'It hath been as you say. But that people was not the cause of the evil, no more than we are at this time. But these mobbers and swearers, and drunkards, and whoremongers, and extortioners, and lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God; these are the cause why God afflicteth both man and beast. Not we: we are sent to persuade them to break off their sins by repentance, that the heavy judgments of God may not consume such a people. And if there be not a general reformation, God will be avenged of such a nation as this.' Then he said, 'Do not preach here.' But God opened my mouth, and I did not cease to set life and death before him. The constable began to be uneasy and said, 'What must we do with him?' 'Well', he said, 'I understand he is for leaving the town tomorrow; I think you must take him to your house.' But he desired to be excused. Then the Justice said, 'You may go where you came from.'

When I had gone a little way through the mob he came to the door and called, 'Mr. Nelson, stop a little.' Then he ordered the constable to conduct me to the house he fetched me from, and take care that the mob did not hurt me. This seemed to be a great mortification to him. But he was obliged to do it. So he brought me to our brethren again. And left us to give thanks to God for all his mercies.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Apr. 23, 1746 (*Works*, 20:119–20).

¹In Nelson's *Journal* this name appears as 'Alderman H____1' (Jackson, *EMP*, 1:146). This is surely referring to John Hornbuckle, mayor of Nottingham 1743–45, and Alderman 1743–55. Cf. George H. Harwood, *History of Wesleyan Methodism in Nottingham* (Nottingham, 1854), 28–29.

²That is, the Jacobite rebellion underway.

From the Rev. Dr. Philip Doddridge¹

Northampton
June 18, 1746

Reverend and Dear Sir,

At length, having been retarded not only by pressing business and a great deal of company, but likewise by a fever which seized me about ten days ago and was succeeded by a cholic, from the effects of which I am but imperfectly recovered, I set myself down as well as I can to discharge my promise, and fulfil your request, in giving you my thoughts on that little collection of books which you seem desirous to make for some young preachers in various parts. I shall remember that your inquiry chiefly relates to books of practical divinity. And that I may not tire you and myself with the little monosyllable 'I' and the frequent use of the words 'would recommend', or something synonymous to them, I prefix the clause once for all, that upon the following heads, according to the little knowledge I have of the matter, and with the little time I have for preparation, and with a very sincere and unaffected submission to the judgment of those better qualified to advise you, I would recommend under the following heads the following books.

For Logic: Carmichael *Breviuscula Introductio*,² and Dr. Watts.³

For Metaphysics: Dr. Urie's *Compendium*, and Watts's *Ontology*;⁴ to which Le Clerc's may be added.⁵

For Ethics: Whitby and Carmichael's edition of Pufendorf *de Officiis Hominis et Civis*,⁶ to which Hutcheson's *Ethics*⁷ may be added, which is an elegant piece, though some of his principles are not in my judgment good, he going on the foundation of the necessarian scheme.

For Jewish Antiquities: Lewis,⁸ and Reland,⁹ and Calmet,¹⁰ with what of that subject is to be found in Prideaux's *Connection*.¹¹

¹JW had asked Doddridge for suggestions of books focused on 'practical divinity' for his proposed *Christian Library*. What Doddridge provides is broader in nature, leading JW to title this letter in *AM*: 'A Scheme of Study for a Clergyman'.

²Gershom Carmichael, *Breviuscula Introductio ad Logicam* (3rd edn.; Edinburgh: Paton, 1736).

³Isaac Watts, *Logic; or the Right Use of Reason in the Enquiry after Truth* (London: Clark, Hett, et al., 1725).

⁴Isaac Watts, *Philosophical Essays on Various Subjects ...; to which is subjoined A Brief Scheme of Ontology, or the science of being in general with its affections* (London: Ford & Hett, 1733).

⁵Jean Le Clerc, *Opera Philosophica: I. Logica ... Ontologia* (Amsterdam: George Gallet, 1698).

⁶Samuel von Pufendorf, *De Officio hominis et civis ... supplementis et observationibus ... auxit ... Gerschomus Carmichael* (Edinburgh, 1724).

⁷Francis Hutcheson, *Philosophiae Moralis Institutio Compendiaria, Ethices et Jurisprudentiae Naturalis Elementa Continens* (Glasgow, 1742).

⁸Thomas Lewis, *Origines Hebraeae: the Antiquities of the Hebrew Republic*, 4 vols. (London: Illidge & Hooke, 1724–25).

⁹Adriaan Reland, *Antiquitates sacrae veterum Hebraeorum* (Leipzig: Wehrmann, 1713).

¹⁰Augustin Calmet, *Antiquities Sacred and Profane; or, a collection of Curious and Critical Dissertations on the Old and New Testament* (London: J. Roberts, 1724).

¹¹Humphrey Prideaux, *The Old and New Testament Connected in the History of the Jews and Neighbouring Nations*, 2 vols. (London: Knaplock, 1716–18).

For a General View of Civil History: Pufendorf's *Introduction*¹² and Turselme's *Compendium*,¹³ and for a judicious and, in a few words, comprehensive, as well as faithful sketch of **Ecclesiastical History**, beyond all compare Lampe.¹⁴

For a Compendium of Natural Philosophy: Rowning,¹⁵ as to be illustrated and completed by Neuwintyet's *Religious Philosophy*,¹⁶ Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*,¹⁷ Cotton Mather's *Religious Philosopher*,¹⁸ and above all, Derham at Boyle's lectures.¹⁹ As astronomy is comprehended in this, I shall only add with relation to that Watts²⁰ and Mr. Jennings's late piece²¹ if it can be got, and Wells's *Young Gentleman's Mathematical Recreations*,²² which touches upon several articles not handled in any of the rest I have mentioned.

For the Proof of Natural and Revealed Religion: Carmichael's *Synopsis Theologicae Naturalis*,²³ Syngé's *Gentleman's Religion*,²⁴ and Clark at Boyle's lectures,²⁵ especially the latter part of it, for the former seems incomparably exceeded by Abernethy on the attributes,²⁶ as much I think in the argumentative parts as in the improvement. The Bishop of London's pastoral letters you undoubtedly know.²⁷ And if upon the whole I had seen the arguments for the proof of Christianity so closely, and at the same time so fully and so popularly stated anywhere else, I should not have taken the great pains I did about my three sermons on the subject, at the end of the ten *On the Power and Grace of Christ*,²⁸ printed

¹²Samuel von Pufendorf, *An Introduction to the Principal Kingdoms and States of Europe* (London: M. Gilliflower & T. Newborough, 1695).

¹³Almost certainly referring to Horatius Tursellinus (or Orazio Torsellino), *Historie Universelle* (original 1647–48; 2nd edn., Amsterdam, 1708).

¹⁴Friedrich Adolph Lampe, *Synopsis Historiae Sacrae et Ecclesiasticae* (1726).

¹⁵John Rowning, *A Compendious System of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1735).

¹⁶I.e., Bernard Nieuwentyt, *The Religious Philosopher* (London: Senex & Taylor, 1718).

¹⁷John Ray, *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation* (London: Smith, 1691).

¹⁸I.e., Cotton Mather, *The Christian Philosopher* (London: E. Matthews, 1721).

¹⁹William Derham, *Physico-Theology* (London: William Innys, 1713).

²⁰Isaac Watts, *The Knowledge of the Heavens and the Earth Made Easy* (London: Clark & Hett, 1726).

²¹David Jennings, *An Introduction to the Use of the Globes, and the Orrery: with the Application of Astronomy to Chronology* (London, 1739).

²²Apparently referring to Edward Wells, *The Young Gentleman's Course of Mathematics*, 3 vols. (London: J. Knapton, 1714–25).

²³Gershom Carmichael, *Synopsis theologiae naturalis* (Edinburgh: John Paton, 1729).

²⁴Edward Syngé, *A Gentleman's Religion; in Three Parts* (London: Churchil & Sare, 1693–97).

²⁵I.e., Samuel Clarke, *A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation* (London: James Knapton, 1705–06).

²⁶I.e., John Abernethy, *Discourses concerning the Being and Natural Perfections of God* (London: Thomas Longman, 1740).

²⁷Edmund Gibson, *The Bishop of London's pastoral letter to the people of his dioceses*, 4 vols. (London: S. Buckley, 1730–39).

²⁸Philip Doddridge, *Ten Sermons on the Power, and Grace of Christ, and on the Evidences of His Glorious Gospel preached at Northampton* (London: R. Hett, 1741).

for Hett. Which the Bishop of Oxford has often pressed me to reprint alone; but which, by giving Hett the copy, I have rendered myself incapable of doing.²⁹ If it be judged necessary to enter into the late controversy with Collins,³⁰ Tindal,³¹ and Morgan,³² of which I think a divine should not be entirely ignorant, I reckon Jefferies³³ and Bullock³⁴ among the best answers to the first; Conybeare³⁵ and Leland³⁶ to the second; and Leland³⁷ and Chandler³⁸ to the third.

To come now to Practical Divinity: which, I think, ought to employ that greatest part of the care of every preacher, I will not presume, sir, to mention to you the divines of the Established Church, though to my pupils I have given a larger enumeration of the principal of them, and their most valuable writings, which have employed many hundreds of my hours. [John] Tillotson, [Isaac] Barrow, [John] Wilkins, [William] Beveridge, [John] Scott, [John] Norris, [Richard] Lucas, [Thomas] Sherlock, [Anthony] Horneck, [Ezekiel] Hopkins, [Henry] Scougal, [William] Law, [William] Fleetwood, and several more are particularly characterized in my catalogue to them,³⁹ and those that seemed to me the most valuable of their writings marked out; and the catalogue concludes with the much honoured and beloved name of Archbishop [Robert] Leighton, who is *omni laude major*.⁴⁰

But as I may reasonably conclude the Puritans, and the divines of the Separation, less known to the generality of those with whom you, sir, may be concerned, you will pardon me that I mention a few of them, and of the chief pieces. [Robert] Bolton, [Joseph] Hall, [Edward] Reynolds, [Richard] Sibbes, [Seth] Ward, and [John] Jackson come under high consideration in the first place; and I must needs say that I look upon the generality of modern divines as but little people, when compared with most of them.

Among the non-conformists of the last age (i.e., those who flourished before the end of the last century), permit me to name the following persons, who appear to me to have been men of great piety, and some of them of very distinguished abilities. And as most of them were voluminous writers, and it is not to be supposed (as perhaps may be supposed with regard to the Puritans) that all their works should enter into the collection proposed, I will specify some of the chief of the books written by each, which stand highest in my esteem.

Owen on *Apostacy*; on the [*Epistle to the*] *Hebrews*; his *Means of Understanding the Mind of God in Scripture*; *Communion with Father, Son, and Spirit*; on *In-dwelling Sin*; on *Spiritual*

²⁹Doddridge was finally allowed to publish the *Three Sermons* separately in 1752.

³⁰Anthony Collins, *Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (London, 1724).

³¹Matthew Tindal, *Christianity as Old as Creation; or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature* (London: Thomas Astley, 1730).

³²Thomas Morgan, *The Moral Philosopher*, 3 vols. (London: for the author, 1738–40).

³³I.e., Thomas Jeffery, *A Review of the Controversy between the Author of a Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion and his Adversaries*. (London, 1726).

³⁴Thomas Bullock, *Jesus Christ, the Prophet whom Moses Foretold* (London: Knaplock, 1724).

³⁵John Conybeare, *A Defense of the Revealed Religion* (London: S. Wilmot, 1732).

³⁶John Leland, *An Answer to a late Book intituled 'Christianity as Old as Creation'* (London, 1733–34).

³⁷John Leland, *The Divine Authority of the Old and New Testament* (London: R. Hett, 1739).

³⁸Samuel Chandler, *A Vindication of the History of the Old Testament* (London: 1741).

³⁹Some of this material was later published in Philip Doddridge, *A Course of Lectures on the Principle Subjects of Pneumatology, Ethics and Divinity; with references to the most considerable authors on each subject*, edited by Samuel Clark (London: J. Buckland, 1763).

⁴⁰'Honored above all.'

*Mindedness, and Mortification; and [Exposition] on the 130th Psalm.*⁴¹
Goodwin's *Child of Light; and Return of Mercies and Prayers.*⁴²
Baxter's *Saint's Rest; his Treatise of Conversion; his Call to the Unconverted; his Divine Life; his Counsel to Young Men; Crucifixion of the World by the Cross of Christ; Poor Man's Family Book; and that inimitable piece of devotion, his Converse with God in Solitude.*⁴³
Bates's *Harmony of Divine Attributes in Redemption; his Spiritual Perfection; Four Last Things; Submission to the Will of God, and his funeral sermons.*⁴⁴
Flavel's *Fountain of Life; Token for Mourners; Sacramental Meditations; England's Alarm; to which may be added, his Husbandry and Navigation Spiritualized.*⁴⁵
Nathaniel Taylor on faith; with his discourses against Deism, and the covenant.⁴⁶
I close this head with the mention of Mr. Howe,⁴⁷ of whom I cannot but say that he seems to me to have understood the gospel as well as any uninspired writer I have ever read, and to have imbibed as much of its spirit. The truest sublime is to be found in his writings, and notwithstanding the obscurity of some passages, and the harshness of others, some of the strongest pathos, as well as some of the most uncommon thoughts. It lies a little out of my way at present to observe to you, yet it is most true, that were all the thoughts of his *Living Temple* to be taken from Clark[e's] *The Attributes*, what remains would be very inconsiderable; but what remains of Mr. Howe, unborrowed, is weighty, various, and in many parts of it extremely beautiful and sublime. This book, dear sir, I will venture to

⁴¹JW included in the *Christian Library* the following works by John Owen (1616–83):
Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers (1656; 17:165–224).
The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of Indwelling Sin in Believers (1668; 17:225–335).
Of Temptation (1658; 18:7–62).
Christologia; or, A Declaration of the Glorious Mystery of the Person of Christ, God and Man (1679; 18:63–250).
Of Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (1657; 18:251–19:160).

⁴²JW included in the *Christian Library* the following works by Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680):
A Child of Light walking in Darkness (1636; 11:3–106).
Christ Set Forth ... as the Object and Support of Faith (1642; 11:107–91).
The Heart of Christ ... Towards Sinners (1642; 11:195–254).
The Return of Prayers (1638; 11:255–305).
The Trial of a Christian's Growth (1641; 12:3–54).

⁴³JW included in the *Christian Library* by Richard Baxter (1615–91):
The Saints' Everlasting Rest (1650; 37:11–442). JW also published separated in 1782 an abridgement of Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* (1658).

⁴⁴JW did not include any works by William Bates (1625–99) in the *Christian Library*.

⁴⁵JW included in the *Christian Library* these works by John Flavel (c. 1630–91):
Navigation Spiritualized (1664; 43:227–336).
Husbandry Spiritualized (1669; 44:7–194).
Planelogia (1691; 44:195–271).

⁴⁶I.e., Nathanael Taylor (d. 1702), *A Discourse on the Nature and Necessity of Faith in Jesus Christ* (1700), *Preservative against Deism* (1698), and *Eight Discourses on the Covenant of Grace* (1703). JW included none of these in the *Christian Library*.

⁴⁷JW included in the *Christian Library* these works by John Howe (1630–1705):
The Living Temple (1675; 48:71–304).
A Treatise on Self-Dedication (1682; 48:305–34).

recommend to you, particularly in the practical parts of it. And to every Christian divine his *Blessedness of the Righteous*; his *Treatise of Delighting in God*; his *Enmity and Reconciliation between God and Man*; his *Carnality of Religious Contention*; his *Thoughtfulness for the Morrow*; *Redeemer's Tears wept over lost Souls*; and *Redeemer's Dominion over the Invisible World*; with his two posthumous volumes on the Spirit,⁴⁸ which, pardon me if I say, *you must read*.

In recommending the writings of Dissenters of the present age, I would be more sparing;⁴⁹ yet permit me to mention:

Evans's *Christian Temper and Sermons to Young People*.⁵⁰

Wright on regeneration; *The Deceitfulness of Sin*; *Concern of Man*.⁵¹

Watts's *Sermons*; his *Death and Heaven*; his *World to Come*; and *Humble Attempt*.⁵²

Select *Sermons* of Grove; with his book on the sacrament, and on *Secret Prayer*.⁵³

Henry on the Bible,⁵⁴ I think very useful for a practical preacher.

Both he and Earl[e] have written well on the sacrament.⁵⁵

Boyce's two volumes of *Sermons*; and his miscellaneous sermons; and those of *The Four Last Things* are among the best books we have.⁵⁶

Bennet's *Christian Oratory* has met with an acceptance which in this indevout age has astonished me.⁵⁷

Jennings' *Sermons to Young Persons*.⁵⁸

Several miscellanies of Dr. Grosvenor's; with his *Mourner*; and his treatise on *Health* shall

⁴⁸*The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* (London, 1725); and *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit* (London, 1726).

⁴⁹Since JW limited the *Christian Library* to writers prior to the eighteenth century, none of those mentioned in this section appear therein.

⁵⁰John Evans, *Practical Discourses Concerning the Christian Temper* (London, 1723); and *Sermons on Various Subjects, Preached to Young People* (London, 1725).

⁵¹Samuel Wright, *A Little Treatise on Being Born Again* (London, 1715); *A Treatise on the Deceitfulness of Sin* (London, 1726); and *The Great Concern of Human Life* (London, 1729).

⁵²Isaac Watts (1674–1748), *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London, 1721); *Death and Heaven* (London, 1722); *The World to Come* (London, 1739); and *An Humble Attempt Toward the Revival of Practical Religion Among Christians* (London, 1731).

⁵³Henry Grove, *Sermons of the Following Subjects*, 4 vols. (London, 1740); *A Discourse Concerning the Nature and Design of the Lord's Supper* (London, 1732); and *A Discourse of Secret Prayer* (London, 1723).

⁵⁴Matthew Henry (1662–1714), *An Exposition of All the Books of the Old and New Testament* (1706–10).

⁵⁵Matthew Henry, *The Communicant's Companion* (London, 1716); and Jabez Earle, *Sacramental Exercises* (London, 1715).

⁵⁶I.e., Joseph Boyse, *Sermons Preached on Various Subjects* (Dublin, 1708); *Discourses on the Four Last Things* (Dublin, 1724).

⁵⁷Benjamin Bennet, *The Christian Oratory* (London, 1728).

⁵⁸David Jennings (1691–1762), *Sermons upon Various Subjects, preached to Young People* (London, 1730).

conclude this catalogue.⁵⁹

How far it might be proper to add too my *Rise and Progress of Religion*, together with my *Sermons* on education, regeneration, and those to young people, you sir, if you have read them, may be more capable of judging than the author.⁶⁰

Yet I must by way of postscript add two volumes of sermons on the principal heads of Christianity,⁶¹ preached at Berry-Street, by six of our divines, who were all my intimate friends and persons of distinguished worth—viz., Dr. [Isaac] Watts and Dr. [John] Guyse, Mr. [Samuel] Price, Mr. [David] Jennings, Mr. [Daniel] Neal, and Mr. [John] Hubbard, which does indeed contain a pretty little system of practical divinity, and which I advise my young people, when entering on their studies not only carefully to read, but to contract.

And here, dear sir, I thought to have concluded my letter; but it occurs to my mind, there is one great defect in it; that is, that I have said nothing of

Commentators, or Books immediately leading to a critical acquaintance with Scripture.

I have recommended to my pupils: [Theodore] Beza (as for the strict import of the words of the New Testament, I think unequalled⁶²), [Desiderius] Erasmus, [Sebastian] Castellio, [Daniel] Heinsius, [Simon] Patrick, [William] Lowth, [John] Locke, [James?] Pierce, and [George] Benson.

[Henry] Ainsworth, [Henry] Hammond, [Hugo] Grotius, [Daniel] Brenius, [Edward] Wells, [John] Calvin, [Matthew] Poole, and [Jean] Le Clerc, are mentioned and characterized in my preaching lectures. I need say nothing of them to you. But I will mention Cradock, a book very little known; but in my opinion the most valuable help for understanding the Scriptures that can anywhere be purchased so cheap—because, besides a very plain and judicious plan of the contents of most of the sacred books, reduced to a proper order, there are extracts of some of the most valuable passages in several of the oldest writers mentioned above.⁶³

I might mention several considerable writers that likewise illustrate Scripture, though not direct commentators, who are also briefly characterized, in this part of my preaching lectures, such as [Herman] Witsius, Sautier, [August] Pfeiffer, [Salomo] Glassius, [Thomas] Gataker, [Johannes] Frankius, [Norton] Knatchbull, [Anthony] Blackwall, [John] Lightfoot, [Augustin] Calmet, [Joseph] Mede, Hollet, [John] Edwards, [Charles] Le Cène,⁶⁴ Wolfius, [Georg] Raphelius, Vininga, Boss,⁶⁵ and above all Elsuer and Lardner, in the two first volumes of his *Credibility*.⁶⁶

⁵⁹Benjamin Grosvenor, *The Mourner, or the Afflicted Relieved* (London, 1740), *Health: An Essay on its Nature, Value, Uncertainty, Preservation and Best Improvement* (London, 1748).

⁶⁰Philip Doddridge, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (London, 1745); *Sermons on the Religious Education of Children* (London, 1732); *Practical Discourses on Regeneration* (London, 1742); and *Sermons to Young Persons* (London, 1735).

⁶¹Isaac Watts, et al., *Faith and Practice Represented in Fifty-four Sermons on the Principal Heads of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (London, 1735).

⁶²Doddridge may mean an English translation of Beza's translation of the New Testament into German, like: *The New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ... Englished by Laurence Tomson* (1603); or he may mean one of the many editions of Beza's Greek New Testament with Latin translation and comments in parallel columns.

⁶³Doddridge is apparently referring to a series by Samuel Cradock: *The History of the Old Testament* (1683), *The Harmony of the Four Evangelists* (1668), and *The Apostolical History ... from Christ's Ascension to the Destruction of Jerusalem* (1672).

⁶⁴Orig., 'Le Crene'.

⁶⁵Lambert Bos?

⁶⁶Nathaniel Lardner, *The Credibility of the Gospel History*, 2 vols. (London, 1727).

But perhaps, sir, you will think that as the critical study of Scripture is not so much intended in your plan, I have gone a little out of the way in mentioning so many upon this head. Yet if you do think so, you will excuse me. Perhaps when young people are accustomed to that attention of thought which sacred criticism will require, it may not only answer a good end in leading them into the true sense and beauty of particular passages of Scripture, in consequence of which their own taste may be greatly improved, but it may prevent those extravagant reveries which have filled the mind of so many, and brought so great a dishonour on the work of God.

I dare say, sir, you will not imagine by any means that I intend to recommend the particular notions of all the writers I here mention, which may sufficiently appear from their absolute contrariety to each other in a multitude of instances. But I think that, in order to defend the truth, it is very proper that a young minister should know the chief strength of error.

I am afraid, sir, I have by this time thoroughly wearied you. And therefore what little matter I have to say by way of more immediate answer to your last I shall refer to a separate piece of paper,⁶⁷ that when you lay this by, in case you think it worth your while to do it, it may not be encumbered with anything foreign to the purpose. It only remains that I most cordially recommend you and your labours to the continued presence and blessing of God; sincerely wishing that you may be honoured more and more as an instrument in the hand of the Great Redeemer for the salvation of a multitude of those precious souls whom he has ransomed with his own blood, and subscribe myself, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother, and faithful humble servant,

P. Doddridge

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778) 419–25.⁶⁸

⁶⁷See his letter dated June 19.

⁶⁸Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:195–96.

From the Rev. Dr. Philip Doddridge

Northampton
June 19, 1746

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I send this by way of postscript, to thank you for the entertaining account you gave me of that very extraordinary turn which affairs took in the battle of Falkirk. I have been informed by another person, who had an opportunity of very good intelligence concerning it. And I traced some of the same circumstances, though not in altogether so distinct a manner. I perceive our rebel enemies were as confident of victory as possible just before the action at Culloden, which proved so fatal to them. For a friend of mine from thence brings word that just as the armies joined, an officer was sent back to make proclamation at the market-cross at Inverness that every householder should bake a bushel of bread, that it might be ready to refresh the prince's victorious army on its return, which was required on pain of military execution. And the consequence of this was that our army found much better provision for their refreshment, after the fatigue of that glorious day, than they could otherwise have done. I have also reason to believe that a day or two before this action, Lord Kilmarnock,¹ having quartered himself and some of the chief of his officers at a minister's of the Scotch established Church in those parts, obliged the master of the house and his eldest son to wait upon them at table, and in a profane manner undertook to say grace himself, which was 'May God d[am]n and confound all presbyterian parsons, their wives, and children, and families, henceforth and for evermore, Amen.' I perceive it is commonly thought the rebels permitted our army to pass the Spa, that they might the more certainly cut off their retreat. It is not to be wondered that such a deliverance, after such circumstances as these, should make a strong impression upon the mind of minister and people in general, which I am assured it does. I heartily pray God the impression may be lasting, and may produce that reformation that is so much needed among them, as well as amongst us.

I am, dear sir,

Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

P. Doddridge

P.S. I shall not be at all surprised if the next winter should open upon us a much more afflictive scene than the last—if we will not be reformed by such judgments and such deliverances as these. Yet think with you, dear sir, that God will not make a full end of us. I look upon every sinner converted from the error of his ways by the power of God, working in his gospel, as a token of good, that we shall not be utterly forsaken.

Source: published transcription; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:207–08; and *Collection* (1797): 32.

¹William Boyd, 4th Earl of Kilmarnock (1704–46), had deserted George II and joined the invading forces of Charles Edward Stuart, the 'Young Pretender'. He was taken prisoner and beheaded a month after this letter, on Aug. 18.

From the Rev. Dr. Philip Doddridge

Northampton
June 29, 1746

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am truly glad that the long letter I last sent you was agreeable to you. I bless God that my prejudices against the writers of the Establishment were so early removed and conquered. And I greatly rejoice when I see in these, whom upon other accounts I must highly esteem as the excellent of the earth, that their prejudices against their brethren of any denomination are likewise subsided, and that we are coming nearer to that harmony in which, I hope, we shall ever be one in Christ Jesus. I cannot think the apprehensions which you, dear sir, intimate of remaining danger to be by any means groundless. And it is something remarkable that just before I received your letter I had been preaching at a meeting of ministers in the neighbourhood from those words, 'Rejoice with trembling',¹ with some peculiar accommodation to our present circumstances. I hope to have the pleasure of paying my respects to you in town before it is long, and desire your prayers for my prosperous journey.

I have always esteemed it to be the truest act of friendship to use our mutual endeavours to render the character of each other as blameless and as valuable as possible. And I have never felt a more affectionate sense of my obligation than when those worthy persons who have honoured me with their affection and correspondence have freely told me what they thought amiss in my temper and conduct. This therefore, dear sir, is an office which you might reasonably expect from me, who should so sincerely desire it from you. If I had such an intimate knowledge of you as could be the foundation of any such address, it has always been a maxim with me not to believe any flying story to the prejudice of those whom I had apparent reason, from what I knew of them, to esteem. And consequently, as I should never make this a foundation, you must be contented to wait, perhaps a good deal longer, before you will likely to receive that office of fraternal love which you ask from, reverend and dear sir,

Your obliged and affectionate brother and servant,

P. Doddridge

Your caution has suggested a thought to me, whether it be modest to call ourselves humble. If the expression means a real readiness to serve in love, in any thing low, as washing the feet of another, I hope I can say, 'I am your humble servant.' But if it means one who is in all respects as humble as he could wish, God forbid I should arrogate so proud a title. In what can I say I have already attained? Only I love my divine Master; and I would not have a thought in my heart that he should disapprove. I feel a sweetness in being assuredly in his gracious hand, which all the world cannot possibly afford, and which I really think would make me happier in a dark dungeon, than ten thousand worlds could make me without it. And therefore I love every creature on earth that bears his image. And I do not except those of them who, through ignorance, rashness, and prejudice, have greatly injured me; though such there are, I hope, in that number.

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797): 33–34.²

¹Rom. 12:15.

²JW published an abridged transcription in *Journal*, July 2, 1746 (*Works*, 20:124).

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[Gwennap]
[July 15, 1746]

[[Dear Brother,

[[I should not suddenly trust Mr. Shep[herd].² It is a bold venture, your sending Larwood³ to Yorkshire. Send me to Newcastle, Ireland, anywhere but London. I am in terribly good humour just now; but I shall never love verjuice. Hang me on a crab-tree⁴ if you catch me there again while my friend Sarah holds her station at the Foundery. I have hazarded my peace and my soul too much already.

[[I want a *genesis thematica*⁵ upon bigotry, not forgetting catholic love.⁶ I rejoice that Molly Francis⁷ is from Kingswood while a friend of ours is at it.]] Mr. Green⁸ [[is in great danger if left alone in London. Whose hands can you leave him in? I would as leave the Germans snapped him up as Sarah Clavel.⁹

[[I find it is utterly in vain to write to you upon anything whereon we are not already agreed. Either you set aside the whole by the short answer that I am in an ill humour, or you take no notice at all of my reasons, but plead conscience. You are now purging the church without fear of favour. Here is one says she is a new creature, and slanders her neighbour. Will not own her fault, yet must she be screened, and kept both in the bands and in your house. I have so little success in my remonstrances that I have many times resolved never to contradict your judgment as to any thing or person.

¹This personal letter appears in shorthand, at the end of a journal letter.

²The shorthand outline is 'sl-p' or 'sh-p.' Little is known of William Shepherd other than that he travelled with JW and CW, assisting them, between 1743–48.

³While the letter is in shorthand (except for 'Mr. Green'), this is the first of eight instances where CW added longhand expansions, apparently to aid JW in reading awkward outlines; namely 'Larwd', 'verjuice', 'crabtree', 'Genesis', 'Thematica', 'Catholic', and 'rebuffs'.

⁴Cf. Samuel Wesley, Jun., 'The Bondsmen', ll. 139–40 (*Poems*, 1736, p. 251):

But dogs, the proverb says, by cruel fate / Hang'd on a crab-tree, will the verjuice hate.

⁵An initial essay.

⁶This request may have contributed to JW publishing in 1750 Sermon 38, 'A Caution Against Bigotry', *Works*, 2:63–80; and Sermon 39, *Catholic Spirit*, *Works*, 2:81–95.

⁷Mary ('Molly') Francis would return to Kingswood, serving as mistress of the school for girls that was lodged in the 'old house'. In 1751 she married John Maddern, one of JW's travelling preachers. The couple served together at Kingswood for a few years, then moved to London, where John became a respected local preacher. When John died, Molly returned to Bristol, to serve as housekeeper at the New Room 1770–82. See A. G. Ives, *Kingswood School* (London: Epworth, 1970), 40, 50.

⁸John Green (fl. 1750–70) was ordained in 1745 (without a degree) and served as curate to Thomas Hough in Thurnscoe, Yorkshire for a year. He would be appointed perpetual curate of Sutton in Ashfield in June 1747, but was frequently in London supporting the revival. He attended the Wesleyan Conference in London in 1748, but over time his sympathies sided with the Calvinist Methodists. He frequently preached at Whitefield's Tabernacle in London. In 1767 Green resigned his curacy at Sutton to serve Lady Huntingdon's connexion in Norwich. After some time there he retired to Reading, Berkshire. See Seymour, *Huntingdon*, 1:217, 358, 388, 2:350; and JW, *Journal*, May 12, 1754, *Works*, 20:486.

⁹Sarah Clavel (bap. Aug. 26, 1705), of Deptford/Greenwich, was a band leader for single women at the Foundery as early as 1742 (see Foundery Band Lists; and JW, *Journal*, Sept. 6, 1742, *Works*, 19:295). By 1744 she was also the lead housekeeper for the Foundery; see *WHS* 14 (1923): 27.

[[I like your proposals for amendment. As to rising, what should hinder? But allowing the first hour to prayer. As to renouncing tea, etc.,¹⁰ what must I do for food in Cornwall? It is my beer some days in the week, and the only one I can get. I have some things upon my mind on this head, but meet with so many rebuffs I have no heart to tell them to you. Now, I suppose, you will answer you speak that is in your heart by all means; and at the first touch of blame, knock all on the head again.

[[Bring a stock of franks to Bristol.

Adieu.]]¹¹

Address: 'To / Mrs Elis. Cart / At Mr Edw. Nowyers / At the Golden Anchor / Bishopgate street / London / Single sheet'.

Postmark: '16/IY'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jul. 15, 1746 / ad. 19'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 6/12.

¹⁰The agreement to cease drinking tea is recorded in JW, *Journal*, July 6, 1746, *Works*, 20:125. CW's attempt to do so was not successful; see MS *Journal*, July 28, 1746.

¹¹The shorthand letter was expanded by Frank Baker and published in *Works*, 26:207–08.

From John Nelson

Newcastle
July 16, 1746

Dear Father in the Lord,

This is with my duty to you to let you know how I find all in these parts. God is greatly reviving the work in town and country. As far as I can find there have been more justified within these last five weeks than have been for several months before. To God be the glory, for I see more clearly than ever that the good that is done upon the earth, the Lord doth it himself, and he will not give his honour to another. I have been at brother Brown's at Newlands.¹ There was a great many to hear and great peace, and I believe it will be well to go there sometimes, for they seemed to have ears to hear. But I think Sunderland should not be neglected, for this fire is begun in that place, for many have found him that was crucified, and many cannot rest night or day but are crying out 'Jesus, thou Son of David have mercy on me.'² I see the necessity of speaking plain, for till a man find he is a damned sinner, he will not forsake all and follow the despised Jesus of Nazareth; for all the preaching seemed to be as a pleasant song to this people. Till Sunday was four weeks I went to preach there, and opened my book and spoke from the words of Amos, which was, 'Prepare to meet thy God!'³ And God gave me to speak such sharp words that it made my new flock shrink, and many that heard me to stand as if the earth had been opening to let them drop alive into hell. And since then they have been sensible of their want, and God hath taken away the spirit of bondage to fear and hath given them the spirit of adoption. Sister [Grace] Murray was greatly blessed to them for she went after me both times. Thus was two the first time set at liberty, and six the second time.

Brother [James] Wheatley went yesterday. He could not set out before upon account of his wife being out of health. But she was better before they set out. I think it will not be well to let him stop much by the way, but to get her home as soon as possible, for she is with child to all appearances and uneasy to be at home. I have talked largely to James Watson, but I do not discern anything in him like a preacher. But I do not pretend to be a judge in such a case. But if he is called to preach, it is not in this part of the land, for he allows himself in truth the worst character of any man in this county. So that he ought to go where he is not known for they will not receive him here. Brother [Thomas] Westell⁴ came last Saturday. But I hear nothing of brother [Samuel] Larwood, yet neither have I heard from Birstall since you wrote. All in this house live in love, and are in good health at present. This with my duty and best prayers for you, from

Your unworthy son in the gospel,

John Nelson

Source: manuscript copy of holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/103.⁵

¹John Brown (d. 1808), a farmer of Newlands, was converted by JW in 1742.

²Luke 18:38.

³Amos 4:12.

⁴Nelson spells 'Westal'.

⁵There is a note signed by Thomas Marriott: 'The foregoing letter has no date but is endorsed by Mr. Wesley July 16, 1746. The original is in the possession of Mrs. Agnes Bulmer from whom I obtained this copy.' An abridged transcription was published in *AM* 20 (1797): 404–05.

From an Unidentified Methodist Soldier

Meerkerk in Holland

July 29, 1746

I have for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward man. And for above two years I have known that God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all my sins. I lived in the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all states. Wet or weary, cold or hungry, I could rejoice. And faith and love did increase so fast that it was my soul's delight to do good to them that hated me, to bless them that cursed me and to call all those that were in a perishing condition to accept of life and salvation. But Oh! How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished! April 6, 1746, I was overcome by a great temptation: it came as quick as lightning. I know not if I was well in my senses. But I fell. I rose the same moment and called upon my offended God. And so I have done ever since. But notwithstanding, his Spirit has departed from me. I have wounded my conscience exceedingly. I am fallen into the spirit of bondage and fear. And I often cry out:

Who shall tell me if the strife
In heaven or hell shall end?¹

Source: published extract; JW, *Journal*, July 29, 1746 (*Works*, 20:126).

¹CW, concluding couplet of Hymn VII, st. 9, in *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741), 15.

From Henry Thornton¹

[Wensley, Yorkshire]
c. August 2, 1746

On Wednesday, July 16, I called on good, old Mr. Clayton.² He was exceeding weak and seemed like one that had not long to continue here. I called again on Monday 21, and found him very ill. He told me no one else should have been admitted; that he had much to say to me to tell you, and desired me to send his kind respects to you, and wished you prosperity in your pious undertakings. Finding he was not able to talk much, I took my leave, not thinking it would be the last time. But when I returned into these parts on Saturday last, I found he died that morning between two and three. On Monday last I went to his burial, and I was unexpectedly made mourner for my good, old friend. I followed his corpse to the ground, where I saw it solemnly interred. Many of his parishioners dropped tears, he having been a father to the poor. He died very poor, though he had an estate of forty pounds a year and a living of near three hundred, of which he has been rector three and forty years.

Henry Thornton

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 4, 1746 (*Works*, 20:126–27), and *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 79.

¹Henry Thornton (1710–63) was born in Redmire, Yorkshire. By 1737 he was living in London, apprenticed to an attorney. That year he married Mercy Gregory. Henry and Mercy appear as married persons in the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46), through Nov. 1745. At that point they relocated to Leeds. Henry assisted the Wesley brothers with some legal matters through the mid 1750s. See Thornton to CW, Nov. 26, 1741.

²Rev. John Clayton (c. 1676–1746), rector of Redmire & Wensley, Yorkshire; likely an uncle of John Clayton (1709–73).

From 'John Smith'

August 11, 1746

Reverend Sir,

1. I am obliged to you for your letter of the 25th of June.¹ But before I answer any other part I must apologize for former tartness or bitterness.² I was not aware of any excess of this last. So far am I from entertaining any bitterness against you that (as I at first told you) whatever errors in doctrine, mistakes in conduct, or excess in zeal, I may apprehend to be in you, still I cannot but love and esteem you for the goodness of your intention. Yet something of tartness of expression is possible, and perhaps unavoidable, in a long debate; for how can the *absurdum* or *ridiculum* of an argument be exposed without a little smartness of reply? I have noted somewhat of this sort in you, but always with applause; if anything then of that sort escapes me, let me crave your patience and forgiveness.

*Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.*³

2. Everyone (whether an antinomian or otherwise) who holds not the popish doctrine of merit may as well subscribe the eleventh Article in its plain, grammatical meaning, as Mr. Whitefield and you can the seventeenth.⁴ The case, therefore, of the subscribers to the one or to the other must continue to appear to me to be exactly the same, till you are pleased to say wherein they differ.

3. I had warned you against an impetuous zeal, but it seems that is not the weak side; your chief danger is from lukewarmness.⁵ The overdone humility in the first paragraph of your last letter may serve to convince you of the contrary, if compared with paragraphs 93 and 94 of the *Earnest Appeal*. The comparison, I am persuaded, will show you that whatever side of the question is for the present uppermost in your mind, that you are apt to push with such impetuosity and excess as unavoidably occasions the appearance of great variety (not to say inconsistency) of sentiment.

4. Thus you claim and you disclaim miracles. [1] You claim them as having seen many miraculous attestations to your ministry. How then do you disclaim them? As desiring none to believe your words 'any further than they are confirmed by Scripture and reason'.⁶ Very modest indeed! For might not St. Peter and St. Paul disclaim miracles on the same account? 2) As to the inconsistency I noted about marriage, if I take you right you have still some doubt, and are not at leisure yet to permit or forbid to marry. 3) The newly justified has 'at once', in that hour, power over all sin, and finds from that hour the work of God in the soul '*slowly* and *gradually* increasing'.⁷ What, till he has power over more than all sin? 4) But surely the tip-top of all inconsistencies is what follows, as explained even in your own way: 'Many receive from the Holy Ghost an attestation of their acceptance, as perceptible as the sun at noonday, yet these same persons at other times doubt or deny that they ever had such attestation.'⁸ You have elsewhere asserted that men may fancy they have this attestation when they have it not; you have now asserted that they may fancy they never had such attestation when they really have had it. Can you find any words in language that shall assert more strongly that this is the work of fancy, and not the work

¹JW to 'John Smith', June 25, 1746, *Works*, 26:197–207.

²See June 25, §8, para. 6.

³'Such pardon we must seek, and give it in return' (Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 11).

⁴June 25, §4.

⁵*Ibid.*, §1.

⁶*Ibid.*, §5.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*

of God? A sick man who fancies today that he has swallowed a cobbler may tomorrow fancy that he never did any such thing; but he who today really swallows a single pea cannot possibly tomorrow (if he continues sound in his mind and memory) doubt or deny this matter of fact, since what was a matter of fact yesterday will continue a matter of fact to all eternity. It is in vain to have recourse to the 'power of darkness'. No one can in body or mind be darker than stone blind. Now he that is stone blind today cannot possibly doubt or deny that he saw the sun at noon yesterday, unless his memory and understanding be destroyed; and then he is not under the 'power of darkness', but the power of madness; and a pious man who should then suffer himself to be amused by his experiences and reveries would be in some danger of being soon confined to the same apartment.

5. In the manner in which you first spoke of commutations I thought I knew none so guilty; in the way in which you now explain yourself I have reason to think I know none innocent.⁹ By 'partial' and commuting I meant two different things. But if you will say that partial religion is a kind of commuting, as exchanging a part for the whole, then as the dispute will be entirely verbal I shall have no more to say on the head. God knows we all offer him too small a part of duty and holiness. The highest degrees stand in need of his mercy, of which yet the lower degrees (for there are many mansions) need not, through Christ, despair.

6. Is there any such thing as perceptible inspiration or not?¹⁰ This one point of doctrine, say you, still remains to be debated; but if this one point, like all the other points, be quite distinguished away, there will remain no longer room for debate, but only for amazement that such sort of language should constantly be used as all mankind must unavoidably understand in one sense till distinguished into a quite different one. I appeal to all your readers, be they friends or adversaries, whether they did not understand you to teach an inspiration perceptible in its *working* as well as in its *fruits* and *effects*. Nay, sir, do not your disciples commonly understand you thus? Nay, further, do you not intend they should understand you thus? Friends that can receive it may receive it, and as for opponents, there are distinctions ready.

7. But what you distinguish away in one paragraph you reclaim again in the next, maintaining that 'every Christian believer, over and above the imperceptible influence, hath a direct perceptible testimony of the Spirit'.¹¹ And for the proof of this I am referred to the 38th page of the *Farther Appeal*. I have again carefully read from that page to the 73rd.¹² The dispute there was about the ordinary and extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost. But of the perceptibility of the ordinary operations, as directly felt to be worked by him, there is not one word said, neither there nor that I know of in any one place in the Bible. What proof is it then which I expect? Much better than the bare assertion of weak or wicked Richardson's or Spenser's, who hurried suddenly from the purgatory of despondency to the paradise of presumption. Now fancy themselves to have attestations as perceptible as the sun at noon; then, sunk back into the distraction of despondency, frankly own they never had any such attestation, and that it was all a mere fancy—a demonstration that it was a mere fancy, since a fact will continue a fact in spite of fate, and must be unavoidably remembered as such by every mind undisturbed through lunacy or idiotism.

8. In short, if you will not suffer this direct perceptibility to be called enthusiasm, you must at least allow it to be called Quakerism, till you show wherein it differs from that. The gulf you mention is not so great as you imagine.¹³ The two sacraments are means of perfection. One who fancies himself to have obtained the end may soon come to look on the means as superfluous. Touching them is now touching the apple of your eye; so once was touching regular ordination and appointment of preachers,

⁹Ibid., §8.

¹⁰Ibid., §9.

¹¹Ibid., para. 4.

¹²*Farther Appeal*, V.2–28, *Works*, 11:139–72.

¹³June 25, §9, para. 6.

yet you can now bear that touch without winking. But regular orders once set aside, what a door do you open to error and discord!

9. Will you ask me again what I mean by order?¹⁴ Was it not manifest that I meant to speak against lay preaching and in favour of regular ordination? How then could you give so strange an answer, 'I bring the very order you contend for into places where it never was before'?¹⁵ Is this true in fact? Do you bring in the ministry of regularly ordained preachers where before the people were used to the preaching of lay brethren? That was the order I was contending for, the breach of which I endeavoured to show you would be attended with very bad consequences, some of which have 'actually happened', and others *probably* (nay, upon any factions joining almost *certainly*) would happen. You seem to make light of the ill consequences which have already actually happened; as if a number of unspent persons going about the kingdom and preaching the worst of heresies were a mere trifle, 'since the poor wretches have done as little harm as good, and have not destroyed one soul'.¹⁶ That is more than you know, but I hope it may be so, since the saving or destroying souls depends not on these or any poor wretches whatever. But leaving salvation to the Saviour, can you deny that this is doing an infinite deal of harm? Yet this is nothing compared to the mischief which must unavoidably ensue when any state faction shall think fit to join the irregulars, as the Prince of Orange's faction did the Calvinists in Holland, and the republicans did the Puritans here in England, and the late rebels did the Cameronians in Scotland. If unspent, well-meaning laymen may preach out their zeal, do you not see that upon the first opportunity which offers unspent, ill-meaning laymen will spread their sedition like wildfire? Cartwright's irregularities did not extend so far as to the approving lay preaching, and yet his irregularities and innovations in the course of a century did more harm than all the labours of his life ever did good. It is true, with all his irregularities he was a better man than regular sluggards, drunken vicars of Wednesbury, or persecuting parsons of Darlaston; such regulars do no good, and some harm, whilst the irregulars do some good, but more harm. The very irregularity of their impetuous zeal awakens some to seriousness, but at the same time it opens a door in the long run to the hurt of many more; and if we cast up the account at a hundred years' end we shall find the loss exceed the profit. When Cartwright was hugging himself for his many converts to piety he would have taken it ill to be told that he was doing the devil more service by breach of order than disservice by all his laborious industry; and yet for all that, could he have looked out of his grave about the middle of last century he would have found that friendly admonition was literally true. And whoever should be suffered to look out of his grave the middle of next century will find, I believe, that the orderly preaching at St. Luke's and St. Giles's Church (how much soever it may be sneered at now) has done more good and abundance less harm than the disorderly preaching at Kennington and Moorfields, assisted elsewhere by the still more irregular preaching of lay brethren. This is not mere random conjecture, but a plain pointing out what must happen from what has ever happened already; and I defy you to produce one irregular departure of good men from the orderly paths through zeal which has not sooner or later been improved by the devil into an occasion of much mischief, such mischiefs as the rebellion and horrid crimes of the Puritans in England and the detestable freaks of the Anabaptists in Germany.¹⁷

10. I am not conscious to myself of being biased by the clamour of the great vulgar or the small.¹⁸ As numbers have no influence on me, so neither has novelty, but I endeavour to seek for truth wherever it may be found. But since you call upon me to re-examine my first notions of these things, I will recapitulate the whole affair. A few years ago I had occasion to be in the West of England. There I first

¹⁴Ibid., §10, para. 8.

¹⁵Ibid., para. 13.

¹⁶June 25, §10, para. 6.

¹⁷A later footnote is added (probably by Moore): 'All this shows the difference between mere sectarianism and a "work of God".'

¹⁸June 25, §10, para. 13.

heard that you had made much impression on many people. The fact was allowed to be notorious, and I thought it worthy of great attention. My reason was this: either this gentleman preaches some more awakening doctrines than other ministers, or the Holy Ghost vouchsafes him such supernatural and miraculous blessing and attestation as he nowadays grants not to others; or else God has at least given him such a natural knack of persuasion as is very rare and uncommon. One of those three I thought must of necessity be the case, and I judged it well worth a serious inquiry, which, upon this I read your *Appeals*, and such other papers as I could get, and when I had carefully noted what your singular doctrines were I resolved to write to you, that either you might convince me of their importance, or that I might convince you of their impropriety. The issue was, you distinguished away all that sounded peculiar, and pleaded that you maintained no singular doctrines at all. The case was the same as to miraculous or supernatural attestation; you had spoken of this in all the strong language of a miracle-working apostle; but when this came to be explained, all this warm, solemn language amounted to no more than that sinners, upon becoming penitents, sometimes *fancy themselves* to have manifest attestations of acceptance, and sometimes fall back into despondency, owning (as they could not do had it been real matter of fact) that it was all a mere fancy and delusion. Thus as despondency or presumption prevails on weak minds, the fancy varies, whereas a fact is a thing invariable; and if I really had an attestation yesterday from the Holy Ghost, that my sins were all forgiven, then (how much soever he may frown upon me today) still I cannot, if I am in my senses, deny that he smiled yesterday, or that what happened yesterday will not remain a fact to all eternity. Well then, how shall we account for the considerable success of your itinerant ministry? It must be owned that you have a natural knack of persuasion, and that you speak with much awakening warmth and earnestness, that God has blessed you with a strength of constitution equal to the indefatigable industry of your mind. These natural abilities, then, without having recourse to anything supernatural or miraculous, might alone account for the measure of your success. Yet there is another thing which gives you more advantage, and occasions you to make more impression than all these put together, and that is the very irregularity and novelty of your manner. ‘The *tanners, keelmen, colliers, and harlots*’, say you, ‘never came near the church, nor had any desire or design so to do.’¹⁹ But when it was told them, There is a man preaching upon yonder mountain, they came in as great flocks to such a dispenser of divinity as they do to a *dispenser of physic who dances on a slack rope*.²⁰ Such a doctor may by a stratagem have more patients, and consequently if he has equal skill may do more good than Dr. Mead, who confines himself to the unalarming and customary carriage of a chariot; yet since it is next to certain that the rules of the college once broke in upon, many unskilful persons will take upon them to get patients by the novelty of the slack rope, it is likewise next to certain that if we cast up the physic account at the end of any one century we shall find that surprise and novelty have done much more harm than good, and that it was upon the whole much better to go on in the slower but safer way of the college.

11. Forgive me the setting up the matter in this light. I would willingly set it in any light that might do you good. My first intention in writing to you was to do myself good. I hope I have not wholly failed. Yet as I have failed in part, and have not been able to bring myself to you, let me now endeavour to bring you back to the old orderly paths, which I think would be doing good both to you and to the public. But then you must bear with some tartness. Bitterness, I am sure, I have none. Nay, I would seem as little tart as possible; let us then drop our own persons and cases, and turn our discourse for a minute to fictitious ones. Let us suppose, then, some good man (we will say Mr. [William] Law) very desirous of promoting the love of God and man; but observing how slowly this great work was carried on by men preaching standing on their feet, his zeal puts him upon gaining the attention of the otherwise unattentive by preaching standing upon his head. This stratagem was not without its success; many heard who otherwise had never heard at all. As numbers of auditors increased, he began to look out for assistants; but not finding many of his brethren the clergy of sufficient agility to accompany him, he called in the assistance of lay brethren. An innocent, but perhaps unenlightened neighbour endeavours to show him the

¹⁹Ibid, §10, para. 10.

²⁰*Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, II.23 (*Works*, 11:306–07).

impropriety of his behaviour; that besides the irregularity and indecorum of the thing itself, it was sure to be attended with very bad consequences; that he was already aped by numbers of weak or wicked men; and that the first time there was a design of public mischief, this novelty stratagem would be sure to be made use of, as all novelty stratagems had ever been, to very wicked and horrible purposes. What then, says Mr. Law, would you have an end at once of my preaching? No, God forbid; I would only have an end of your headlong preaching. Take the largest and most laborious cure you please, and play the part of the most industrious curate. To this you may be regularly called; but I know no call you have to play the part of an itinerant evangelist, or to assume the episcopal, patriarchal, or apostolical either language or office. Ah, my good friend, Mr. Law! You have a regular call too to another place; how usefully and ornamentally might you be employed in your college of Emmanuel at Cambridge, not as a philosophical sluggard, or 'saunterer' *inter silvas academicas currere cursum*, but *quaerere verum*;²¹ a thing well worth your search, for the longer you live the more you will find that you want light more than heat.²² When you had found the truth, how advantageously might you communicate it to the expecting youth! How many hundred in a course of years might you fit for regular yet zealous pastors! And to how many thousands might they in a century or two spread the love of God and man! These regularly raised plants in due time would be more numerous, but to be more sure, more lasting, and less liable when mixed with poisonous weeds than those which are irregularly and suddenly raised in hotbeds. You would not indeed then be the head of a sect. Suffer my jealousy in turn. I fear you do not know every evil seed that may still lurk in your own breast. Are you sure there is no spark of vanity there? No love of singularity? No desire of distinction, *digito monstrari et dicier, hic est*?²³ At least turn your emulation into a right channel. God can make you as conspicuous in a regular as you are endeavouring to make yourself in this irregular way. But if nothing else will serve you but playing the part of an apostle (nay, and pretending to a more perfect and sinless part than they, poor men, could in the infancy of Christianity arrive to), then I can add no more but my prayers to God for you and for myself, that he will so cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love him here, and be prepared for an happy appeal to that awful bar where all controversies shall be decided, and where men and angels shall be ear-witnesses of the just decision, whether it be the 'Εὐγε'²⁴ of good and faithful servant, or the reproof of, 'Who hath required these things at your hands?'²⁵

Source: manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 64–73.²⁶

²¹Not 'in the groves of Academe to run a race', but 'to seek the truth' (Horace, *Epistles*, II.ii.45); cf. June 25, §1.

²²See JW to 'John Smith', Sept. 28, 1745, §21.

²³'To have the finger pointed at one, and to hear people say, "That's him!"' (Persius, *Satires*, i.28).

²⁴'Well done!' (Luke 19:17).

²⁵Isa. 1:12.

²⁶This full transcription was published in *Works*, 26:209–15.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

Plymouth
Sunday Night, [August 17, 1746]

[[Dear Brother,

[[Satan is indefatigable² to alienate the hearts of this people from me, but I defy him. His chief instrument is poor Herbert Jackson, that mere tool of the Dissenters. My stay here will be the shorter. You must take no notices of this to any. My journal likewise, when it comes, keep to yourself. John Trembath is given over with the spotted fever.³ Against hope I believe he will recover. [Thomas] Richards is not yet come. On Tuesday or Wednesday I think of returning to Tavistock, and St. Gennys; on Tuesday sennight I hope to see Exeter, but know not how to get thither. My horse has got the]] fashions,⁴ [[I expect to leave him behind me.

[[Brother pray for me. The peace of God be with you.
Farewell]]

Address: 'The / Revd. Mr Wesley / at the Foundry / London single sheet'.

Postmarks: 'PLYMOUTH' and '20/AV'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'C[harles] Aug. 17, 1746 / a[nswere]d 22 / Journal'.

Source: holograph; MA 1977/503, Box 5, file 11.

¹This shorthand letter appears at the end of a journal letter.

²CW also wrote 'Indefatigable' in longhand beneath, so that it would not be misread.

³CW also wrote 'fever' in longhand beneath, so that it would not be misread. 'Spotted fever' was a common name at the time for typhus.

⁴*OED*: "'Fashions" is the 15th–17th century spelling for the obsolete word "farcin". The modern spelling for this word is "farcy", which is defined as "a disease of animals, esp. of horses, closely allied to glanders".'

From Martha (Wesley) Hall

[Salisbury]
[August–September 1746]

My Dear Brother,

Though I did not remember to desire you to write to me when you was here,¹ methinks you should find a little time for that as well as all your other acts of charity. And it seems to me you should the rather do it because if I have any pastor on earth it is you and my dear brother [CW].

I desired much to have spent some time with you but it was not permitted me—for some good reason I doubt not, though at present I cannot see particularly what it is. Sometimes I think perhaps it is not best I should recover my strength, and therefore the most probably means of doing it is withheld. For I cannot once imagine that the will of any creature can hinder the almighty Creator from giving what blessing he pleases to any one person. I find myself, through infinite mercy, entirely delivered from the fear of hereafter. I have not for some time had so much as a doubt concerning it! Yet I find there is something of a natural fear of the dissolution of soul and body (especially when attended with great pain) that I am not wholly delivered from. I sometimes shrink a little at the thought, but I am immediately comforted with the blessed hope that ‘as my day is, so shall my strength be’,² which is all I desire.

The sermon you preached here was the very thing I wanted you to speak of. That continual worship you so well described is what I am satisfied I was called to years ago! But I desired to be excused, and could a little quiet my conscience with a sort of hope (for I could never get to be fully persuaded of it) that it was not designed to be our state in this world. But oh, suffice the season past, I can now plainly see that if the great deceiver can but get any soul into that snare and keep them in it, it is impossible they should enter into the rest that remaineth for the people of God in this life, because they cannot ask for what they believe was never designed to be given. Dear brother, pray for me, that he who has brought me up so often from the gates of death would now be pleased to finish his own work in me before I go hence—that (if it is not too much) the disciple may be as her master, and the servant as her lord.

Sister [Anne] Lambert waits for your coming before she determines as to coming here.³ I cannot but think it would be better for her to be here than at Wroot. Here is a good sort of a woman that is willing to board her for £13 a year, and is very desirous of her company. If you think well of (it) I believe it will be in your power to have it so. Do be so kind to write.

Address: ‘To / The Revd. Mr John Wesley / at Bristol’.

Postmark: ‘SALIS/ BURY’. *Charge:* ‘3’.

Endorsement: by JW, ‘S[ister] Hall / Sept. 1746/ a[nswere]d 20’.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/7.⁴

¹JW had preached for Westley Hall at Salisbury on July 22, 1746 (see *Journal*, *Works* 20:125).

²Cf. Deut. 33:25.

³Anne (Wesley) Lambert’s husband John had died in 1743.

⁴Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:215.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Queen Anne's County, Maryland
October 14, 1746

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

Although you have not heard from me, yet the regard I have always had for you and your own brother is still as great, if not greater than ever; and I trust we shall give this and future ages an example of true Christian love abiding, notwithstanding difference in judgment. Why our Lord has permitted us to differ as to some points of doctrine will be discovered at the Last Day. O that the difference may cease, if it be his blessed will, before we die! That we may go on hand in hand, preaching and spreading abroad the everlasting gospel. But however that be, this we know, that all things shall work, and are now working together for good, and for the furtherance of the gospel. I hope you and the dear souls in England have found the late troublesome times growing times. I have not failed to sympathize with, and pray for, you continually; and I heartily bless the Lord that the storm is so happily blown over. Ere this reaches you, I suppose you will have seen my sermon on that occasion. I have had the pleasure of reading the continuance of your *Appeal*, and pray our Lord to prosper every labour of your pen and lip. What we know not, may the blessed Jesus teach us all! I know you will say heartily, Amen.

By the confused accounts I have of things I find that antinomianism has been springing up in many places. I bless God you have made a stand against it, and trust your endeavours will meet with the wished-for success. If you ask how it is with me, I answer: happy in Jesus, the Lord my righteousness. If you ask what I am doing: ranging and hunting in the American woods after poor sinners, and resolved in the strength of Jesus to pursue the heavenly game more and more. If you ask, with what success, I would answer (O amazing grace!): with great success indeed, for my labours were never more acceptable, and the door for fifteen hundred miles together is quite open for preaching the everlasting gospel. In Maryland and Virginia people fly to hear the word like doves to the windows. Congregations are large, and the work is going on just as it began and went on in England. Notwithstanding the declining state of Georgia the Orphan-house is in a better situation than ever. In a year or two I trust it will support itself. I am now going there to spend some part of the winter, and to begin a foundation for literature. Several of the great and rich favour the Redeemer's cause, and many of my professed enemies are made to be at peace with me.

O reverend and dear, and very dear sir, be pleased to continue to pray for me that I may not flag in the latter stages of my road, but go on from strength to strength until I come to appear before my God and your God in Zion. Be pleased to remember me in the kindest manner to all the followers of the Lamb. That grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied upon you all is the earnest prayer of, reverend and very dear sir,

Your most affectionate, though unworthy younger brother and servant in Jesus Christ,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 417–18.¹

¹Titled by JW, 'On the spreading of the gospel in North America'. Abridged version included in *Works*, 26:220–21.

From a Methodist Soldier

Camp near Maastricht
c. October 15, 1746

Ever since the 22nd of July our army and the French have lain so close and marched so close together, that we have expected them to come upon us almost every night and have had for many nights strict orders not to take off our accoutrements, but to be ready to turn out at a minute's warning. And almost every day some of our out-guards have had skirmishes with them. On September 29, at night, Prince Charles had intelligence that they designed to fall upon us with all their force. So we had orders to be ready, and at break of day our regiment and [Col.] Graham's were ordered to march in the front of the army, with two Hessian, two Hanoverian, and a part of the Dutch. We marched a mile forward into little parks and orchards, a village being between us and our army. In this posture we remained about three hours, while their right wing was engaged with the Dutch, the cannon playing everywhere all this time. But we were all endued with strength and courage from God, so that the fear of death was taken away from us. And when the French came upon us and overpowered us, we were troubled at our regiment's giving way, and would have stood our ground and called to the rest of the regiment to stop and face the enemy, but to no purpose. In the retreat we were broke, yet after we had retreated about a mile, we rallied twice and fired again. When we came where we thought the army was, they were all gone. So we marched good part of the night and the next day, about four o'clock, we came to this camp. We left our brother Mark Bend² in the field; whether he be alive or dead we cannot tell, but the last of our brothers that spoke to him, after he was wounded, found him quite resigned to the will of God. We that he has spared a little longer desire you to return thanks to God for all his mercies to us.

Source: published extract; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 16, 1746 (*Works*, 20:147–48).

²Mark Bend (or Bond), born at Barnard Castle.

From Sampson Staniforth¹

Bush, of Brabant [Belgium]
October 17, 1746

Reverend Sir,

I have long had a desire to write but had not an opportunity till we came to our winter quarters. When we came over we thought we should have had brother [John] Haime with us, as formerly, but we were disappointed. We were about three weeks upon our march and endured a great deal, through the heat of the weather and for want of water. At Viller camp we lay so near the enemy and were forced to mount so many guards, that we had hardly any time to ourselves, nor had John Haime time to meet with us. We left this camp in twelve or fourteen days' time, and wherever we marched we had the French always in our view, [except] only [for] a few days, when we were marching through woods and over high mountains. Coming back to Ma[a]stricht, at some camps we have lain so near the enemy that their sentries and ours have taken snuff with one another, having then no orders to fire at, or hurt each other. But the day we came off we found it otherwise. For at eleven o'clock the night before orders came for us to be ready to turn out at an hour before day, which was the 30th of September. At daybreak, orders came to our regiment and Col. Graham's, to advance about a mile and a half toward the French. We were placed in a little park, and Graham's regiment in another, to the right of us. We lay open to the French; only we cut down the hedge breast high and filled it up with loose earth. Thus we waited for the enemy several hours, who came first with their right wing upon the Dutch, that were upon our left. They engaged in our sight and fired briskly upon each other, cannon and small shot for two hours. Then the Dutch, being overpowered, gave way, and the French advanced upon us and marched a party over the ditch on the left of Graham's and fell in upon them, notwithstanding our continual firing both with our small-arms and four pieces of cannon. So when the French had got past us, our regiment retreated, or we should have been surrounded. In our retreat, we faced about twice and fired on the enemy, and so came off with little loss, though they fired after us with large cannon-shot, I believe four-and-twenty pounders.

We lost one brother of Graham's regiment and two of ours—Andrew Paxton, shot dead in our retreat, and Mark Bend, who was wounded and left on the field. The Lord gave us all on that day an extraordinary courage and a word to speak to our comrades as we advanced toward the enemy, to tell them how happy they were that had made their peace with God. We likewise spoke to one another while the cannon were firing, and we could all rely on God and resign to his will.

A few of us meet here twice a day, and, thanks be to God, his grace is still sufficient for us. We desire all our brethren to praise God on our behalf. And we desire all your prayers that the Lord may give us to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. I remain

Your loving brother,

S. S.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 16, 1746 (*Works*, 20:146–47).

¹Sampson Staniforth (1720–99) was born in Sheffield, joined the army about 1739, and was converted while on a campaign in Europe about 1744. Back in England for a while, he came under JW's preaching in 1745. He had now been sent again to Europe on duty. When he returned in Feb. 1748, Staniforth took his leave of the army and settled in Greenwich, working as a master baker and supporting the Methodist cause, including financing the construction of a preaching house. Over the years he also served as a local preacher, particularly in Deptford and Rotherhithe. See Staniforth to JW, c. Dec. 1782.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[Grimsby, Lincolnshire]
c. November 7, 1746

William Blow,¹ John Melton, and Thomas Wilkinson were going, on Friday last, in a boat on the sea near Grimsby. John Melton could swim exceeding well, but William Blow not at all. When they were about half a league from the shore they were both beat overboard. John Melton sunk to the bottom like a stone. William Blow sunk and rose several times, and was in the water near a quarter of an hour before Thomas Wilkinson could get near him. At last he saw his hand above the water. He then struck down his boat-hook at a venture, and caught him by the flap of his coat, and pulled him to the boat-side. He was quite sensible and said, 'Tommy, I am afraid you can't get me in.' 'Nay then', said Thomas, 'we will sink together, for I will not let thee go.' At last he did get him in and brought him safe to land.

We asked how he could keep in the water so long and not be drowned. He said God gave him that thought, to keep his mouth shut, and when he was almost choked, he gave a spring up and got a little breath. I asked him how he felt himself when he was under water; if he was not afraid of death. He answered, No, his soul was lifted up unto the Lord, and he freely resigned himself into his hands.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 16, 1746 (*Works*, 20:145–46).

¹William Blow (1710–91), a cordwainer in Grimsby, was one of the first to receive John Nelson there; see Jackson, *EMP*, 1:68–81.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Bethesda
December 23, 1746

Reverend and Dear Sir,

With great pleasure I lately received a kind letter from you and your dear brother, dated above a year ago.¹ The Redeemer's Spirit came with it, and drew me to my knees for you and your dear brother, whom I honour and love much in the bowels of the ever-loving, ever-lovely Jesus. Blessed be his name for causing your bows to abide in strength.² May he yet continue to make you fruitful boughs, even fruitful boughs by a well, and cause your branches to run over the wall! Glory be to the riches of free and sovereign grace, the arms of my hands are yet strengthened by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. But the help of an all-gracious and all-powerful Redeemer, I continue to this day preaching among sinners the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. In New England there has been a great and glorious harvest, and therefore Satan has been sowing many tares. Antinomianism has prevailed there more than in Old England, and a great number have turned almost complete ranters. I had strong invitations to go thither this last summer, but thought it my duty to see what might be done in the more southern provinces. I have now passed through them once more, and the Lord Jesus (Oh amazing love!) has been pleased to bless my poor labours abundantly. This is one great reason why I cannot think of coming over to England as yet. For here is a range of many hundred miles, as it were, unwatered by the gospel, and no one (comparatively speaking) to go out into the highways at all. God is pleased to give me great favour in the eyes of thousands, and the orphan house affairs call for my longer continuance in America.

Blessed be God, I found my family grown in grace, and have a comfortable prospect of breeding up some youth for the service of the sanctuary. I have now opened a grammar school and have got persons to teach the children, who (I have reason to think) love Jesus Christ in sincerity. As for my own soul, it is kept cheerful and happy. And I shall have reason to bless God to all eternity for giving me such an helpmate. I expect her here in a day or two, and salute you heartily in her name. We propose leaving Georgia again in about two months, and return the way we came.

I wrote to you and your brother twice in our journey hither.³ I wish we could correspond often. It might promote union, and be a means of imparting some spiritual nourishment to each other. O that all narrowness of spirit may die in us, and that love which burns up self and selfishness grow and increase in us ever, more and more! I approve of your general Conference, but despair of much success till the interest of every *particular party* is made to give way to the *general interest* of the Redeemer in the world. I see more and more that he is the happiest man who is most weaned from the creature, and has learnt the holy art of living upon God, even a God in Christ. To his tender mercy do I commit you, and the dear lambs committed to your charge. I beg a continued remembrance in their and your prayers, and am, reverend and dear sir,

Yours, etc.,

G. Whitefield

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 43–44.⁴

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²See Gen. 49:24.

³These letters are not known to survive.

⁴Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:222–23.

From Dr. Andrew Wilson¹

Newcastle
December 30, 1746

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I had the satisfaction of receiving yours of the 11th of October,² which was very agreeable to me.

I am inclined to explain myself further unto you as to the nature and importance of knowledge, of which I wrote you in my former letter,³ because you have an opportunity of teaching much people. I perfectly agree with you that knowledge without charity (love), is as sounding brass—it puffeth up, and is attended with very bad consequences. But that knowledge which conveys into the heart the impresses of the love of God, manifested in the face of Jesus Christ, teaches us to love his image, to love and serve those who are born of him, because we love him who hath begotten them. And love is the fulfilling of the law.

The knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures of truth I take to be of the last importance, and is what real Christians need as much to have their attention awakened unto as the generality of those with the 'Christian' name need to be taught that 'they are dead while they have a name to live'.⁴

The understanding of the true meaning and intent of the Scriptures is understanding the mind of God in every place. And he who opens up that does more and (so to speak) gives more opportunity unto the Spirit of God to operate in the heart by his own Word than he who says abundance of serious things which are not contained in the subject he discourses from. In the latter way a man may preach a number of years unto a congregation and never explain the direct meaning of the Holy Spirit in one scripture. Meanwhile he is not increasing their knowledge of the Word of God. The brilliance of the diamond, and the carnation of the rose, depend upon the same natural light; but what sort of a philosopher would he be who therefore in explaining the nature of the one should describe the other? As absurd it is, in speaking from the Scripture, to insist upon topics which the passage does not at all intend. The Word of God is that alone by which the Holy Spirit influences the heart of a believer. And I cannot think it sufficient for the carrying on of that work that Christians be taught a few general truths, which possibly by constant teaching they may acquire some distinct notion of, without ever seeing them in the Scripture in their genuine beauty and dress. And do not all foolish and injudicious clamours about orthodoxy and heresy rise from this? It is on this account that the professors of Christianity have so many jarring views, and are judging one another.

I apprehend the Scriptures contain a more glorious, beautiful, and various display of the eternal God than the inconceivable variety in nature gives us of this creation, which is his work; and I would have all Christians search the Scriptures, and study God there, with as much assiduity as the naturalists do nature in his material works. What an infinite reward of enjoyment would arise from thence? Heirs of God! How shall we possess the riches of an inheritance we do not know? And how shall we know God but by the Scriptures? They are they which testify of him.

Such an insight into the Scriptures I take to be that knowledge of the mystery hid from ages and generations, and of the manifold wisdom of God. This knowledge all Christians ought to be increasing in, upon the belief of the truth. It is true indeed [that] a head knowledge of these things is nothing. The Spirit

¹Andrew Wilson (1718–92), son of a Scottish clergyman, went on to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh and graduate in 1749. He then practiced, first in Newcastle and later in London. He also became known as a philosophical and medical write. JW followed with interest, and whose medical talents he regarded highly—'a more skillful man, I suppose, is not in England' (letter, Oct. 13, 1770). Wilson practised in Newcastle and London.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴Cf. Rev. 3:1.

of God must make the heart sensible of all that our understanding can comprehend in revelation. But these are two distinct things which God hath joined together—even as the power of God in raising of Christ from the dead is one thing to be understood and believed from the Scriptures, and the same power employed in quickening of a sinner is a work actually performed in the heart by the Spirit of Christ but is inseparable from the faith of the former. This it is that makes the understanding I speak of so necessary, for without it a person will never be able to judge, by the Word of God, what passes in himself. For it is the only standard to try the spirits by, and thereby to prove everyone's work.

The true understanding of the mind of God in revelation, conveyed with power into the heart by the Holy Spirit, I take to be the bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall never die.

There are two things that serious people are generally in hazard from. The one is, regarding only what they feel in themselves when their affections are lively, and they receive great consolation from a belief of the love of God in Christ. They take that for the knowledge of God which is only the effect of it, and consequently are in hazard of seeking the knowledge of God in their own feelings, and measuring of their knowledge by them, not attending that our nourishment is not from within ourselves but comes from without. It is God's whole glory displayed in revelation, communicated by the Holy Spirit, received by faith, which ought to be the Christian's daily bread.

The other danger which serious Christians are in is the effect of that gross darkness which, since the knowledge of the Scriptures has of old been taken away in some measure, still covers the people. Since Christians have been deprived of the liberty of judging in all things for themselves (which they will never be capable of without understanding the Word of God), they would rather be blindly led by any than recover unto themselves the privilege of studying the Scriptures for their alone rule and director in all things. Therefore, whenever they are well affected towards any help raised up for them, they will follow blindly if much pains are not bestowed to direct them in the knowledge of the Scriptures. And backward will they be to embrace their birthright, and greatest privilege.

Dear sir, I hope you will not mistake me in writing unto you in this way. It is the effect of my confidence in you, and because I know the special opportunities you have of assisting many in the way of truth and holiness.

I have not always the faculty of conveying my sentiments with perspicuity; and I know I am ready, as well as others, to mistake. On which accounts, I hope, if in anything I appear to you to be mistaken, I will take it kindly to be corrected. You will not wonder after this, seeing I am of opinion that much of the regard due unto the Scriptures is lost, much of the sense and true beauty of them must be lost also. But if it please God to favour our correspondence, we may have after occasions of communicating unto one another our views more particularly. May you be kept in the love of God, and in the patient waiting for the coming of the Lord; and may he succeed and direct your labours.

I am, dear sir, with greatest regard,
Your assured friend and servant,

Andrew Wilson

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 34–36.⁵

⁵Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:223–24.

From Charles Perronet¹

Shoreham
January 26, 1746/7

Dearest of Men,

He that was from the beginning reveal himself to you! God in Trinity come, take up his eternal abode in your inmost soul throughout all ages! Amen.

I received your kind letter,² in which you are so good as to tell me to write often to you. I hope you will at times let me hear from *you*.

Your hands are full of employment, I know, but I hope all your avocations will be *partly* of what things I hunger after, especially from you—reproof and counsel.

As to going to Newcastle, the motives that ever prevail with me are: an open door of Providence; warm inclinations of mind, I know not how; paternal advice; and the earnest persuasion of friends (not merely their invitations). None of these I find now. I have two things to draw back, though I want to go. First, I have a swelling on my thigh, that has been coming eleven months. The surgeon tells me it is not dangerous, though it will be some time in healing. Secondly, I have great reason to believe my brother Edward has told publicly all I kept secret save to himself, and a few even of our own family. I have nothing to object against what he has done. He knows the mind of the Lord better than I. But since it is, I am backward in going amongst those he has told them to. To yourself, and dear brother Charles [Wesley] I had not objections to it; and to others, I can only say (sorrowfully) so be it. The reasons why I spake to you were: first, because I knew he would; secondly, through love; thirdly, because your private talk to me has been so *greatly* blessed to me, and I hoped in this it would be too; fourthly, because you were so eminently employed by God, and I know not but he designed you to instruct me. But you did *not* so much as give me your sentiments, nor speak hardly ten words. And now what I spake to you were things of some moment. Those other things (which I know not to have spoken to him or any one) I shall be very shy in opening my lips upon, lest any think too high of me, or grow offended. Experiences of grace I hide not. But those of the other kind, I think. When God would have them disclosed, he will stir up a desire, and open a way to declare them. I may not perhaps be so close as hitherto, yet to all upon the sparing hand.

Your scheme of going to Scotland is a song to my soul when I think of it. May a nation be born in a day from your mouth! May my beloved John Wesley be κλητὸς ἀπόστολος!³ O pray God to send me also somewhere to preach him my soul loveth. I ask not for gifts, but to do all I can for him who did so much for me. Never any one in a fever panted for waters more than I for a wearisome, painful preaching of Christ Jesus.

God daily shows me the extensiveness of faith. I see that I, nor any one ever had, or can have, so much but he is to seek a continual increase of it. What is the matter that I am not a father in Christ, but want of that proportion of faith that they have? I want to know if the eternal God died for *me*, why am I not possessed of all he designed for me? If Christ gave himself for *me*, and resigned up his life not for himself, but for *me*, why am I not, and why have I not, all that he intended and has amply purchased by an over-price? If his righteousness is mine, how is it that my nature does not shine with it? That I am not filled with the glory of God within and without? I do not know how to account for it. The fault cannot be in God, who so loved me as to send his Son into the world, etc. It cannot be in Christ, who so loved me as

¹Charles Perronet (c. 1719–76) was one of the sons of the Rev. Vincent and Charity (Goodhew) Perronet of Shoreham. The whole family threw in their lot with Methodism in 1746, after the death of another son in May, and the visit of one of JW's London supporters, Samuel Watkins. Both Charles and his brother Edward became itinerant preachers, though intermittent in their loyalty.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³'Called to be an apostle' (Rom. 1:1).

to die for me. It must be in me—all in me. What else to do I don't know, and yet I have not received the Spirit of adoption *abidingly*. I have received as great boldness, and as near a familiarness to the Father, as John surely could at the Passover to Christ's human nature. But then it only comes and goes. It does not abide. I have also experienced such⁴ a reconciliation to the Father that I could not (for a time) without doing violence to my conscience ask for *reconciliation*; no more than if he had healed me of a fever, could I have asked him to have still healed me. Your opinion on things I trust will do me much good.

O Jesus, be not displeased! Turn not away thy face! For then Satan will triumph. But rather let thy power be increased, to make us stand perfect and complete in all the will of God! Ah, Lord! get thee honour upon Pharoah and all his host. Cast the horse and his rider into the sea. And appear in great power and glory for *thy own purchase*. Pray for me *greatly*. So I rest to you in love unknown. The *abiding* knowledge of the THREE be this hour to you and me, and throughout all ages. Amen.

The least of all Christ's sheep,

C. P.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 468–71.⁵

⁴Orig., 'experienced one thing that have only light of one that knew it; i.e., such'; abridged to the above in errata (at end of vol. 9).

⁵Title in *AM*, 'The Breathing of a Soul strong in Faith'. Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:226.

From John Varley

Epworth
January 31, 1747

Reverend Sir,

Brother William Holmes,¹ going to Misson² to visit his wife's relations, was taken ill of a fever. It continued nine days. All this time he was preaching to all about him, and telling all who came to see him, what God had done for his soul. He said, the day of his death would be his coronation-day. Every morning, finding so much of the love of God, he blessed God for the comforts of the night past. Through the violence of the fever he was for some time light-headed. Yet all this time he prayed as steadily as before. The ninth day he appeared to be something better, but the fever returning, he died without a sigh. Before he died, he told his wife it was strongly impressed on his Spirit that God had a work to do by him at Ascham.³ His brother Robert, who lived there, told John Nelson that just at the time of William's death (as he afterwards found) he was in bed, groaning under strong convictions. He turned himself, and said, 'Lord, What shall I do to be saved?' A voice answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.'⁴ He knew it to be his brother's voice, and presently perceived him come and lie down by him. He endeavoured to take him in his arms but he could not. He went out of the room, shutting the door after him, and left Robert rejoicing in God.

John Varley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 531.

¹William Holmes was a farmer at Sykehouse, Yorkshire, who opened his home to the Methodist society and preachers.

²Orig., 'Missen'; Misson, Nottinghamshire is 10 miles south of Sykehouse.

³This is probably a misreading for Ashkern, Yorkshire, about 3 miles southwest of Sykehouse.

⁴Cf. Acts 16:30–31.

From John Hague¹

c. February 1, 1747

Dear Sir,

I hope my class are bending one way. K. T., A. G., A. S., M. S., M. R., E. L., and S. S. seem to retain their confidence in the Lord. W. R., L. R., S. R., H. B., I. B. the elder, and A. B. seem to be shut up in a fog and are not able to get out at any side. They are very dead and yet very sore. Nothing seems to do them any good, unless it be smooth as oil and yet sharp as a razor.

M. S., M. Q., E. E., E. B., M. H., F. B., M. S., J. B., and I. B. the younger, seem to be in earnest, seeking the Lord. J. T., M. H. appear to have a desire and to be widely seeking something.

It seems to me we all want advice that is plain and cutting, awakening and shaking, and hastening us, like that of the angel, 'Escape for thy life. Look not behind thee, neither tarry thou in all the plain.' I find the Lord often waking me as with thunder. Yet I find a spirit of stillness and lukewarmness to cleave to me like the skin to my flesh. The Lord shows me at times how insensibly it steals upon me and makes me tremble, because I have not been fearing always. May he give us to feel the true state of our souls! Which, I hope, will ever be the prayer of

Your unworthy son in the gospel,

John Hague

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 2, 1747 (*Works*, 20:154–55).

¹John Hague appears in the Foundery Band Lists beginning in 1745 as a leader of a single men's band and in the Select Society. He was buried in Bunhill Fields, London on Mar. 18, 1749. See JW's posthumous affirmation of his character in JW, *Journal*, Sept. 9, 1750, *Works*, 20:361.

From the Rev. Vincent Perronet

[Shoreham]
February 7, 1746/7¹

My Dear Friend,

I make no apology for this trouble, because I know that you will think it needs none. God hath raised you up to propagate his spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men. Therefore be careful how you frustrate this great design of God. But will you not frustrate this great design if you injure your bodily health? Or can you labour in the vineyard of Christ when your strength is gone? Deny yourself, my dear friend, so far as is consistent with your constant toil and labour. But be cautious lest your self-denials should rob God or his children of what you have undertaken for the service of both. Remember, that if you weaken your body by over-mortifications, you render yourself so far incapable of promoting the honour of the former and the happiness of the latter—and yet I know that each of these is dearer to you than life itself.

A Christian, undoubtedly, should be willing to lay down his life to save one soul. Consequently, he should take care of that life which may prove instrumental to the saving of thousands. Therefore, every approach towards hurting that life must be avoided. Let the Holy Spirit's advice, out of the mouth of a mortified apostle, to the abstemious Timothy be constantly before you.²

If it should indeed happen that we must either be contented to bear a hungry stomach, or wound a weak conscience, surely no real Christian can dispute one moment what is to be done. But I question whether low proficients in Christ may not much oftener be hurt by observing too rigorous a behaviour.

May you, my dear friend, ever go on in the strength of God's Holy Spirit, and in the light of his countenance—ever under his divine influences, ever under his divine directions.

I am, with great sincerity, my dear brother in Christ,
Your most affectionate,

Vincent Perronet

P. S. I thank you for the kind and acceptable present of your very learned father's works.

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr Wesley / at the Foundery / in / Moor-fields'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Perronet / Feb. 7. 1747 / ne[ed] not [reply]'.

Source: holograph, MARC, DDCW 6/93f.³

¹Misdated '1746' in *AM*.

²Cf. 1 Tim. 5:23.

³Transcription (minus the P. S.) published in *AM* 20 (1797): 252–53.

From Howell Harris¹

Plymouth
February 14, 1746/7

My Dear and Honoured Brother, John Wesley,

I am sorry I can't send you good news from here. Such confusion and insurmountable obstinacy I think I have not met in general anywhere, and yet each side think themselves most loving and humble, but can't bear each other.

Since I came here none but the Lord and this by [??] can conceive of the burdens and wounds I have received from all quarters in labour for peace and love, for such is the prejudice that all prevent you may as well make a house of sand as endeavour to unite. As to the reports of brother Charles, as I find the whole has been laid before you I would not grieve you with the remembrance of it. I have laboured all in my power to stop the spreading of that flame. And I trust it is near extinguished. Though it gains too much credit yet all are willing to be silent about it.

Brother [Joseph] Cownley has behaved well, and preached the gospel peaceably, but if brother [John] Trembath and brothers [James] Relly and [Herbert] Jenkins had the same spirit of moderation this flame would not have rose so high. Brother Charles's solemn declaration to so many that (he wished) not such a separate society here if he were asked, and sending brother Trembath, etc., here immediately, and brother [James] Wheatley preaching about Plymouth at the same time the society met, and saying the workers called him, whereas they all denied in sending a letter to be read against that account when they heard it, etc.—these are the things that stumble the people. My dear brother, did you but see the advantage the enemy hath gained by this spirit, that is by this means got among the people on both sides, it would grieve your righteous soul, and I think it hath a loud voice how we should interfere with each others' labours, lest we all be scourged for it in opening such a door for the devil. None but God can write the 1 Corinthians 13 on their hearts on both sides. I have laboured all I could continually since I came here. I believe brother Cownley has, too, but no effects appear as yet. A separation seems unavoidable at the Dock. But the bottom seems to me to be altogether bitterness and prejudice. The room is lent to neither of us but on condition of love and peace. The proprietors seem willing on this footing for both sides to preach. I have preached there three times and am going tonight there again, and to receive to the society as many as have a desire on the terms of their Christian behaviour and waling in pure love to all.

Brother Cownley can tell you more particulars. My dear brother, I remain in the love and spirit of our Saviour,

Yours in his kingdom and patience,

How. Harris

P. S. If you answer me, direct to Bristol if before next Monday; sevensnight afterwards to the Hay, Breconshire.

Source: Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #1614.²

¹A complaint about rival factions in Plymouth, answered by JW on Mar. 3.

²A slightly abridged transcription reflecting Harris's spelling and contractions can be found in *Trevecka Letters, 1742–47*, 220–21; a briefer polished abridgement was included in *Works*, 26:227.

From John Bennet

Chinley
March 7, 1747

Sir,

This day I have given Mr. Charles Wesley a particular account of the societies in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire, according to his request.

His coming was not in vain. Surely a little cloud of witnesses are arisen amongst us, who received the word of reconciliation under his ministry. I trust God will send you also hither, to water the good seed of his word.

Last week I spent three days in and about Chester, and the word was gladly received. I am assured that the time is come that the gospel must be preached in that city. The inhabitants received me gladly and said, 'We have heard of Wesley, and read his books. Why could you not have come hither sooner?' They also desired that I would write immediately and entreat you to come up thither also. I expounded at a town four miles from Chester, where several of our friends (unknown to you) came to hear me. A little society is begun near Nantwich,¹ and they have got your hymn books, etc. *These long to see you.*

The manner I proceeded at Chester was as followeth. I heard a religious society was kept in the city, and so I made an enquiry and found them out; upon which I was desired to preach, and afterwards pressed upon to stay longer or visit them again. I think your way is plain and open into those parts. I desire, if you can, you will allow yourself some time and visit them in your return from the north. If you intend so to do, please to let me know in time that I may give notice, for the people will come from every² quarter.

Some young men in Manchester (that spoke with Mr. Charles when he was with us last) have begun a society, and took a room, and have subscribed their names in a letter to Mr. Charles desiring you will own them as brethren and visit them in your return. They also desire any of us helpers in the gospel may call on them. I have sent their letter to London. Dear sir, do not forget us.

I have been at Rochdale some few times since Mr. Charles was there, and begun a little society. The town is alarmed, and in prospect of much opposition, notwithstanding the word is gladly received and multitudes flock to hear. This town is eight miles from Manchester, directly in your way from Yorkshire.

On Monday the second of this instant, as I was expounding in John Heywood's house at Holme, five miles from Manchester, a band of wicked, drunken men with clubs and staves, having a petty steward of a neighbouring gentleman's at their head as captain or leader, and gathered together by the blowing of a horn, came and assaulted the house, breaking the windows, pulling the *thatch* off some part of the house. I was obliged to leave off expounding, and we fell on our knees and prayed. The shouts and acclamations for some time abated, and I spoke to the people again. No sooner had I begun, but the bells at Eccles and Flixton³ began to ring, and then they broke into the house. I was directed to go away to a friend's house, which I did, and so escaped their malice. I found such solid peace as I never had done before in trouble. It is not in the power of men or devils to interrupt a man's peace a moment, that looks with a single eye to God.

I am,

Your unworthy brother and son in the gospel,

John Bennet

¹Orig., 'Namptwich'.

²Orig., 'each'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

³Orig., 'Flixon'.

P. S. I must confess, that I lately looked upon man as a mere machine. And whoever considers man as such cannot possibly escape falling into the doctrine of reprobation and election. I looked upon man in this light from reading some authors, which has caused me many an uneasy hour. I with all my young brethren may escape this *place of torment*. Unguarded expressions which we have used in our exhortations have given rise to the Calvinistic doctrine, as also to antinomianism.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 471–73.⁴

⁴Titled in *AM*, 'Some Account of the Beginning of the present Work of God in Cheshire and Lancashire'.

From Elizabeth Mann¹

London
March 29, 1747

Dear Sir,

I am still an inhabitant of a weary world, a sojourner in this vale of tears—for such indeed I find it. Oh that I had wings as a dove, then I would flee away and be at rest! Indeed I do rejoice in hope that my days, though they have been few, are drawing near to a period. But how often have I been disappointed of this hope! When I have been brought to the very brink of eternity, and was just ready to clap the glad wing, and tower away, the Lord hath stayed me, and added to my life another and another year. For what end I am kept, I know not. I live a poor, useless creature, oftentimes a burden to those about me, and as I sometimes think, till all my friends are well nigh weary of me. Oh, what a blessing do I find it to have a friend in heaven, who will never fail, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. This friend hath told me, in the world ye shall have tribulation. I daily find the truth of these words. I have much affliction of my own, but more of others. I can truly say with the apostle, ‘Is any weak and I am not weak? Is any afflicted, and I do not bear a part in their affliction?’ My soul mourns, and is in heaviness for those who having put their hands to the plough, are ready to look back; for those poor, unstable souls who are weary of waiting for the coming of Christ in his ordinances, and desire to find an easier path. My soul deeply sympathizes with those who are in the fiery trial, who walk on in darkness and have no light; and are tempted on every side, ready to give up their hope, and sink under the weight of their corruptions. Oh how doth my soul groan under their burden, and long till the Day Spring from on high visit them—and the Day-Star arise in their hearts! Oh how true is that word, when one member suffers, all the members suffer. I think the remembrance of past conflicts, when it was with me, the hour and the power of darkness, causes me the more sensibly to be touched with a feeling of their sufferings, and the more earnestly to long for their deliverance. But neither in this consists all my trouble. I have more than I can mention now. Yet in the midst of all, in him I have peace. My soul is kept in a calm assurance of his love, and I rest securely on that Rock of Everlasting Ages. The kingdom of my Lord was not of this world; so neither is my happiness, my hope, my comfort of this world. The Lord hath given me an eye that pierces through things temporal and views the things that are eternal, or surely I should be of all most miserable. For while my life consumes away with pining sickness, I have no part in me free from pain and weariness. Surely my flesh and my heart would fail me, but that God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. Oh who can sound the depth of those words! My tongue cannot utter what I feel in them. Is God my strength? What then can overcome me. Is he my portion? Oh what can I want besides him. He is indeed a sufficient portion, for in him is all fullness, and all he has is mine. In giving me his Son, he hath given me all things. O the unsearchable riches of the grace of Christ. How hath it abounded to me the chief of sinners. I often look back with astonishment at the tenderness of the Lord in his dealings with my soul. Oh how did he bear my manners in the wilderness. He would not give me up to the natural hardness of my heart, when he showed me it was as the nether millstone, but laid his hand upon me and slayed my impatient spirit. He made me wait upon him till I had renewed my strength. Then did my soul mount up with wings as an eagle. I walked in the light of his countenance, and rejoiced in the God of my salvation. And since then how many slips have I made in the narrow way, how often hath my evil heart deceived me. Yet hath he raised me up and set me upon the Rock that is higher than me. I could not behold the face of an angry God. But I looked up and saw a loving Father, ready to receive me with open arms, notwithstanding all my failings and imperfections. O how this tender compassion breaks the

¹JW comments in *AM*: ‘The following describes one of a tender heart, then pressed down with many sorrows. Some time after, she was married to Dr. John Jones. After a short stay with him, she died in peace.’ Elizabeth Mann (c. 1713–51) appears as a leader of bands for single women in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). In Feb. 1750 she was married to John Jones, currently at Kingswood School, with JW officiating. She died a year later.

heart! It fills my soul with shame and self-abhorrence. I loath myself in my own eyes, and would hide me in the dust at the sight of such majesty and love! Well may the angels veil their faces at the full blaze of his glory, when the defiant beams of his love are almost insufferable to weak flesh and blood. O sir, help me to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men. As for me, I have but a stammering tongue, but by and by it shall be loosed and I shall speak of his praise day without night. I shall join with those that excel in strength, to praise that all-glorious God that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb for ever and ever. Till which happy time, may the Lord make and keep us spotless and unblameable, for his dear Son's sake. Dear Sir, I doubt not but you will join in this prayer, with

Your unworhiest child,

Elizabeth Mann

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 377–79.

From 'John Smith'¹

April 27, 1747

Reverend Sir,

[1.] You make some question whether my last was not wanting in that seriousness which was required in so awful an inquiry as 'whether we dwell in the eternal glory of God, or in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'.² Truly this is so awful a subject that I should think all pleasantries here quite out of place. But was that the subject of our inquiry? How much then was I mistaken when I took it to be no more than this, whether Mr. Wesley is not wrong in his notions about the perceptibility of inspiration, and his deviations from established order? Now if you think to blend these two inquiries together, as if they were convertible, it would be impossible for me to receive it without that seriousness which you seem to expect. Do not so profusely fling about everlasting fire, nor throw out such frequent hints that all who dispute your nostrums are mere ignorants, condemners of all God's children, and consequently children of the devil. If I am in this bad state, you pray God I may say from the heart, 'Lord, what I know not, teach thou me.'³ Sir, your petition is granted, for (in whatsoever state I am) that is my daily prayer, and was so perhaps before you were born. For many years I have implored the assistance of God's good Spirit in the impartial search of truth, in which I have ever begged to be preserved at the expense of friends, relations, country, and all that I hold near and dear to me in this world. This you allow is much better than to 'canonize my own ignorance',⁴ which whether I do or not I cannot say, because I do not at all understand the meaning of that phrase. But I am sure I do not condemn 'all (or any of) God's children of idiotism and madness',⁵ but I leave that to those whose schemes require it to be allowed that many of God's children 'do not continue in sound mind and memory'.⁶

2. Sir, whilst you are pleased to submit to the equality of a disputant you should not pronounce sentence *ex cathedra*.⁷ Who it is that mistakes his own ignorance for the only knowledge and wisdom is not as yet decided; and till it is I should esteem it a rude begging the question to throw that imputation upon you, though it were cloaked under the charitable prayers of—'God help your ignorant head', or 'The Lord correct your damnable error, and snatch you from hell-fire.' The softest prayers may be so contrived as to suggest the rudest things, even that one's antagonist is a brand of hell. This may move terror in children, but pity only in men of sense. Let me therefore once more entreat you to be more sparing of this manner, at least in your appeals to men of reason and religion.

3. And if this debate is to go any further, I must insist upon your keeping your temper, and upon your bearing with patience your adversary's supposing himself in the right, and you in the wrong; he does but suppose so, and therefore keeps himself open to conviction, whenever you shall be able to offer it. Whenever it comes he will receive it gladly; and if it never comes, he must then conclude you in an error, but such an error as no way shakes his opinion of your being a reasonable, sincere, and good man. Instead of anathematizing you, or devoting you to hell, he hopes to meet you in the blessed regions of heaven. Now preserve but the same candour for him that he retains for you, and then this our friendly debate may be a friendly debate to the end of the chapter.

¹Replying to JW's letter of Mar. 25, 1747 (*Works*, 26:229–37).

²Mar. 25, §1.

³*Ibid.*, §8.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶'John Smith' to JW, Aug. 11, 1756, §4.

⁷'From the chair'; i.e., as if infallible.

4. To proceed, then. I can very patiently hear you reply to what I said of a number of unsent persons preaching about the kingdom; you have heard of but two, and no more;⁸ but I have heard of twice that number in one county, and of many more in other counties of this kingdom. I myself never saw but one; he prayed for you and your brother by name, and besides much 'smooth undigested nonsense' preached up 'heresy'—even that worst of heresies (as not striking at the branches but the whole root of holiness at once), I mean antinomianism. I was soon after told that I should see this preacher no more, for that he was committed to the county gaol upon his own confession for horse stealing. Now how many such preachers, or such horsemen, are gone forth in the kingdom is not at all material to my argument, which is as well illustrated by one example as by a thousand.

5. Whether the irregulars shall never join any state faction, whether they are not more liable to sedition than the regularly-ordered clergy, whether the Civil War and the destruction of church and state was God's vengeance for the persecution of those holy good men the Puritans, whether you without the study of physic can cure more hundreds in four months than the ablest students in physic can cure in as many years, and whether Dr. Bulkeley and Dr. Gally (whom I know not) are such wicked numskulls as are fit to pave hell withal—all these things, to shorten our debate, I shall pass untouched. I must only observe that much the greater part of the few clergy with whom I have the pleasure to be acquainted are as averse to 'dead form' and as zealous for 'inward solid virtue' as you or anyone living can be; though they cannot take the liberty of gaining attention by irregular bold strokes, as never having yet had any call from the pulpit to the tombs.

6. That you caught attention by such bold strokes as preaching on tombs and mountains I hope I might tell you without contradiction, because I had it from yourself, and you had told me so in express words; nay, you now confirm this, whilst you attempt to deny it, for *many gapers and starers came to hear you from your first appearance at Newcastle*, though you had preached above six-score times before you perceived you had made much 'impression'.⁹ But you perceived the impression much sooner at Epworth, where the novelty and oddity of a son's preaching on his father's tomb had more effect 'in three days' than preaching in his pulpit had 'in three years'.¹⁰ Is not this plainly declaring that the effect was owing to the novelty, and to the novelty only? For here was the same preacher, the same hearers, and surely the same God to influence (unless it were to be profanely said that there is one God of the church and another stronger influencing God of the churchyard), so that the only difference between preaching in the pulpit and on the tomb was this, that the former being customary made little impression, whilst the latter from its strangeness caught much attention. You may fancy perhaps that you have a divine call thus to catch attention, but other clergymen are sure they have no such thing, and therefore hold themselves obliged to forbear the novelty of preaching on tombs as much as the singularity of preaching on their heads.

7. There are three ways in which the Holy Spirit may be said to bear witness: first, by external, miraculous, sensible attestations (as by an audible voice from heaven, by visible signs, wonders, etc.); or secondly by internal, plainly perceptible whispers ('Go not into Macedonia', 'Go with these men', 'Join thyself to this Christ', etc.); or third [and] lastly, by his standing testimony in the Holy Scriptures. In all these three senses St. Paul and the other apostles might truly say, 'The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' If external miraculous powers and internal prophetic inspiration both continued in the days of Ignatius and Polycarp, then they might too truly assert the same thing in all the three senses. But if in the days of Origen and Chrysostom external miraculous powers had ceased, whilst internal prophetic inspiration still remained, then they could not truly use the same phrase but in the two last senses. Lastly, if in the days of St. Bernard both miracles and prophecy had entirely ceased, then he could not truly use the expression but in the last sense only. If Bernard (who was somewhat

⁸JW to 'John Smith', Mar. 25, §9.

⁹Mar. 25, §13.

¹⁰Ibid.

enthusiastically given) yet insisted that he had still plainly perceptible whispers, it would be natural for his neighbours to call on him to show either that it should be so by Scripture, or that it *was* so by facts. If for the former he produced Romans 8:16 the answer was easy; you attempt to decide controversies by the very controverted texts. If for the latter he produced variable facts, today asserted, tomorrow doubted, and the day following denied; then it is evident the whispers were not so plainly perceptible as was asserted, or that they were not the whispers of him in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. The spirit of man and his fancies or opinions may vary, but the Spirit of God and his facts cannot. You may be fully of opinion today that the Scriptures are of God, and doubt of this tomorrow, and so vary your opinion a thousand times, but what is this to the purpose?¹¹ We were speaking not of man's opinions, but of God's facts. Turn this to fact, and see how you will like it. If God tells you today that the Scriptures are true, can you tomorrow doubt whether they are false? Or could the man in the Gospel to whom Christ distinctly said, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee', doubt or deny the day following that Christ ever said such a word? Yes, if we will groundlessly and blasphemously suppose that the god of this world can more strongly obliterate than the God of heaven can imprint; but if it be obliterated, whether it be by the god of this world, the devil, or by the goddess of the night, the moon, the man is no longer *compos mentis*, is altogether incapable of true religion, and fit only for the regions of Moorfields.¹² Yet you suppose such an one still a religious subject, even after you allow that he does not continue in sound mind and memory. Now pray, sir, is it you or I that impute idiotism and madness to the children of God?

8. That the Spirit beareth witness with the spirit of the faithful that they are the children of God in some sense or other (suppose in the third above mentioned) was never denied by sober Christians; but that he beareth witness precisely in the first or second sense was never maintained but by Montanists, Quakers, and Methodists, who have no more right to quote this text as decisive in favour of their peculiar interpretation than the others have to urge [it] as decisive in favour of theirs. Neither this text, therefore, nor any other that I know of in the Bible, at all favours the doctrine of a direct, perceptible inspiration, as easily distinguishable from all suggestions of reason or fancy as light is from darkness. Now if Scripture fails the only remaining proof is from instances and experiences. If we ask how we may know that these instances are not mistakes the answer is, you feel they are not, for 'God speaks to the inmost soul as never man spake'.¹³ If we reply that there are enthusiasts in the world who are fully persuaded that they have this inward speaking when in truth they have not, then you can keep your temper no longer, and the only answer is, that if we question it in you, or perceive it not in ourselves, we are 'ignorant of the whole affair', and 'doomed to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'.¹⁴ Proceeds this now from the benign spirit of charity, or breathes it not a different and quite contrary spirit?

9. Some years ago a Quaker came to me with a message which he was fully persuaded he had received from God. As the matter of the message was innocent, it might possibly come from him, but I thought it more probable that it was only the effect of an overheated imagination. I asked the man what reason he had to think it rather an inspiration of God than a suggestion of fancy; he answered almost in your very words, that the inward light was as plainly perceptible as the outward, and that God's speaking to the inmost soul was distincter and sweeter than ever man spake. Thus far you are equal. But in point of charity he far outdid you; for he allowed that all the sincere servants of God and hopers for salvation were in a fair way for it, though they had not been favoured like himself with a direct perceptible inspiration concerning these things. Yet I could not help suspecting that my neighbour was enthusiastic, although for some years (except *in this respect*) *he continued in his sound mind and senses*. But at last his heated imagination blazed out, and I had the mortification to see the poor man confined, when he employed himself all day long in repeating gibberish, as a proof of his having the gift of unknown tongues.

¹¹Mar. 25, §8.

¹²Bethlehem Hospital for the insane, which was in Moorfields, not far from Wesley's Foundery.

¹³Mar. 25, §8.

¹⁴Ibid., and §1.

10. In short, as the enthusiast seems as confident of his inspiration as one really inspired is of his, a third person hath a right to call for other proof than confident assertion; everyone may say, like Pharaoh in Cowley:

If thus from God you come, said Egypt's king,
What sign, what powers, what credence do you bring?¹⁵

God commonly attests to inward inspiration by outward miracles. To this attestation too you have likewise laid claim: to the casting out devils, to the doing many wonderful works, and to the having seen miraculous things. Now do but make good this claim, and I shall readily believe (not anything which you shall advance contrary to plain Scripture, but) your interpretation of doubtful and controverted passages preferably to the interpretation of all other men. But if you can by no means make this good, then I again call upon you ingenuously to own it, and to confess (as you do on another occasion in your last letter), that 'the expression is too strong'.¹⁶

11. I heartily thank you for your *Sermons*. I was in hopes to have found there (according to your profession in your first letter), 'the love of God and man more insisted on ten times over than all other subjects whatever';¹⁷ but I must own I was disappointed, other subjects being ten times over more insisted on than that. There is, however, such a vein of seriousness and piety throughout the whole as will ever make me love and esteem the author, and wish him freed from all excess and extravagance. Where we differ, I may possibly be in the wrong; but where we agree I am sure we are both in the right. Our agreements are material, our differences (at least in the eye of charity) but trivial. Charity never faileth. This shall endure when all controversies about faith shall be ended, and when faith itself shall be swallowed up in vision.

P.S. Since I wrote the above it came into my mind that possibly by your putting in Greek letters the ἐνέργεια of the powers of darkness, you meant to suggest to me some particular emphasis of the original.¹⁸ But upon turning to the original I find no such expression. I can find the word but seven times in the New Testament. Six times it notes the power of God; the seventh is ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Σατανᾶ, 'the working of Satan'.¹⁹ What, to erase the testimony of the Holy Ghost out of the memory of justified believers who are saved? No, but to amuse with signs and lying wonders them that receive not the love of the truth, them that perish. The same apostle elsewhere says, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid' (To whom? To those to whom God specially reveals it? No, but) 'to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds' (Of whom? Of true believers? No, but) 'of them which *believe not*'.²⁰ Strange! That from these passages that mention the influence of the devil over wicked infidels man should frame such a groundless, such a blasphemous hypothesis as that when God has testified their justification to the regenerate in express terms and as perceptible as the sun at noon, yet the devil has the controlling power to erase God's plain testimony, and to throw God's children into such distraction that they shall not only assert what God testified was false, but shall totally forget and deny that he ever testified any such thing at all!

Source: manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 83–91.²¹

¹⁵Cf. Abraham Cowley, 'The Plagues of Egypt', st. 3.

¹⁶ Mar. 25, §4.

¹⁷Sept. 28, 1745, §17.

¹⁸Mar. 25, 1747, §5.

¹⁹2 Thess. 2:9.

²⁰2 Cor. 4:3–4.

²¹This full transcription published in *Works*, 26:238–42.

From Joseph Milthorp¹

Atherton

3rd. of ye 3rd. Mo. [i.e., May 3,] 1747

John Westley,

Whereas by reading thy *Appeals to men of Reason and Religion*, I perceive thou takes upon thee not only to admonish the nation in general, but also to direct and reprove every religious society of men; and as thou hast used so much freedom thyself, I take it for an encouragement for others to do the like by thee; therefore I desire thee to resolve me the following queries.

1st. When and by whom was the house founded of which thou callest thyself a fellow?

2nd. If before the reign of Henry the 8th, whether thou precisely comply with the institutes of the said house?

3rd. Whether it be equitable (in case of a master expressly requiring a service, and propounding a revenue for the performing it) in a servant to request the wages, not strictly adhering to the said master's intentions; and whether was it the intentions of the first founding of our English universities to nurture a brood of men to pull down the pope's supremacy?

4th. By what authority you receive a revenue of the said house, and what was the intention of the founder in establishing such revenue?

5th. If by human and not divine authority, and if the intention of the founder proceed from an erroneous judgment, how a person under a scruple of conscience, whose parents having given him his whole fortune in education intending thereby to secure him a vital maintenance, may reconcile himself to receive such revenue?

6th. If the intention of the founder was good in a general sense and erroneous in some particulars intending thereby the propagation of the gospel, show me thy precept or precedent from Christ or his apostles as thy authority for doing it. Yet if in case thy production do not satisfy a tender conscience: Whether has the legislature power to convert such revenues to more proper public uses, or ought they to return to the hereditary proprietors?

7th. If a person receiving education on the terms above-mentioned, and letter knowledge sufficiently qualified, yet never obtain the evidence of Christ within him the hope of glory, nor by the unction of the Holy Spirit himself, enabled to preach the gospel? Whether he ought to declare his own conceptions of the Holy Scriptures, and to receive a revenue for doing so, and compel persons (who having known the voice of the true Shepherd, that stranger dare not to follow) to contribute to his maintenance out of their labourious endeavours?

8th. Whether a person truly qualified for the work of the ministry ought to compel persons to contribute to his maintenance; or only content himself with such temporals as are freely bestowed on him

¹The preface to the copy of this letter in Joseph Wood's notebooks is as follows:

Occasioned by reading his *Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion*, delivered to his own hand at Birstall; with a short introduction to the letter.

But notwithstanding his boasting and frequent calls to men of all persuasions or religions, expressed in his said *Appeals*, promising to abide by the doctrines of the Church of England page 78 of his second *Appeal*; and page 84, asserts himself a member of a College of divines founded to overturn all heresies, and to defend the (then) Catholic faith. And page 71 calls aloud for any man to show him by any arguments what is wrong in him, promising to be thankful to God and the person that doth so; and many other points which I then remarked out of his three *Appeals*, expecting he would have been so ingenious as to have answered; yet he never made the least reply by word or writing. Meeting him one day upon the road, reading in a book as he rid along; I remarked him diligently not then knowing who he was; but finding a concern upon my spirit I enquired of a person that was following him, who that man was that I had met with the book in his hand, he told me it was John Westley. I arose early next morning, and wrote to him the following letter.

by such persons as received his spirituals?

9th. If in case a Jewish priest, in the days when Jesus Christ was upon earth or in the space following whilst the temple retained its revenues, had been by the power of God converted to a Jew inward, and in that power sent among the Gentiles to preach the gospel, whether he might have commanded his yearly revenue out of the outward priesthood to have followed him; and whether might he have applied it to his own use, and that of the converted Gentiles?

10th. Whether a Jew inward, before his conversion receiving a revenue or holding a benefice in the outward temple, could peaceably retain it according to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, on pretence of privilege to preach the gospel in the outward temple to his unconverted brethren? And when the primitive Christians found their spirits pressed by the power of God to preach the gospel in the Jewish synagogues, whether they might safely with the peace and force of conscience decline it, on its pretence of unlawfulness as to men, and whether it was their practise to do so?

11th. If in case of a person of the tribe of Levi, after his conversion to the Christian religion, should be called to the gospel ministry and be ordained anew to be a priest after the order of Melchisedeck, and not after the order of Aaron, and sent to preach to the scattered tribes; whether would the proportion of the tenths of his brethren's inheritance be his right by divine appointment upon account of his ministry?

12th, and lastly. If in case the Lord should raise up a servant of the Gentiles, and make him an able minister of the gospel to his brethren, whether would a tenth of the inheritance be due unto him, *jure divino* from such as refused his gospel? Or was it the practice of the apostle Paul, who was a Jew born, to claim any tenth of his Gentile converts upon account of his ministry? And whether may a gospel minister give the right hand of fellowship to such as call themselves by his name, and yet abide in the above hinted at encroachments never taught or practised by Christ or his apostles?

P.S. Who is the beast mentioned in² Revelation 13th that arose out of the sea to whom the dragon gave his power, his seat, and great authority; after whom all the world wondered, to whom power was given over all kindred, tongues, and nations; who all the earth worship whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life?

Who is the beast that arose out of the earth, that had horns like a lamb, that deceiveth the men of the earth by his miracles?

Who is the image and what is the mark without which none must be admitted to buy or sell?

Who is the woman that sitteth upon the beast, and who are the merchants that mourn for her downfall?

Now my friend I desire thee to answer directly and briefly with serious solid arguments, as becomes a religious man rather than a subtle disputant, and as may tend to edification. And I do hereby assure thee, if thy answers convince my judgment, they shall be a means of a further correspondence betwixt thyself and one that is thy sincere friend unknown, and a well-wisher to the people of your society.

Address: 'delivered to his own hand at Birstall'.

Source: published transcription (of copy in notebook); Pamela Cooksey (ed.), *The Large and Small Notebooks of Joseph Wood: A Yorkshire Quaker, 1750–1821* (Huddersfield: High Flatts Quaker Meeting, 2011), Volume 1, section 16, pp. 14–16.

²Orig., 'were'.

From Jeannie Keith¹

May 17, 1747

Reverend Dear Sir,

I believe it will be agreeable to you to hear that I can heartily bless God that ever he brought me into this house, for I think it is like a little heaven to me, and I never think myself more happy than when I am in it. For there is not only such love but such freedom amongst us as I myself could not have believed would have been so soon. As for my part, I have never seen a thing that I thought amiss in any of the family, neither do they seem to think any thing wrong in me.

I know nothing but the being in your house that could have kept my soul from being hurt. For I am as much entangled with the great ones of the world as ever. And if they are not with me, I am with them. Hitherto I have found the grace of God sufficient, but find myself in danger every hour. O the deceitfulness of my heart! May the Lord watch over it, for I cannot. I have great reasonings whether to shake off all acquaintance with them or not. But that I dare not do, lest the Lord should have some end in it that I do not yet see. For I am surprised how they bear the plainness of speech that I use, for with tears do I tell them the danger that their souls are in.

'O how hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven!'² As to my own heart, God knoweth it, I do not. I have had no such conflicts since ye went away as I had before. But oh my God seemeth to keep me at a great distance. I would fain approach nigh, though with trembling. Sometimes I enter in the holiest by the blood of Jesus, can lay my hands upon the feet of his throne, pour my tears before him, and beg that he would not send me away again but suffer me to lie at his feet for ever. But alas! I am soon exiled from his presence, and sent back to wander in a world of sin and woe.

O! forget not

Your weak child,

Jeannie Keith

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 473–74.³

¹Jane ('Jeannie') Keith was a young Scotswoman from an apparently well-to-do background. About 1745 she found a religious retreat in the Orphan-House, Newcastle, where she was known as 'Holy Mary'. In Nov. 1750 Keith married James Bowmaker of Alnwick, had two children, and died about 1752, a Presbyterian, but continuing to press the Wesley brothers' writings upon her friends and relations. Cf. JW's reference to 'poor Jenny Keith' in a letter to Joseph Benson, Nov. 28, 1751, *Works*, 26:479.

²Cf. Matt. 19:23.

³Titled in *AM*, 'Some account of the family in the orphan-house at Newcastle. The writer of it died many years ago'.

From the Rev. William Grimshaw¹

Haworth
May 30, 1747

Reverend and Dear Brother,

I hope this will find you in good health, and at hard but happy-making labour. O may the Lord give you sufficient strength of soul and body, as well as find you full employment in his vineyard, to the end. The work, I hope, prospers well in all these parts. The societies you formed in William Darney's circuit I hear are in a good state. I went amongst those about Todmorden the week after you was there, and to my great comfort found it so. I likewise observed a general disposition in all sorts to hear the gospel. I exhorted twice that day—for I will not have it called preaching. I afterwards gave a short exhortation to a few who happened to come too late to hear either of the former. I then took leave and came away about seven in the evening. I lay that night at a friend's house about six miles from Todmorden, in the road to Halifax. Next morning, about half a mile from thence, in the parish of Heptonstall—in which you also was—and in my way home at a friend's house (to whom I had signified my intention two or three days before) I was met, praised by God, by a great multitude. The house was so full that one third part, if not more, I think stood out of doors. I stood just within the door threshold, for the convenience of all. I exhorted near an hour and an half. The Lord gave me great freedom and power. These [hearers] were as attentive, serious, and civil, as those the day before.

At my coming home I met with a letter from a clergyman about fourteen or fifteen miles hence, and not above two or three from that place where you preached in Rossendale before you set off to Manchester. He desired me to come and preach at his chapel on the morrow. I embraced the request, finding freedom in my heart, perceiving that a door is hereby opened, and that the Lord seems to make my way plain before me. I purpose to set out today at noon, and to walk it, having an agreeable friend to bear me company. I know the Lord is with me. William Darney desires a particular letter from you respecting his going into Scotland. He would go soon after Whitsuntide, if you think proper. I shall see him, I hope, tomorrow, as also Mr. [John] Bennet, who will both be at the chapel I am going to, and I intend that one or both of them shall preach at noon near the same place.

Last Lord's day I received a letter from one Mr. Perronet, at Mrs. Holmes's, desiring to see me last Monday there, but I could not conveniently go. I suppose he is gone. However, this week I wrote² to Mrs. Holmes,³ assuring her, with the Lord's leave, that I would next week wait upon her. I hope we shall remember you with pleasure. I had Mr. Hutchinson and his sister from Leeds here the last Lord's day. I hear a comfortable account from the Lord's people in those parts also. I hope you meet with all things well, wherever you come. You will not fail to present my tender respects to your brother. The same I desire to all the sincere servants and seekers of the blessed Jesus, your Redeemer and mine. O may we be kept faithful to him to the end. May we ever go forth in his strength, incessantly making mention—yea, loudly proclaiming—his righteousness only, indefatigably labouring to glorify him in our hearts, lips and lives (which are his), and continually endeavouring to bring innumerable sons and daughters to glory by him. This week two members of our society, a married man and woman, are gone to rest with this

¹William Grimshaw (1708–63), served as curate for a few months at Littleborough, then at Todmorden for ten years, and in May 1742 came to Haworth, where he remained until his death. The Methodists also came to Haworth in 1742, and John Nelson persuaded the Wesley brothers to visit the parish and meet the parson, Charles on Oct. 22, 1746, John on May 1, 1747. From the outset they became greatly attached, for Grimshaw was deeply religious and a boisterous evangelist. He became JW's right hand man in the midlands and the north, and in Methodist trust deeds was named as the one responsible for the direction of Methodism in the event of the death of both John and Charles Wesley.

²Orig., 'rode'.

³Holmes, Elizabeth (1712–85), of Lightcliffe, near Halifax, Yorkshire.

precious Lord. Blessed be his name. To him I heartily commend you and yours. Lord Jesus, sweet Jesus,
be with you. I am, dearest sir,

Your unworthy but affectionate younger brother,

W. Grimshaw

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 44–46.⁴

⁴Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:243–44.

From Thomas Meyrick

Epworth
August 6, 1747

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I wonder the people in the north are not more forward to be joined in society. I am sure there are many amongst them much awakened. And a more general disposition for hearing the word I do not remember to have seen in any part of England, nor attended with less opposition. But I suppose the difference of their opinions is the principal objection, and so doubtless great tenderness ought to be used, and a considerable time afforded them for adjusting their present scruples.

Since my coming to Epworth I have been ill of a fever, in which I experienced much of the goodness of the Lord and can truly say, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.'¹ It has been a means of quickening my desires much, and stirring me up to do the work of the Lord diligently (in which I am well convinced I have been but too negligent) and God bears witness to my endeavours.

I returned last Saturday from the country circuit, where all is peaceable except at Tealby, where Satan rages indeed. On July 22 I went thither. And having heard that Mr. Baxter² the minister of the place had hired a mob from [Market] Rasen³ and other places, in order as he said, 'to give the finishing stroke to the progress of the Methodists'; and that he had boasted that we were all afraid to face him; I called at his house, but found him far too hot to wear a sword. I spoke to him as civilly as I could, but he immediately fell to calling of names and bid me get out of his house. And being seconded by his wife, they pursued me to the door, and with much emotion assured me if there was a mob to be got they would have one. I went immediately to the house where our friends were met together, but found only a few there, most of whom came with me from Hainton, etc., the neighbours being afraid to show their heads. Immediately the mob rose. But as providence ordered it, they were all disappointed, notwithstanding they had bound themselves under a curse that they would not sleep till they had secured me, and then they intended to sew me up in a sheet and drown me in the river. But God turned all their counsel into foolishness. The preachers that had been there before used to go back to Hainton as soon as they had done, and the mob, taking it for granted that I should do the same, had fixed a chain across a narrow lane through which we were to pass and then placed themselves in ambush, in order that when we were stopped by the chain, to fall upon us behind. While they were busy with this project, I had finished my discourse and ordered all the doors to be locked. As soon as the mob perceived their mistake, and that we did not come out as they expected, away they came and surrounded the house immediately, cursing and lamenting their folly that they had not come sooner. They swore they would stay two or three days, but they would have us out. They beat at the door, broke the windows, threw in stones, water, dirt, and whatever they could lay their hands on. We continued silently lifting up our hearts to the great deliverer, amidst such cursing, swearing, shouting, singing, and raving as was a just epitome of hell itself. They broke open the stable door and turned our horses into the fields at midnight, and would not, I suppose, have let them escape so but that the horses were wise enough to run for it. They continued about the house till one or two o'clock, and then, notwithstanding their boasted perseverance, their patience failed them and they slunk away, till a few children only remained, who soon afterwards followed the rest. We then praised God for our deliverance, got our horses, and about four o'clock came to Hainton, having suffered no injury. Next day I went over, with two of our brethren who had suffered some personal abuse, to Justice Atkinson at Fonthrop and procured warrants for two of the principal rioters, in hopes it would make them a little more peaceable; their worthy pastor having made them believe we were all out-laws, and that it was no more crime to kill us than dogs.

¹Heb. 12:6.

²Richard Baxter (d. 1753) was currently vicar of Tealby, Lincolnshire.

³Orig., 'Rason'.

At Grimsby all is peaceable, but I found the society broken all to pieces. They had had no public or private meetings for almost two months, the leaders having left the town to get work, and there is neither man nor woman left that seem to be any way qualified for that office. James Skelton I have persuaded to go back again, and Robert Blow, I believe, will return soon. I found much comfort while I stayed. Many souls were greatly refreshed, and many came back who had quite left the society.

At this season of the year the people of Epworth are so exceeding busy that our time is almost thrown away upon them, so that I intend to go and spend a few days more than the usual time at Grimsby, which, I believe, will be more profitable. Dear sir, my best wishes attend you, and hope you will not forget to pray for

Your affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

Thomas Meyrick

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 21 (1798): 487–89.

From the Rev. William Grimshaw¹

Ewood
August 20, 1747

Reverend and Very Dear Brother,

Wherever these lines find you, may they find you full of the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, fighting in the strength of our Lord the good fight of faith, pulling down the strong holds of Satan and industriously labouring to deliver multitudes of poor, sin-slaved souls out of the kingdom of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God! Such success let us daily and heartily beseech our dear Redeemer to bless all his faithful ministers with, wherever he sends them.

You will desire to know how I do; O dear sir, hearty and happy in the Lord. And how my ministry, or rather the present state of my parish; blessed by God, flourishing still more and more. Our societies are in general very lively in the Lord. And several others, though not as yet joined in society, are nevertheless come to a sense of the pardoning love of God. Others are under deep concern, or eagerly hungering and thirsting after our Redeemer. Two under my own roof are just now under true conviction—one a girl about 18 years old, and the other a boy about 14; and I hope, my own little girl, between 10 and 11 years old. It is near six months since the first began to show a serious concern for her sinful state.

The method which I, the least and most unworthy of my Lord's ministers, take in my parish is this. I preach the gospel, glad tidings of salvation to penitent sinners through faith in Christ's blood only, twice every Lord's day the year round (save when I expound the Church catechism and Thirty-nine Articles, or read the *Homilies*, which in substance I think my duty to do in some part of the year annually on the Lord's day mornings). I have found this practice, I bless God, of inexpressible benefit to my congregation, which consists, especially in the summer season, of perhaps ten or twelve hundred, or, as some think, many more souls. We have also prayers and a chapter expounded every Lord's day evening. I visit my parish in twelve several places monthly, convening six, eight, or ten families in each place, allowing any people of the neighbouring parishes that please to attend that exhortation. This I call my monthly visitation. I am now entering into the fifth year of it; and wonderfully, dear sir, has the Lord blessed it. The only thing more are our funeral expositions or exhortations, and visiting our societies in one or other of the three last days of every month. This I purposed, through the grace of God, to make my constant business in my parish, so long as I live.

But, O dear sir, I know not what to say. I know not what to do. Sometimes I have made excursions into neighbouring parishes to exhort, but always with a Nicodemical fear and to the great offence of the clergy, which till lately almost made me resolve to sally out no more, but content myself in my own bounds. Till lately, I say; for on Wednesday was six weeks from about five o'clock in the afternoon to about twelve at night, and again for some hours together, I may say, the day following, my mind was deeply affected with strong impressions to preach the gospel abroad. The event I left to the Lord, fearing to be disobedient to what, I trust, was the heavenly call.

The first thing suggested to me was to visit William Darney's societies. I accordingly met one of them about a month ago. Last week I struck out into Lancashire and Cheshire, Mr. [John] bearing me company. We visited the societies in Rochdale, Manchester, and Holme in Lancashire, and Booth Bank in Cheshire. At the same time we made a visit to Mr. Carmichael, a clergyman at Tarvin near Chester.² He says he received remission of sins last September and, I believe, preaches the same truth to his people. From thence we came back by Booth-Bank to Manchester, visited the society a second time there, and

¹JW labels in *AM*: 'The labours of a worthy clergyman of the Church of England'.

²The Rev. John(?) Carmichael was curate of Tarvin, Cheshire, when Bennet met him. Bennet entered in his journal: 'Mr. Carmichael was turned out of his church for preaching the gospel, and so was driven out into the highways and hedges. When he was turned out he owed £30. Mr. Whitefield collected £30 amongst the friends at London, and sent him a bank bill' (Jan. 10, 1750).

there we parted. I called and spent a part of two days with William Darney's societies, particularly those in Todmorden, Shore, Meller-Barn, Rossendale, Widdup, Corstone, Stoneshaw-Yate, Crimsworth, Dein. Everywhere the Lord was manifestly with us. Great blessings were scattered, and much zeal and love, with great humility and simplicity appeared in most people everywhere. The whole visit found me employment for near five days. O it was a blessed journey to my soul! I now in some measure begin to see into the import of our Lord's design by that deep impression upon my mind above-mentioned. I am determined, therefore, to add, by the divine assistance, to the care of my own parish that of so frequent a visitation of Mr. Bennet's, William Darney's, the Leeds and Birstall societies as my own convenience will permit and their circumstances may respectively seem to require, all along eying the Lord's will and purposes for me. If I find the Lord's pleasure be that I must still launch out further, I will obey, for he daily convinces me more and more what he has graciously done and will do for my soul. O I can never do enough in gratitude and in love to him, for the least mite, if I may reverently so speak, of what his blessings are to me. O dear sir, that I may prove faithful and indefatigable in his vineyard! That I may persevere to the last gasp steadfast, immoveable, and always abounding in his work, do you pray. The same shall be mine for you, your dear brother, and all our fellow labourers.

What I purpose concerning surveying the abovesaid societies, as I have great cause to believe it is the Lord's will from the freedom I feel thereto in my heart, so I question not but it will be agreeable to your conception of it. I desire to do nothing but in perfect harmony and concert with you, and therefore beg you will be entirely free, open, and communicative to me. I bless God I can discover no other at present, but every way a perfect agreement between your sentiments, principles, etc., of religion, and my own; and therefore desire you will (as I will do to you) from time to time lay before me such rules, places, proposals, etc., as you conceive mostly conducive to the welfare of the church, the private benefit of her members, and in the whole to the glory of the Lord. My pulpit, I hope, shall be always at yours and your brother's service, and my house, so long as I have one, your welcome home. The same I'll make it to all our fellow-labourers, through the grace of God.

Please to wink at the faults you meet with in this long, incoherent ramble; and assure yourself I am

Your affectionate, but very unworthy, brother in the Lord,

William Grimshaw

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 474–77.³

³Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:257–58.

From 'John Smith'¹

August 21, 1747

Reverend Sir,

[1.] Hell was made by God to be threatened to and inflicted on impenitent sinners. The preacher was therefore ridiculously delicate who minced the name to them that 'would not repent'.² To such persons I would have hell and damnation set forth in the broadest manner. But if the Pope threaten damnation to all who believe not his infallibility; or Mr. Whitefield to all who own not his election and reprobation; or Mr. Wesley to all who deny that he is an inspired and a miracle-working prophet; then such untimely brandishing hell-fire becomes ridiculous, fit only for the terror of vapoured women, but the pity and reproof of men of sense.

2. Heaven and hell are far from being offensive to my ears. I never desire to have either of them out of my thoughts. But I should blush at threatening you with hell for your differing from me in speculations; nay, though your speculations were certainly false, and led to practice certainly wrong; we will say to a 'deviation from established order'³—for this may possibly be neither wilful nor sinful, and therefore no way connected with eternal awards. If you really (whether truly or falsely) believe yourself to have a call to the apostolate of England, I question not but God's mercy may both forgive and reward the irregular pains you take 'between London and Berwick, and between Deal and the Land's End'.⁴

3. And yet such deviation, how innocent soever in you, may still be very wrong and hurtful in itself; it may open a door to much disorder and error; Wildbores, Smiths, or Moors, will enter at the breach. The man I saw called himself Williams, but whether this was another man or another *alias* I know not. But government once dissolved you need not look far for preachers of heresy; witness one George Whitefield, whose doctrine you treat as heretical and blasphemous.

4. I wish to God, with you, that all the clergy throughout the land were zealous for inward, solid virtue;⁵ but that all of any large body should be so is rather to be wished than expected. The greater part, as I told you, with whom I am acquainted are so. I am sorry your acquaintance is so much worse that you cannot answer for one in ten. As to complaints of immoral clergymen, they are best made to the bishop of the diocese. If you will be so public-spirited as to present them, if instead of censuring the heap you will thus contribute to the winnowing the chaff from the wheat, I dare say you will have the thanks of the bishops, and of all good men, both clergy and laity.

5. There is a sense in which novelty awakens and amends; and there is a sense in which God is the doer of all things, for whatsoever is done in the earth he doth it himself. If your new doctrine (or not to differ about phrases), if God's blessing on your new doctrine has amended some on whom your father and yourself, whilst you preached the old doctrine, spent your strength in vain; this is no proof of the superior truth or of God's approbation of your novelties; or that your father, who died unenlightened by them, is gone to hell; or that his exerted strength did not contribute towards sending others to heaven. It only shows that novelty, which has a natural tendency to awakening, may when God pleases have an efficacious tendency to amending. The new Act of Parliament against swearing made a convert who had been long deaf to sermons and Scripture; yet you will not say that an Act of Parliament is a better thing than the Word of God, though in this instance attended with 'his influence and blessing'.⁶

¹Replying to JW's letter of July 10, 1747 (*Works*, 26:244–52).

²July 10, §1.

³*Ibid.*, §2.

⁴*Ibid.*, §3.

⁵*Ibid.*, §4.

⁶*Ibid.*, §5.

6. I think you will not deny so plain a matter of fact as that God's influence and blessing accompanies the ministry of many who are utter strangers to your new notions of inspiration, which can no more be supported by the Eighth of Romans⁷ than by the First of Genesis. Notwithstanding all your pains to distort that text, for anything which has yet been said to the contrary, it may be understood of the Spirit's witness to miracles, by prophecy, or by the gently and imperceptibly wrought assurances of the Holy Ghost. But what proof is this of those divine illapses and sensible communications maintained honestly by the Quakers *always*, and more amazingly by you only *sometimes*? Sometimes you claim them in as strong terms as they do, though at other times you are disposed to distinguish them away. Your wriggling on this head, and on the plainness where with justification is notified, obliges me to call you back to order.

[7.] It is notorious that the Methodist writings abound with intimations of divine communications, prophetic whispers, and special guidances: it is as notorious that they teach the notification of justification to be as perceptible as the sun at noonday, and as distinct as our Saviour's notification, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee. But the instances produced in support of these high claims, instead of supporting, subvert them. Thus H[annah] R[ichardson] had her justification notified, and yet she denied that her sins were forgiven, and continued almost in despair above a year afterwards. Now either this notification was not so distinct as it pretended, or if distinct was notified by one of suspected credit, whom she could not believe; or else, if it was both distinct and credible, she was not of sound understanding if she disbelieved it, nor of sound memory if she immediately doubted or denied that she had ever received such a message. Could she possibly deny a plain matter of fact? Yes, ['in process of time she might, particularly if she drew back to perdition'].⁸ That is, in a long time people may forget or deny facts, especially if they grow wicked and are given to lying. But what is this evasive answer to the case of H. R., who lived no length of time, and never did draw back to perdition? After the time that she is said to have had *certain justification* she lived a blameless and holy life, only terrified almost to death for fear that her sins were not remitted. When she apprehended they were she died in raptures, declaring she *was in very great pain*, but that she did not *feel any*.⁹

8. Now, sir, do you think that such ordinary instances can in any wise support such extraordinary pretences? And after having assumed the language of an inspired prophet, and claimed the attestation of miracles, of casting out devils, and having seen many other miraculous things, when you are called upon to specify will you think it sufficient to refer to the 'one great standing miracle'¹⁰ of making many converts? I do not know that Origen or St. Chrysostom pretended to any such thing; it would have been impertinent therefore to have demanded it of them, especially in support of a thing so probable as that they loved God. But had they demanded belief to something highly improbable, or claimed to themselves miraculous attestation; in either of these cases there had been nothing so extravagant in the demand. If prophetic intimations were vouchsafed them after external miracles were ceased, such intimations might be rules of action to themselves, but could be none at all to other men, any farther than as they credited the claimant prophet. Indeed a miracle-working prophet like St. Paul had a right to a more implicit kind of belief; neither can I help thinking that Paul, even in the infantine state of Christianity, and with all his thorns and infirmities about him, might more reasonably be looked upon as an inspired prophet than Mr. Wesley in this newly-matured state of Christianity, though arrived in his own imagination to a sinless perfection.

⁷Ibid., §6.

⁸Ibid., §9.

⁹*A Short Account of... Hannah Richardson.*

¹⁰July 10, §11.

9. You have much to say against the demand of miracles in proof of doctrines.¹¹ I make no such demand. I demand them as things to which you lay claim; nay, in truth I demand them no otherwise than as the prophet required idols to do good or to do evil, which was no more than a manner of asserting that they had no such power. All that I (properly speaking) demand is that you should revoke your *ampullas et sesquipedalia verba*,¹² and ingenuously acknowledge that your expressions were too strong.

10. Had St. Bernard, after having talked throughout his voluminous works in the style of a miracle-working prophet, entrenched himself at last in the 'standing miracle of making many converts, and in the holiness of his life',¹³ I should have thought he might have been answered in this manner: 'You have hitherto always claimed much more, but still you claim too much; for to make converts (even true converts to a sober, righteous, and godly life) is no miracle at all—much less to make converts to popery, to the belief of such incredible proofless stuff as transubstantiation, and to the consequent idolatrous practice. Then as to holiness of life, no one but the great Searcher of hearts can say what is true holiness. The popish severities of flesh fastings, celibacies, and other monkeries, may pass for such with weak men, and draw many followers, and yet imply no true holiness at all. Nay, you may found nunneries for unholy and wicked purposes; abbesses and matrons may discipline their bands, and close bands for the uses of the fraternity, and the grossest wickedness may be carrying on under the cloak of hypocrisy.'

11. God forbid that there should be anything like this amongst the Methodists; though to speak freely I have been assured that there are very pregnant proofs about to be produced of very shocking things. I shall believe nothing without proofs. And in the meantime charitably hope that neither of us maintain any principles or practices which may bar us from seeing the 'unclouded face of God'.¹⁴

Source: manuscript transcription; 'John Smith' correspondence, 99–104.¹⁵

¹¹Ibid., §11–12.

¹²Bombast and long-winded words' (Horace, *Art of Poetry*, 97).

¹³July 10, §11.

¹⁴July 10, §13.

¹⁵This full transcription published in *Works*, 26:258–61.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Philadelphia
September 11, 1747

Dear and Reverend Sir,

Not long ago I received your kind letter dated in February last.¹ Your others I believe came to hand, and I hope ere now you have received my answers. My heart is really for an *outward* as well as an inward union. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to bring it about. But I cannot see how it can possibly be effected till we all think and speak the same things. I rejoice to hear that you and your brother are more moderate with respect to *sinless perfection*. Time and experience, I believe, will convince you that attaining such a state in this life is not a doctrine of the everlasting gospel. As for *universal redemption*, if we omit on each side the talking for or against reprobation, which we may do fairly, and agree as we already do in giving an universal offer to all poor sinners that will come and taste of the water of life, I think we may manage very well.² But it is difficult to determine such matters at a distance. Sometime next year (if the Redeemer spares my life) I hope to see you face to face. In the meanwhile, the language of my heart is:

O let us find the ancient way,
Our wondering foes to move;
And force the heathen world to say,
See how these brethren love.³

I rejoice to find that the rebellion⁴ has been over-ruled for the awakening of many souls. Our Lord generally builds his temple in troublesome times. I cannot, upon the maturest deliberation, charge myself with a design to flatter in my sermon on that occasion. You know my attachment to the present establishment. Out of the fulness of my heart my pen wrote. But it may be I know not myself. Lord, keep me from trimming! At present my heart seems as free for Jesus as ever. I have been once more in New England. My entrance was as at the first, about seven years ago. Perhaps I may embark from thence for my native country. Our Lord will direct. I am now going to Georgia to winter. At New York and here Jesus has enlarged my heart and opened my mouth to show forth his praise. I have news of the awakening of several negroes at my new plantation, lately purchased at South Carolina. I hope ere long to be delivered from my outward embarrassments. I long to own no man anything but love. This is a debt, reverend sir, I shall never be able to discharge to you or your brother. Jesus will pay you all. For his sake I love and honour you very much, and rejoice as much in your success as in my own. I cannot agree with you in some principles, but that need not hinder love, since I trust we hold the foundation, even 'Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever'.⁵ Will you salute, in the kindest manner, all the followers of the Lamb within your sphere of action? Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon all their dear souls! I thank them for remembering a poor pilgrim, who though faint is still pursuing, and determined in the strength of Jesus, to spend and be spent more and more for the good of poor sinners. Perhaps before I see you I may visit Bermudas and Cape-Breton. You will pray that the Lord may order my steps aright. What

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²In *AM JW* omitted the passage about sinless perfection, and altered the following sentence to read: '... the same things. However, I agree in giving an *universal offer* to all poor sinners that will come and taste of the waters of life.'

³CW, Hymn on 1 John 3:18, st. 9, *HSP* (1740), 119.

⁴The recent Jacobite uprising.

⁵Heb. 13:8.

have you done with the Moravian Brethren? Their affairs are in confusion here. I think their foundation is too narrow for their superstructure. I believe in their plan there are many plants that our heavenly Father hath not planted. The Lord bless what is right, and rectify what is wrong, in them, in us, and in all. Even so, Lord Jesus, Amen! O for heaven, where we shall mistake, judge, and grieve one another no more. Lately I thought myself sailing several times into the blessed harbour. But it seems I must put out to sea again. My Redeemer's will be done! Forgive, reverend sir, the prolixity of this. Love indites. I salute you for my dear fellow pilgrim, who is gone forwards. Continue to pray for us, and assure yourself that you are always remembered by, reverend and very dear sir,

Your most affectionate though unworthy younger brother and willing servant for Christ's sake,
G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Works*, 2:126–28.⁶

⁶JW published an abridged and edited version entitled 'On the Blessedness of Religious Union' in *AM* (1778): 478–79; an abridged version also appears in *Works*, 26:261–62.

From John Trembath¹

Dublin
September 26, 1747

Reverend Sir,

I hope that you still bear the people of this place on your heart. They have need of your prayers, for as yet they are but young in grace, and have many enemies to encounter with daily. But God hath said, 'As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.'² And God will make a way with every temptation for the tempted to escape. I cannot say but it hath surprised me to find the people stand as they do. Exceeding few are turned out of the way, and the society increases daily. About 386 still remain in the society, and are in nothing terrified by their adversaries. Still they meet together in the name of the Lord their God, and find the God whom they serve is able to deliver them. There are many who have found a sense of pardon since you left Dublin. I trust God hath much people in this place.

I find, as for my own part, that I want more of that composure of mind which you commend in brother [John] Haughton.³ It is a blessed thing always to be looking up to Jesus in the midst of persecution. I believe this persecution was permitted for good, that we might not trust in the arm of flesh. We thought that the magistrates would do us justice, but in this we were disappointed. It likewise drives us all to prayer and watchfulness, and also causes us to love each other better than ever. So that we are like sheep driven by the wolf into the fold. When we went out, we carried our lives in our hands. But all this did not hinder us once from meeting together at the usual hours. The society still increased, and those who had the root in themselves stood like marble pillars; and, by the grace of God, were resolved rather to die with Christ than to deny him. All the city was as it were in an uproar. Some said it is a shame the men did no harm. Others said the dogs do all deserve to be hanged. Blessed be God, we walk unhurt in fire! Now we can literally say we live by faith; and the less we have of human help, the more we shall have of divine.

As for my part, I find (blessed be God) that according as my day is, so is my strength. The Lord hath given me to rejoice in the cross of Christ. When they take hold of me in the streets, I can rejoice that so far I am counted worthy to suffer for his sake. I have many times thought on these words, 'An untried faith is an uncertain faith.' But here you have liberty enough to try your faith. For no one is fit to be a preacher here who is not fit to die every moment. Your brother came in a trying time, but the Lord is with him and not an hair on his head shall fall to the ground without the permission of God. Dear sir, pray for us, and for me, who am,

Your unworthy son in the gospel of Christ,

John Trembath

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 528–29.

¹JW titled in *AM*: 'Account of the First Work of God in Dublin'.

²Deut. 33:25.

³Orig., 'Houghton'.

From the Rev. John Lewis¹

Holt
October 5, 1747²

Reverend Sir,

I had the favour of yours from St. Ives in Cornwall, near eighteen months after your receipt of mine; and should have returned an answer in less than eighteen days if I had known how to have directed to you. But I considered you was an *individuum vagum*,³ continually moving from place to place, and I was afraid my letter, in running to the Land's End, might lose itself before it found you.

I expected after so long silence to have received a full answer to all that I objected, but must say that on reading your letter I found my expectations disappointed. However, I shall now reply to the several heads contained in yours, in the order they lie before me. And though perhaps you will think my language in some places a little harsh, as not suited to your way of thinking, yet as all I aim at is the vindication of the truth of religion, and pointing out some of the errors you are fallen into, I persuade myself you will give me a patient hearing.

1. As to the reformation you boasted of in your *Appeal*, and which I told you I could not discern among my neighbours, I still adhere to the same thoughts. All that I know within my own district (and I don't look beyond that) were religiously disposed before they fell into Methodism; and I don't find they understand religion one bit better, or live one jot more Christian lives, than they did before. They are mostly weak women that go after this new way. Only two men in this place are fallen in with 'em, and those two such, whose heads were well fitted to receive new light, being very dark before, and having no judgment to discern between right and wrong.

But supposing that elsewhere there may be reformations wrought, yet I look upon them all as built upon unsound principles, for such I take yours to be. And if this foundation be laid wrong, the superstructure cannot be firm or lasting. It is an house built on the sand, and when it falls it is to be feared they that set up their rest in it will perish in the ruins.⁴

As to the unsoundness⁵ of your principles, I will speak to that point by and by, and at present only ask you this question: What is that religion good for that has not a proper regard to the great duties of justice, mercy, and charity?

And what can I think of your reformations, when I see some zealots⁶ in your way carry their religion to such a pitch of fanaticism as (like Muggleton in the last age⁷), with great confidence and a seeming self-satisfaction, most uncharitably to denounce damnation against their neighbours (perhaps as righteous as themselves) because they do not herd with them or express a dislike of their ways; and when I see others so far to forget and overlook moral honesty as to run in people's debts and take no care to pay

¹Lewis initiated correspondence with JW on Feb. 4, 1746 (above). JW replied briefly on Feb. 14 [see *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 7 (2015): 129–30], but did not send a substantial response until July 2, 1747 [see *ibid.*, 130–35]. This is Lewis's reply to that longer response. This letter survives in two versions: Lewis's initial draft (kept by him in a ms notebook for his records), and the holograph sent to JW. Our transcription follows the holograph, noting any significant variants in the draft.

²Lewis's draft is dated Sept. 18, 1747 (apparently when he began composing it).

³'A wandering individual'.

⁴Cf. Matt. 7:24–27.

⁵'Heterodoxy' instead of 'unsoundness' in the draft.

⁶'Devotees' instead of 'zealots' in the draft.

⁷Lodowicke Muggleton (1609–98). Muggleton and an associate, claiming to be the 'two witnesses' in Rev. 11:3, gathered followers of their new revelation, while condemning in the strongest terms competing groups like the Quakers.

them? Is not this hypocrisy? And will you call that a reformation which only changes a libertine into an hypocrite, or a sober-minded Christian into a fanatic?

2. Your answer to the charge of enthusiasm in your *Appeal* I cannot but still think to be evasive. You endeavour to clear it from that imputation by saying that you was there speaking, not of doctrines, but the practical constituent parts of Methodism. But sir, if I may be allowed to judge by what I read in your *Appeal*, you are there vindicating the new religion you teach both as to doctrine and practice from the charge of enthusiasm. For [on] p. 86, par. 9, where you assert the purity of your religion, these are your words: 'I speak particularly with regard to the doctrines held by us',⁸ which you go on to show are free from superstition and enthusiasm. And you challenge us to say that you and yours do not closely adhere to what our church delivers as pure doctrine; or to point out any body of Christians that approve themselves more orthodox, more sound in their opinions.⁹ So that it is very evident your business in that paragraph which I pointed at was to vindicate the set of doctrines peculiar to the Methodists, and by which they stand distinguished from all other sects as free from enthusiasm.

And is not your answer then evasive when you shift the point in question, and ask whether there be any enthusiasm in the love of God, etc.? Was ever any objection of this kind made to those practical duties? Did ever any person say that there was any enthusiasm in the pure love of God or our neighbour? You know that censure was laid on the pretended revelations and seraphical flights in yours and Mr. Whitefield's *Journals*, and on the ecstatic fits and fancied impulses, feelings, and visions of some of your followers, all of which have certainly a strong tincture of enthusiasm. And as to speculative points, that censure was likewise passed on the Methodist doctrines of an imaginary new birth, and imaginary new faith, and an imaginary assurance, in all which, on the closest inspection I can make into them, I think there is enthusiasm in a very high degree. For as those doctrines (as held by you) have no real foundation in Scripture, but dwell only in the imagination, so, being taught and maintained as divine doctrines and gospel truths without ground, I cannot see how you can clear them from the charge of enthusiastic fancies.

For what is enthusiasm when applied to teachers and doctrines but the asserting things for divine truths upon a strong but false imagination that they are such? If then those doctrines of yours abovementioned are unscriptural, and yet preached up by you and received by your hearers for gospel truths, Methodism will still be obnoxious to the charge of enthusiasm. And if you make the observation, I dare say you will find that these novel doctrines are most readily imbibed by persons of a natural or complexional enthusiasm; i.e., people of strong imaginations and weak judgments.

3. You own schism to be a causeless separation from the Church of Christ; but that to divide and separate from a particular national Church does not come under the notion of schism. But, sir, how can you be in union with the catholic church of Christ but by being in union with some branch of it, or some national church, and particularly with that within the verge or pale of which providence has cast your lot? But you are not in union with such a national Church, nor consequently with the catholic church, unless you live in due subjection to your spiritual rules, and in unity and concord with your Christian brethren, and submit to the authority and discipline of that Church.

I do not indeed charge you with direct schism because you have not completed your separation by setting up altar against altar. But by your forming distinct religious societies, holding separate assemblies, forsaking episcopacy, and setting up laymen to be public teachers, I think you have gone a great step towards it. And nothing remains now but for some of your preachers to take upon them to administer the

⁸JW, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, I.9, *Works*, 11:277.

⁹Draft includes a sentence omitted in the holograph sent to Wesley: 'Moreover after you have spoken to the point of enthusiasm you go on to assert that your doctrines are free from bigotry and affirm that the Methodists are in no wise bigoted to opinions, but do indeed hold right *opinions*.' Referring to *ibid.*, I.11, *Works*, 11:278.

sacrament, which I am very inclinable to believe they will shortly do, as the French prophets¹⁰ heretofore did, and then the schism will be complete.

4. When I said in my letter that God might have raised you up, I did not allow that he had authorized or commissioned you to do what you have done. I only supposed that in his wise providence he had permitted this new spirit to arise and pass through the land, to remonstrate against the wickedness of the age, against deism and infidelity, and against the remissness of church discipline, and of the pastoral care. But, you know, God does not approve of all he permits. He makes use of the sins and follies of men to good ends. And perhaps enthusiasm is now suffered to arise and increase when formality and deadness in religion too much abound. In like manner the spirit of Quakerism sprung up about a hundred years ago with the divine permission, probably with design to witness against common swearing and perjury, equivocation in trade, pride and superfluity in clothes, vain compliments and flattering titles, etc., then grown too much in vogue. And I am apt to think that all the dissenting sects, along with their manifold errors, carry something in them of truth to upbraid the members of the Church [of England] of what they are defective and blameworthy in. I mean not as to doctrine but as to practice. And I am of opinion that if we would reform and amend what they seem to tell us is amiss, they would all soon disappear and drop like meteors, that make a blaze awhile and are extinguished.

If you think that God has raised you up to witness against the deism and infidelity of the present age, give me leave to ask you one question on that head, viz.: Among the multitudes that you say you have reclaimed from vice and ungodliness is there any one infidel brought over to the Christian faith? There is no reformation that I can hear of wrought on that side, whereas your scheme is certainly calculated for the conversion of unbelievers and not for the reforming of such as profess the faith of Christ. For you seem to suppose us all destitute of faith, and under a necessity of being new born in order to salvation, and you do not distinguish between the state of the world at the first publication of the gospel and the present state of the Christian church which has been a means to lead you into all your errors.

5. You seem to think that not having a cure and flock of your own, you are authorized, or at least at liberty, to invade the province of others, and to gather a flock out of other men's folds. This cannot be right in the church of God, because if generally practised (as it may be with the same reason) it must introduce strife, confusion, disunion, and every evil work. If you had no cure of your own wherein to exercise your ministry, you should with leave of the diocesan have served a cure for some other clergyman, and waited with patience till providence had opened a way for you, which without all question it would long ago have done. But you was impatient and would not wait God's leisure, as I think you ought to have done, and so you burst the door open, and would break into the fold of Christ by extra-regular ways.

And I cannot help making this observation on what you have done, that one error treads upon the heels of another, and by this first false step you have been led to propagate unscriptural fancies for gospel truths, to break down the pale of episcopal ordination, and on your own head let in a set of illiterate persons to exercise the ministerial office without a lawful call. What the consequence of this may be God only knows. But when such numerous detachments of these uncommissioned officers swarm throughout the kingdom, and with great zeal labour to gather congregations and fill people's heads with new fangles in religion, what can we expect but blind zeal and religious frenzy—which when overheated may produce the most fatal effects, even though there be no actors behind the scenes to use them as tools and engines for accomplishing their own designs. Those that are sent out by you may perhaps keep themselves within some tolerable decency, and hold to your plan as long as you live and preside over them; but what may they not do when you are gone? And what may be done by those many others who set up of their own heads, some of whom teach strange doctrines and broach dangerous opinions. Whatever mischief it may

¹⁰A small group of French Protestant emigrants in London in the early eighteenth century, led by Elie Marion, who claimed prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit. See Hillel Schwartz, *French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

occasion, I think the blame will rest with you, and your brother, and Mr. Whitefield. For you opened the sluice. And however fair the pretences for doing it may seem to you, you must be answerable in some degree for the inundation of evils, that shall thence afterwards follow.

6. When I said, in the words of an apostle of Christ, that you was in duty bound to pay obedience to those that have the rule over you, and you tried to evade the force of that injunction by saying that you would obey 'em in all things indifferent, but preaching the gospel is not so, then I ask: Who is to be judge, you or your spiritual governors? And you cry out, 'This is my *πρῶτον ψεῦδος*; no man is to be judge of your conscience.' Don't you see a fallacy in this way of reasoning? The apostolical injunction is plain, and not to be overruled by any sophistry—viz., that you are to obey your spiritual governors. The only question is, how far you are to obey them. Is not obedience due to such governors in all things except where by obeying them you shall disobey an express law of Jesus Christ? But where is that law in the book of God which you shall disobey if you forbear preaching, and comply as others do to the established rules and canons of the church of which you are a member?

Supposing the case doubtful, I still ask who is to be judge how far the obligation of the law reaches? The governor or the governed? The legislator or the subject? If the latter, then the force of any law may be eluded and interpreted away; then laws are but words, and words but wind, etc.; and good and evil, duty and sin, will be the most precarious things in the world and vary as men's opinions do. Besides sir, if you may act in this manner, every other minister may do the same. And if private persons may thus make themselves judges in matters of public cognizance, and practice upon their own judgment contrary to the established laws, then farewell all law, rule, or order, decency, or discipline in the church. All will be governors and then it will be nothing but misrule and confusion. And if such doings were allowable no society, sacred or civil, could subsist.

Remember, sir, the only authority you have for preaching the gospel was conveyed to you by these your governors, and when they gave you this authority it was under this express restriction, that you should exercise that power of preaching God's Word to the congregation where you should be lawfully appointed thereunto.¹¹ If then you take upon you to exercise your ministry in direct contradiction to this limitation, and there is no law of Jesus Christ that enjoins you (in the circumstances you are in) to preach his gospel, what are you doing every day you preach but breaking an express law of God under a false persuasion that you shall sin if you forbear preaching?

In short, God's law is the rule of conscience and that expressly enjoins you to obey your governors. The only question then is: What law of God you shall transgress by forbearing the exercise of your ministry? Unless you can produce some express command from the sacred text that requires you to preach the gospel independent of those human laws, you as a subject ought to obey. Your preaching must be a thing indifferent and consequently you ought to be guided and directed therein by your spiritual governors to whom by the apostolic injunction your obedience as well as mine is due. To call this an implicit obedience is giving it a wrong name.¹² For both the divine and human law are explicit and clear. And as these are the rule by which your conscience is to be guided, so your obedience cannot be blind and implicit. For the general commands to obey are very plain; and if the command to disobey, in the particular instance under consideration, be not equally plain and positive, I do not see how it can possibly justify your disobedience.

7. As to the peace and unity of the Church, it is too evident that you don't consult it, as a presbyter of the Church should, when you refuse subjection to its governors, break decent order, and uphold irregular assemblies, whereby people are drawn from their own parish churches; and when you throw such odious aspersions on the Church clergy, and tell your hearers that we don't teach the true gospel of Christ; and moreover when you invade other men's provinces, and gather congregations out of

¹¹'Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto' (1662 BCP service for 'The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests').

¹²'Very unfair turn' instead of 'wrong name' in the draft.

their folds, and encourage unlearned mechanics to usurp the ministerial office. All these measures plainly tend to introduce strife, envy, dissension, and numberless other mischiefs inconsistent with the peace and unity of the Church.

8. As to your lay preachers, it is absolutely an indefensible point; and the necessity you allege for it does not appear; but the mischiefs that flow from it are already too apparent, and will every day, I doubt, grow worse and worse.

9. I should be very sorry if all you say of the parochial clergy be true; but I consider 'tis a good plea to justify your own measures, and therefore I am willing to believe that the account you give is not quite impartial, nor exactly true. However, if what you say was true in fact, though it might be allowable to insert it in a private letter, yet I think in prudence and Christian charity you should not have published it so openly to the world as you have done in your *Appeals*, when no good could come from such a publication, but much harm.

10. As to the last head, wherein you reply to the objection that you 'confine Christianity to your own party, and say that none can be true Christians who do not adhere to your doctrines, etc.' you say, you have heard this objection a hundred times. Methinks that should have put you upon a close examination of your doctrines, whether they are perfectly agreeable to the Word of God or not. But you look on it as too trifling a censure to be regarded, because you say every clergyman does the same. But surely, there is some difference between preaching a set of new¹³ doctrines of private invention, and preaching doctrines established by the authority of the Church as consonant to, and plainly deduced from the Word of God, and supported by the judgment and practice of the primitive fathers in the first and purest ages.

But do you really think none can be saved but those that come into your way, and pass your new birth in the manner you describe it, and feel your new faith produced in 'em by a new creation? Then let me ask you one question. Are the doctrines you preach the same which are taught in the Church, or not? If they are (as in some of your writings you would persuade us they be), then the gospel of Christ and the true way of salvation is taught by the Church-clergy as well as by you and your partisans. If they are not the same, then you have a scheme of religious principles, which you call the gospel of Christ, peculiar to yourselves; and then all the members of the Church who do not embrace your doctrines and put in practice your rules are by your assertion excluded from salvation. For if we are not true Christians who do not fall in with your plan, we can have no interest in Christ nor salvation by him. And then surely it concerns us to examine well your principles and see upon what grounds you lay down so uncharitable a position.

In casting my eye on your last *Appeal* after I had sent you my thoughts upon it, I was much alarmed by reading what you say towards the end of your book, where you speak of your being engaged in the work of God with as much confidence as if you had a commission under the broad seal of heaven in your pocket.¹⁴ And you seem to be astonished that we do not all fall readily in with your scheme and design; judge us inexcusable, stupid, and infatuated; and almost denounce an anathema against us for rejecting and opposing, or even not encouraging your measures. This put me upon examining your doctrines, which I have done with a sincere desire and endeavour to discover the truth. And I take the freedom with all sincerity to tell you that upon comparing them with the Rule of Truth, I believe them in general, from first to last, to be erroneous—excepting where you say that everything that is good in us proceeds from the operation of the Spirit of God, and that there is no final justification without holiness and good works.

You will smile to hear this, I suppose, and pity my ignorance. But let the error rest where it ought. What I here say has no regard at all to the practical duties of the love of God and our neighbour, of inward piety, and outward holiness of life, wherein you would place the essence of Methodism. These are

¹³'Peculiar' instead of 'new' in the draft.

¹⁴See, for example JW, *Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, III.33, *Works*, 11:314–15; and IV.9–18, *Works*, 11:320–25.

quite out of the question, being taught in the Church by the lawful pastors, and pressed with as much earnestness as you or yours can do it, and all upon sound principles. These therefore are no part of Methodism, strictly speaking, or considered as a distinct sect.

They are the speculative points of a new birth, new faith, etc., which have an influence on practice, that I here condemn. But I should much exceed the bounds of a letter to expatiate on these heads as I might, and therefore will only just give you a hint where I think your *πρώτον ψεύδος*¹⁵ lies.

I first lay it down as a truth that in Scripture there is no new birth but the baptismal, nor is there any justification spoken of by St. Paul but the baptismal and the final. And I think it is evident beyond all contradiction that the justification by faith asserted by that apostle is no other than the baptismal, when adult converts were, on embracing Christianity and declaring their faith in Christ, received into covenant with God and into the membership¹⁶ of Christ's church by baptism; and then¹⁷ were justified from all their past sins¹⁸ by faith alone in that mediator whose religion they became converts to.¹⁹ But you misapply all that the Scripture says of the new birth in baptism to a new birth subsequent to baptism; and what the Scripture saith of justification by faith in baptism you misapply to a justification by faith after baptism; whereas it is very certain that all justification after baptism depends on our fulfilling or not fulfilling the terms of the covenant we then enter into.

You may think perhaps our case differs very much from that of the adult converts in the apostles' days, who could make an explicit declaration of their faith in Christ by which they were justified. But I think that alters the case very little. For as we are in our baptism in infancy regenerate by the Holy Ghost and admitted into covenant with God (as the Jewish children were in circumcision) on the faith of our parents, and on the declaration we make both of faith and future obedience by the mouth of our sponsors, we are thereby savingly born both of water and of the Spirit and consequently put into a justified state.

As to your definition, or rather description, of the new faith which you imagine to be produced and perfected in an instant after baptism, and on which as a foundation all your religion rests, I cannot find it in the New Testament. It is quite unscriptural, and was never heard of in the church of Christ for fifteen hundred years. I am told it was coined at Geneva by J[ohn] Calvin, and thence brought hither by our English divines who fled thither from Queen Mary's persecution. And I admire how you come to lay such stress upon it when it has no foundation in the book of God.

I hope you will weigh and consider these hints with an unbiased mind, and not reject them till you have thoroughly examined them. And believe me to be,

Your affectionate brother and humble servant,

John Lewis

The definition of faith which I tax as unscriptural is that which you give in your *Farther Appeal*, Part I, p. 3, line 24, etc.²⁰

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr. John Wesley at the Foundery, near Upper Moorfields, London / A single Sheet'.

Postmarks: 'BRAD/FORD. W'(?), '7/OC'.

¹⁵'First error'.

¹⁶'Communion' instead of 'membership' in the draft.

¹⁷'Upon their repentance' missing in the draft.

¹⁸'How wicked soever they had been' missing in the draft.

¹⁹'And this I take to be the sense of our Church in her Articles and Homilies' missing in the draft.

²⁰This postscript is found only in the holograph. Lewis's reference is to Part I, I.4, lines 3–6, *Works*, 11:107: 'a sure trust and confidence that Christ dies for *my* sins, that he "loved *me* and gave himself for *me*". And the moment a penitent sinner believe this, God pardons and absolves him.'

Endorsement: by JW 'Mr Lewis of Holt / Oct. 5, 1747'.

Sources: holograph, MARC, MA 1977/610/95; and Lewis's preliminary draft, Gloucester, Gloucestershire Archives, D6755/3/1.²¹

²¹An abridged transcription of the holograph published in *Works*, 26:262–65; a transcription of the preliminary draft published in *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 7 (2015): 136–46.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

Dublin
October 9, 1747

... I must go there² or to some other lodgings, or take my flight, for here I can stay no longer. A family of squalling children, a landlady just ready to lie in, a maid who has no time to do the least thing for us, are some of our conveniences. Our two rooms for four persons³ (six when John Healey⁴ and John Haughton come) allow no opportunity for retirement. Charles [Perronet] and I groan for elbow-room; our diet answerable to our lodgings; no one to mend our clothes; no money to buy more. I marvel that we have stood our ground so long in these lamentable circumstances. It is well I could not foresee while on your side of the water.

Source: published excerpt; Crookshank, *Ireland*, 1:21.

¹CW had arrived in Dublin on Sept. 9, on the request of JW, to take over care for the fledgling society there that was engulfed by persecution. Within a month he had revived and enlarged the society, and secured a measure of peace in the south-west suburbs.

²To the new preaching house he had just purchased in the Dolphin's Barn neighborhood of Dublin, on Cork Street.

³In addition to CW and Charles Perronet, Charles Skelton and John Trembath were likely sharing these living quarters arranged when they first arrived in Dublin.

⁴Orig., 'J. Healy'. Jonathan Healey (fl. 1745–50) had aligned with Methodism in Newcastle by early 1743, when he served as a guide to JW (see JW, *Journal*, Apr. 1, 1743, *Works*, 19:321). He had a tendency to defend the cause physically, leading CW to send him out of Newcastle on Feb. 19, 1744 to avoid a mob (see MS Journal). Healey moved to Nottingham and was arrested there on Mar. 10 as a Methodist sympathizer (ibid.). He appears to have continued to assist the Wesley brothers from that point, though his name does not appear in the Minutes as a preacher. CW was expecting JW to send Healey to help in Ireland (see letter of Oct. 13 below).

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

Dolphin's Barn [Dublin]
October 13, [1747]

[[Dear Brother,]]

This is a dangerous place: so quiet and retired I could hide myself here for *my* time. *Hic gelidi fontes*, etc.² It is a thousand pities to spoil this pretty house and garden. You shall [[have it for your own if Miss Clark does not choose it. But you must send me money to pay for it, if it be not sent already. The bill I have received, and spent before it came, upon]] myself and companion.³ His money, and three guineas of [John] Trembath's, and book-money borrowed, and five guineas, and four given me for printing, are to be paid out of it; besides money for keeping our horses two months, and two persons' travelling expenses to Bristol with the horses. All which I must furnish out of my £20, so that I don't expect so many shillings surplus.

John Trembath (and Charles Perronet most probably) will leave us October 26. At least the former, who you observe is to make a diversion in Wiltshire. John Cennick keeps the house another year.⁴ Draw me him off, and his flock comes to us on course, to repair our loss at Kingswood. I [[may last show you my regimen. The second rule I have strictly observed, no thanks to me, but him who leads me not into temptation]]. I promised Mrs. Felster to quit the house before the time,⁵ yet notwithstanding his [Cennick's] importunity, I cannot relinquish it till we got another.

Mr. Crampton demands £8 a year for the ground,⁶ which is too much by 4. Here we stick at present, and I greatly doubt whether anything can be done unless you come yourself. Time you would have for writing sermons, much more than in London, and all things promise a great harvest. I will write just now to Jones of Anglesey⁷ not to meet us with our horses till Monday fortnight, that I may first hear from you whether you will meet me at Garth on Wednesday, November 4. I could ride straight thence to London, or round by Bristol, as you choose. Bring John Healey with you, if you have not sent him already. [[The Lord bless our good and gospel?]].

[[I do not care to tell you, lest it should not last, but I have had more love of late than for a long time past.

Farewell.]]

¹This letter appears at the end of a journal letter.

²'Here are cold springs,' etc.—Virgil, *Eclogues*, x.42.

³Charles Perronet.

⁴John Cennick had been leading a Moravian congregation in Dublin for the past year, meeting in a rented house on Skinner's Alley. The landowner was seeking a higher rent (perhaps through the influence of Thomas Williams; see William Horne to JW, Apr. 27, 1748), and had offered the building to CW for the Methodists if the Moravians declined to pay the increase.

⁵Mrs. Agnes Felster (d. 1769) was owner of a lower floor room rented to the Methodists, with an upper floor warehouse, in the Strand at the corner of Great Marlborough Lane, which had been ransacked in recent anti-Methodist riots. She was pushing the Methodists to leave the site.

⁶Crampton owned a property near the center of Dublin, called 'the Foundery' (see journal letter, Oct. 8, 1747).

⁷William Jones, of Trefollwyn Blas, which is 1 mile west of Rhosmeirch; he was a convert of Howell Harris and travelled as a lay preacher around Anglesey.

Address: 'To / Mrs Lewin⁸ / at the Foundery / London'.

Postmarks: 'DUBLIN' and 'OC/13'; '19/OC'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Journal / fr[om] Sept. 29 to Oct. 10 / a[nswere]d Oct. 20 / in Dublin'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 6/19.⁹

⁸Sweet Lewin was a prominent member of the Foundery society—serving from Aug. 1742 as leader for multiple bands for married women, for 'trial bands,' and as a part of the Select Society. Her name disappears from London tax records after 1758.

⁹A transcription of most of this letter, with expansions of the shorthand by Frank Baker, was published in *Works*, 26:266. A few corrections to the shorthand expansion are made here.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[[Dublin]]
[[October]] 29, [1747]

[[Dear Brother,

[[Still I fear some after-stroke from [Samuel] Larwood, and should be easier if you could assure me all is safe. Commend to me [Thomas] Butt's contrivance as much as you please, only trust him not, for he has foully abused your confidence.]]

Whether Charles Perronet leaves me or not on Saturday is still undetermined. Charles Skelton carries our horses to Bristol, and returns by ship. [[John Trembath must stay with me. It is as much as his soul is worth to be left to himself till he is humbled so far as to see his danger.]]

[John] Haughton I don't expect to see before our brethren go hence. It was inexcusable, his delay, when you wrote me word from Dublin that you had *then* sent him orders to set out.

Had you the thought to send me by John Healey as much of your volume as is printed? I would see it, if possible, before it be published.² Your answer to the bishop should not be lost.³ Let the three passages be corrected with a pen, and then sell it privately. You *must* let brother [Henry] Thornton copy your new Oxford sermon in shorthand, and send it me for my approbation.⁴

We propose building a kind of booth in our garden to screen the hearers this winter.⁵ John H[ealy]'s judgment determines us to Crampton's or Carr's ground⁶—unless the still Brethren should throw up their room in dudgeon;⁷ then we succeed.

I set up my rest here for the winter. Toward February, I presume, you will relieve me yourself.

[[Mr. [Thomas] Williams is running into debt again, but take no notice of it to him. If my warning will stop him, well; if not, that will only happen which I expect, and we must part again. It cannot yet enter into my heart to conceive that God will ever join him and me in one work.

[[Your reasonings about tea do not appear conclusive.⁸ 'It is right and good for you and the people to leave it off, therefore for me.' I never thought of tying up myself for life, neither shall I ever make any promise of drinking it no more. I am not fond of dispute, and therefore never opposed your arguments against it, though some of them appeared frivolous to me, such as the unwholesomeness, etc., and invented]] *ex post facto*.⁹ [[In[deed] I have often heard you, though you now forget it, plead that argument on the other side [of] the case. But my two reasons for leaving it were: 1) example, that the poor people might leave off all they could not afford; 2) your desire. As to myself I must still insist upon my

¹This personal letter is added at the end of a journal letter.

²JW's *Sermons*, Vol. 2, published at the end of the year (*Bibliog*, No. 129).

³*A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London* (1747), in which (as CW suggested) three passages were erased by hand, and omitted from later editions (see 11:327–51, 555, of this edn.).

⁴The last time that JW preached in Oxford was in Aug. 1744, and his sermon *Scriptural Christianity* (see *Works*, 1:159–80) was published shortly after. It was again his turn to preach the official university sermon, but Oxford officials chose to substitute another preacher (see *A Short History of the People called Methodists*, §30, *Works*, 9:440).

⁵At the property they had purchased in Dolphin's Barn.

⁶Crampton's property was near the center of Dublin; Carr may be the owner of the property on Marylebone Lane (now Morrowbone Lane) where CW had preached several times in October.

⁷I.e., unless the Moravians walk away from the Skinner's Lane preaching house they had been renting in indignation.

⁸JW soon published his thoughts in *A Letter to a Friend Concerning Tea* (1748).

⁹'In retrospect.'

privilege either to use it or let it alone. Neither will I give up the liberty of ever having a friend to visit me, which I must do with tea, my only entertainment for him.¹⁰

[[As to my drinking it in Dublin, I have David's reason,¹¹ and were it sacred as the showbread I should not scruple it when I can get nothing else.

[[I find I must take care how I engage myself for the time to come, seeing]] *vestigia nulla retrorsum*,¹² [[and you make that a point of such importance, which you yourself lately told me was not the most excellent way. However, my example need not clash with yours. We are on different sides of the water, and may so continue. I am very well content to give up old England, and see it no more for ever. But if we should meet there again, my present mind is to abstain from tea there, merely to oblige you.

[[The above journal send to Mr. [Ebenezer] Blackwell and Mr. Perronet.¹³

[[Peace be with you.

Farewell]]¹⁴

Address: 'To / Mrs Lewin / at the Foundery / London / single sheet'.

Postmarks: 'DUBLIN' and '29/OC'; '4/NO'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'J[ourna]l from Oct. 20, 1747 / Ireland'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 6/20.

¹⁰See CW's letter of July 15, 1746.

¹¹See 1 Sam. 21:1–9.

¹²'There is no retracing one's steps' (Horace, *Epistles*, I.i.74–75).

¹³CW likely means Rev. Vincent Perronet, of Shoreham; but could mean his son Edward Perronet.

¹⁴The shorthand in this letter was expanded by Frank Baker and published in *Works*, 26:266–68; a few corrections are made here.

From the Rev. William Grimshaw

Ewood
November 27, 1747

Reverend and Very Dear Brother,

Yours, bearing date the 20th of this month,¹ I yesterday received. I answer again, and by the length of my letter it will appear I answer not in haste; though I must assure you I have as little leisure for writing as anything I do. The want of preachers here at present is very great. That the harvest in these parts is really large, and the labourers but very few, is very manifest. Why is it so? Perhaps the Lord of it only knows. Indeed you in some sort assign a reason for it. But, dear sir, are there such plenty of helpers in Cornwall? Send us one or two of them, without further entreaty.

You desire a particular account of the progress of the Lord's work here. Indeed I have the pleasure of assuring you that I think it never went better since its first appearance amongst us than it has done within this two months. I may say at Leeds, Birstall, Keighley, Todmorden, Rossendale, Heptonstall, Pendle Forest, and in my own parish the societies are very hearty. Souls are daily added to the church, and I may say multitudes on all sides (many of whom have been enemies to us and our Master's cause) are convinced of the truth, run eagerly to hear the gospel, and (as I told you in my last) are continually crying out for more preachers. New and numerous classes have been lately joined. Were not matters thus with us, you may easily suppose I should not be so urgent with you for assistance. I think my public exhortations (alias what I call my monthly visitations) in my parish were never so visibly blessed, I praise God, for these four years past as they have been within these two last months. Such a mighty presence of God has been in those visitations, and also in many of our weekly class-meetings, as I have rarely seen before. This evening I am venturing, by the divine assistance, upon a public exhortation in a wild, unchristian place called Midgley, four miles west from Halifax, where of late I have a great part of my residence—and I hope my attempt will that the Lord on its side.

I hope brother [John] Bennet fails not to inform you how well the work of grace flourishes in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and in the south of Lancashire; particularly about Bolton, Chowbent, etc. Mr. Lunelle (whose wife has lately experienced the pardoning love of God) wrote me a delightful account of the state of the church at Leeds. Thus much of my incoherent relation of our Lord's work in these parts.

Brother Bennet, [John] Nelson, and I not only (I hope) love as brethren, but are cordially united in carrying on the Lord's work. I hope we believe, and profess, and preach one thing—Jesus, and him crucified. If you know them, you know me. About three weeks since, brother Nelson and [Thomas] Colbeck were all night with me. Before then I accidentally met with brother Bennet at Bank, near Heptonstall, where I went to meet all the Heptonstall-parish classes. Last week I met brother Colbeck and all the Keighley-parish classes. And about six weeks ago I visited those of Leeds and Birstall. About a month since, those of Todmorden, Show, and some of Rossendale.

Dear sir, I beg you will present my hearty respects to all your societies, classes, etc., in London, or elsewhere, in the following manner:

1. To believers: Dear souls, I frequently have you in my thoughts and wonder how your hearts are disposed towards our Saviour! Do you still continue fervent in spirit serving the Lord? Is he still the most precious, the more you experience of his grace? Or like the ungrateful Israelites, which God forbid, do you begin to loathe the heavenly manna? Sure the more you feel by faith the virtue of the blood and righteousness of our dear Saviour, the more you are filled with the love of God and the sweet consolations of the Holy Ghost. For as our Lord truly affirms the kingdom of God is within you, so that kingdom is asserted by St. Paul to be righteousness, (and then) peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The more therefore you feel of this, the more will you rejoice, and the more will you hunger and thirst thereafter. Which if you do, 'Blessed are

¹This letter is not known to survive.

you', says our Lord, 'for you shall be filled.'² Loath would I think but that this is the disposition of your hearts, who have received the pardoning love of God our Saviour. O may you be affected with an insatiable appetite for a Saviour's graces, daily more and more. How will the forever blessed THREE rejoice to see it, and rejoice to satisfy it! Therefore, 'Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find.'³ The more you enjoy of God's grace, the more will he endue you therewith. He gives plentifully and upbraideth no man. 'To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.'⁴ God's treasury never fails, how much soever goes out of it. Nor doth he ever tire with giving, if you never tire with asking and carefully improve what he gives. O may you receive abundantly at this all-bounteous hand, and may you never fail, nor faint, whilst breath lasts, to improve it to the donor's glory and your own everlasting benefit!

2. To seekers: And supposing some of you are but yet seeking the Lord, and have never felt his pardoning love, nor the joy which follows. Supposing you are mourning under the load of sin, or panting for a deliverance through a Saviour—Courage, dear souls, and despair not. He that will come will come, and will not tarry. The bruised reed he will not break; the smoking flax he will not quench. No. No, he has wounded you on purpose, to bind you up. To you he has made a promise. 'Blessed are you that mourn, for ye shall be comforted.'⁵ This holy David well knew (Psalm 116:5), 'Come unto me', cries our Lord, 'all ye that are heavy laden and I shall give you rest.' What though you cannot as yet with children cry 'Abba, Father'; though with them you as yet perceive not yourselves set down to the full meal of your heavenly Father's table. Though you may think you are looked upon at present but as dogs, as indeed what are any of us better by nature than dogs living upon our vomits? Yet with the Syro-Phoenician woman, think well to be called dogs (sincere contrition for sins will readily bear the name) and then have you hereby a title to the crumbs which fall from your Master's table.⁶ Claim but the dog's portion. Beg but to live under the table, and then shall you shortly partake of the children's loaf. 'A broken and contrite heart he will not despise' (Psalm 51:17). You shall quickly hear your Master say, as he did to the woman, 'O my precious mourning souls, great is your faith! Be it unto you' (mark the next words) 'even as you will.'

To him I heartily commend you all, being one who have I trust received grace, and am determined through my Saviour's never-failing assistance to live and die in his service; as, I hope, you all are, or else woe be to you.

W. Grimshaw

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797), 46–48.⁷

²Cf. Matt. 5:6.

³Cf. Matt. 7:7.

⁴Cf. Matt. 13:12.

⁵Cf. Matt. 5:4.

⁶See Matt. 15:21–28 and parallels.

⁷Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:268–69.

From Martha (Wesley) Hall

[Salisbury]
December 30 [1747]

Dear Brother,

I find myself so much affected with my own strange circumstances¹ that it is as much as ever I can do to concern myself at all about others at present. But I know the case is widely different with you, who have such a zeal for your Master's glory as I can scarce hope for, insomuch that I cannot but think you are so far raised above the cares of this life that whatever concern you can have here is swallowed up in the care you have for the souls of others.

There are a few here who I believe would be much strengthened by seeing you, and probably more would be added, for which reason (saying nothing of myself) it seems to me you will think it right to come again. You tell me there is a cloud hanging over me, but surely the rains are descended and the floods come, insomuch that I sometimes doubt whether I must ever be delivered in this world or no.

Yet when I mark my life and ways,
Thy justice me most fitly pays.²

Mr. [Westley] Hall has sent orders to them that live in our house to meet in the chapel. They had another letter from him last post, but they refuse to let me see them. I have not answered his letter, being quite discouraged. Nor do I know that I shall till I am obliged for bread, for he has sent me no order to receive anything of his tenant. It pleases God to try my faith and patience yet more by the illness of my little child.³ I see her pining away, without being able to do anything but cry unto God for her. And methinks it is now said unto me, that is enough.

Though I seem almost to despair of it, yet I should be glad if you could see Mr. Hall, or at least write to him before you come. I have great need of blessing. I trust you will not cease to pray for

Your affectionate friend and sister,

M. H.

You will see what poor Betty says.⁴ I truly pity her, but I doubt whether anything but her great misery could have reconciled me so fully to her.

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr. Wesley at the Foundery, London'.

Postmarks: 'SALIS / BURY', '1/IA'. *Charge:* '3'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'M. Hall & / Eliz. Greenaway / Dec. 30, 1747 / a[nswere]d Jan. 6'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/8.⁵

¹Westley Hall had proven unfaithful to his wife, abandoning her, and leaving a mistress pregnant, whom Martha had taken into her home.

²George Herbert, *The Temple* (1633), 'Justice', st. 2.

³This may be Susanna Westley Hall (baptized May 29, 1741); but likely another more recent daughter. No daughter survived to adulthood.

⁴See the following letter, which Martha enclosed with her own.

⁵Transcription published in *Works*, 26:275–76.

From Elizabeth Greenaway¹

[December 30, 1747]

Reverend Sir,

Your Leve I Receve as an indulging favoiur, it is some kind of Relief to speak. I am as Glad as one (with such an wounded consence as mine can be) to hear you think of me. Do Pray still (if you can) for one that has spok very slighting of you, with sham I Acknowledg it, and heartily beg your Pardon for it. I am sorry I have spok as I have consearning ye Ordnances (and hop to do so no more) but I am still so Dark I dont know wether they are of God or No. Nor can I have ye Impudence to eye it whilst in such uncertinty. tis true I go to Church Likeing that Rather than ye Decenting forms, for that appears as such to me & more Leding to a party Spirit, which I have too Long Endulgd & by Straigning at a Naght I have swallowed a camele. yet could I see it Instituted of God: Do I dare to apear in that as an outward & visable sign of that which I have Not. I seem as a bransh that is witherd. I am still wishing I had Never bin born. Nor can I Bless Him for my creation: No, I often think I would Gladly be Anniallated. How often with a trubled mind I Repete this verss

Jesus hear in bitterness. Of Spirit hear me cry &c.

Sir, I'm affraid you think better of my state then it realy is. when you pray for me cry as for a great Sinner. I let my thoughts run Evin into Heaven their vewing a Liberty as I Deemd it. When I come toward ye Men Christ who is to judg both Quik & Ded I blush to think what thoughts I have had of Him. when I would think of a Magdellen who was forgivin much I start back at ye Remberence of my former Naushous Noshons (I trembl I cant speak) Sir you will understand me & Pity one who has Raisd such an Effectual bar aganst her self. Sattan now maks it as a flaming Sword & Drives Me far from ye Tree of Life.

thus in some measur your see ye unhappy State of ye wreched

Eliz. Greenaway

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/8; added on p. 3 of Martha Hall's letter.²

¹Elizabeth Greenaway had been seduced by Westley Hall and left pregnant, without support. Martha (Wesley) Hall had taken her in. Greenaway's letter is reproduced *literatim*. It is likely, but unclear how, Elizabeth was related to Westley Hall's earlier friend Rev. William Greenaway, rector of St. Martin's in Salisbury.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 26:276.

From the Rev. James Hervey

Weston, near Northampton
December 30, 1747

Dear Sir,

With pleasure I received, and with gratitude acknowledge, the favour of your two letters.¹ That which bears the date of November 21 I should have answered long ago, had I not been retarded by the following reason.

I was desirous to give a proof of my love for your person and of my reverence for your conduct somewhat more substantial than the bare profession of my pen. My bookseller is this week to pay a sum of money for a second impression of two little pieces of devotional meditation which I lately ventured to publish,² and which God has vouchsafed to honour with acceptance. This is to be received by my brother in Miles's Lane,³ at whose house if you please to call he will in my name present you with five guineas, which I beg of you to accept as a token of that affectionate and grateful esteem which I bear to my ever-valued friend, and distribute among the indigent or distressed members of that divine Benefactor who died for us both.

Assure yourself, dear sir, that I can never forget that tender-hearted and generous fellow of Lincoln [College] who condescended to take such compassionate notice of a poor undergraduate, whom almost everybody condemned, and no man cared for his soul.

If you ask why I have withdrawn into a corner, and lain hid in obscurity, while God seems to be shaking the heavens and the earth, and to be doing his work, his great and glorious work, of bringing sinners to Christ, as the doves to their windows—I will tell you freely. It is because of an infirm constitution, a languid flow of spirits, and an enervated state of body, which renders even that small share of business which lies within my narrow sphere too often burdensome to me, and but very poorly performed by me.

As for points of doubtful disputation, those especially which relate to particular or universal redemption, I profess myself attached neither to the one nor the other. I neither think of them myself nor preach of them to others. If they happen to be started in conversation I always endeavour to divert the discourse to some more edifying topic. I have often observed them to breed animosity and division, but never knew them to be productive of love and unanimity. I have farther remarked that in forming their sentiments on these doctrines persons may be diametrically opposite, and yet be high in the favour of God, and eminently owned by him in their ministry. Therefore I rest satisfied in this general and indisputable truth, that the Judge of all the earth will assuredly do right, and whosoever cometh to him under the gracious character of a Saviour, he will in no wise be cast out.

I embrace, readily embrace your offer. Let me ever be reckoned in the number of your friends, and often remembered in the earnestness of your prayers. Though it is your distinguished province to lift your voice on high, and make the world resound with the Redeemer's name; though my employ is to catch the pleasing accents, and echo or rather whisper them among a little circle of acquaintance; yet, I hope, we may be united in the same cordial affection here, and united in the same kingdom of our common Master hereafter.

Your correspondence will be greatly esteemed, and I hope will prove a blessing to, dear sir, your very unworthy but truly affectionate brother and servant,

J. Hervey

¹Neither of these letters are known to survive.

²Hervey was just publishing *Meditations among the Tombs*, which was a second edition of his *Reflections on a Flower Garden* (1747) with some additions.

³This is apparently William Hervey, who would later publish letters growing out of controversy between JW and James Hervey (see JW, *Works*, 13:219–22).

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 134–35.⁴

⁴Complete transcription included in *Works*, 26:273–75.

From Thomas Burton¹

[London]
1747–48

Friends,

Admitting that you have, in some degree, been made instrumental in the hand of the Lord (spiritually) to bring many people out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the wilderness, many of whom having been convinced of sin and, after some time of distress and heaviness thereupon, have received a sense of forgiveness, and have for a time rejoiced as upon the banks of deliverance, having a measure of divine love shed abroad in their hearts, at which time they began to be sanctified. But, if I may be allowed to trace the comparison (though very distant as to the glory and greatness, both of the work and the qualifications, of the person that was to carry it on), it may be observed that notwithstanding Moses was made instrumental in bringing the people thus far onward; yet it was not while under his dispensation, or by him, that they were to be brought into the promised land. But that was to be the work of Joshua, who was still a more eminent type of Christ.

Not that I am about to determine absolutely how far the Lord may be pleased to bring forward his people in this gospel day by human instruments. Yet this I may venture to say, both from Holy Writ and experience, that it must be alone the work of the spiritual Joshua to fit, prepare, and lead his depending children into the possessions of the promised gospel rest. Therefore when the Lord may be pleased to set about to bring any sincere souls that are among you more nearer to himself, and into a more spiritual dispensation, and to fulfill the promise in them of *teaching them himself*, and to bring them under his own discipline, *exclusive* of all human *teaching*; I say, when this comes to be the case with any persons that are among you, you cannot hold them with all your might, for it is the Lord's doings. Although they may for a while lie under doubts and confusion, and distractions of thoughts from the different opinions of zealous, jarring guides in spiritual concerns; and not being so thoroughly established on the *divine* teacher, therefore may for some time be loath to move from that way of worship where, in time past, they had found so much pleasure; nay, and would not move while they found any life therein. Was not the Lord to deal with them as he did with journeying Israel, by first moving the *pillar of cloud*, and the *pillars of fire*, and then they found it their duty to depart from that place; otherwise they also were loath to move from the place where they had been favoured with the *divine presence*; which is evident by Moses's crying out, 'Lord, carry us not hence, except thy *presence* go along with us.'²

So that when the Lord may be pleased to *withdraw* his presence from the souls of any, and thereby take away that life they once had in *ceremonial* performances and *outward* ways of worship, they will then find the same occasion to withdraw from that way as Israel did from that place, the time being then come that they are called to *withdraw* from this *mountain* or the other, and to worship the Father in *Spirit* and in *truth*. For how should the soul be able to perform outward acts of worship aright that is in darkness and distress, that finds all divine consolation to be withdrawn? It can then no more rejoice and sing then the *captives* in Babylon, whose harps were hung on the willows; but finds it needful, in such a condition, to *stand still* as to the outwards—not in *indolence*, not in *carelessness*, not in *lightness* and *indifferency*; but to keep close to the Lord in spirit, and to wait as at Jerusalem, by prayer and supplication, until there is power given from on high. For this is a time of *sorrow*, and of *lamentation*, a time of *purging* and *cleansing*, a time of keeping close to the Lord in the way of the *cross* and *self-denial*, refusing to be comforted with any superfluity of temporal delights or pleasures, until its Lord appears in a fresh dispensation of *grace* and *love*, with the springing up of *divine life* in the soul. Therefore, I say again, when the Lord may please thus to visit and call any from among you, think it not strange, for you cannot hold them. But be content, as Moses was, to be instruments in the Lord's hand in bringing the people just so far as the Lord may think fit. And be willing to give them up, and resign them over, and

¹Little is known about Thomas Burton other than that he was a member of the Society of Friends.

²Exod. 33:15.

recommend them to the conduct and guidance of the spiritual Joshua, the *true minister* of the *sanctuary*, the *anointing* that teaches as never man taught, who alone is invested with powers and authority to bring his depending children into the possession of the promised gospel rest; who must and will first sit on the soul as a *refiner with fire*, and cleanse away all the filth with the Spirit of *burning* and a Spirit of *judgment*, and empty the vessel of all the old leaven, of all that is contrary to the *divine* nature; and prepare the temple as with a whip of small cords, before he will appear therein to make his abode the 'second time without sin unto salvation'.³ Therefore it is not apprehended needful that you should hold the people so fast down to so much dependence upon your own teaching in particular, and to crosses of your own prescribing; as also to so many *ceremonial* observations of *days*, and *times*, and *ordinances*, most of which are of man's *inventing*. Though some, in time past, without doubt have been by divine appointment, and have had their use. And though they were for a time continued in the church for the sake of the *weak*. Yet it is very evident from Holy Writ that they were all to *decrease* as the gospel dispensation *increased*, and as the things *signified* by them took place, as the *new creature*, or *circumcision* of the *heart* took place, as the *great sacrifice* was come, as the *spiritual baptism* took place, as the *bread* and *wine* of the *kingdom* took place. For although our Lord, when the time of his departure was near at hand, thought it needful to command, or give orders, that the Passover should be made ready, that he might partake thereof, on the same account as he suffered himself to be baptized, that he might fulfill all righteousness; yet we do not find that he hath anywhere commanded that it should be continued in the church, and called a 'gospel ordinance', as many people are terming it. For the most account we have with respect to the continuance thereof is that the disciples were told by the apostle that 'as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.'⁴ And this appears to be nothing new, or more than what eating of the Passover had all along typified. Excepting that when our Lord himself was partaking thereof, that the type, or thing signified thereby, was then more nearer its fulfilment and accomplishment, on the account of the *great sacrifice*, or *antitype*, being then present near to be offered up. And now, as this dispensation of *outward* bread and wine appears immediately to be closed up, and to cease, with regard to our Lord himself, as soon as ever he partook of it, by his declaring that 'I shall henceforth drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until I drink it new in the kingdom of my Father.'⁵ So likewise, when ever he comes into the soul with the *promised Comforter*, and fills it with the bread and wine of the *kingdom*, that soul will then find it time to *cease* from the *outward* also. Not that I condemn any sincere souls that really think it their *duty* to be found in the use of *outward* bread and wine, but may they go on, and be faithful to the light they have received, until the Lord may please to lead them *farther*. But let them beware of so *resting* in the *shadows* as to miss of the *substance*. Likewise, on the other hand, where any are truly seeking the Lord, that are finding his presence to be withdrawn from them in *such* performances, and therefore are finding it *needful* to *withdraw* from them, and to *wait* on the *Lord* in the *singleness* of *heart*, for his *inward* and *spiritual appearance*; and when this is the case with any, why should not they go uncondemned also?

And now, as to *crosses* of man's appointing, which are not the crosses of Christ. For although our Lord did expressly lay down the necessity of denying ourselves and taking up our cross, yet we do not find that he left it so as for one man to appoint what another should take up his cross in, as to each particular. Neither in that respect is one man able to chalk out a path for another. For although the true ministers of the gospel are concerned at times to preach up *cross-bearing*, yet they are directing the performance therein alone according to the workings and requirings of the Spirit of Christ, as made manifest in the heart. For otherwise it might be justly termed 'bearing the crosses of those that prescribe them', and not bearing the crosses of Christ. For none may be truly called the crosses of Christ but what are according to the workings of his holy and pure Spirit upon the heart, convincing the mind what he

³Heb. 9:28.

⁴1 Cor. 11:26.

⁵Matt. 26:29.

would have done, and what he would have left undone, and by the working of his holy power, subjecting the will into obedience thereunto. And they that are truly and in earnest in the Christian race, and are faithful in their obedience to the Lord's requireing, will find *that* to be crosses imposed upon them for they are the crosses of Christ, and they only that are taken up in obedience to what the Lord is calling for, according to the powerful convincement of his own Holy Spirit. And such crosses always have been, and still are, well known by the redeemed of the Lord to be the *power of God*, to the plucking down of the strongholds of sin and Satan, and in which path alone the soul becomes purified, and cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and made a fit place of residence for the Most High. Which work, all the cross-bearing, and self-denial, and ceremonial observations that are of man's prescribing can never be able to effect (they being of no more service in the work of sanctification, than Roman hair-clothes and penances, or keeping of Lent, or fasting on every Friday, or sixth day of the week), but are rather hurtful than helpful, as bearing too near analogy and proportion to the noise of the tools that were not to be heard in the building the temple of old, it being contrary to divine appointment, and therefore would mar and spoil the work. And yet this appears to be too much the case with respect to the spiritual builders in our day. But I am persuaded in my mind that the work will never be rightly carried on to the completing thereof but in the profound silence of all that fleshly wisdom, willings and runnings that are of man's inventing.

Likewise, your holding the people to so much *dependence upon your own teaching in particular*, the consequence of which is like to be bad and destructive to your society, for want of their being rightly gathered in their minds to have their dependence more upon the *teacher in themselves*. For what otherwise is like to be the case with the people, whenever it may please the Lord to call several of you aside *by death*, but to be as sheep without a shepherd? Instance the case of George Whitefield's followers, upon his withdrawing from them; the effect of which you are not insensible of, but very well know that they are a *scattered, desolate* people. Whereas, had they been sufficiently directed to, and rightly established upon, the *divine teacher*, which could not be removed, their disappointment could not have been so great, neither would they have been so *dispersed*, though they for a while might have been without any outward teacher.

But to return to the question concerning your *being called aside*, to which it is very likely you may reply that *the Lord will raise up more teachers to teach the people when you go hence*; to which it may be observed that we do not find it in Holy Writ to be the mind of providence to raise up teachers in this dispensation of time to teach the people to depend upon *their* teaching. For when many of the Jews, and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, after the congregation was broken up, we do not find that Paul and Barnabas laid a strict charge upon them to come *early on the morrow morning, or the morrow evening*, to hear their preaching. But instead of that, they persuaded them to continue in the *grace* of God (Acts 13:43). But for people to depend chiefly upon the teaching of any man now living, that would be inconsistent with this gospel dispensation, where in the Lord hath promised to teach his people himself, and that they should be all taught of the Lord, needing not that any man teach them, but as the anointing teach them, which is truth and no lie.

And this we may understand from Holy Record to be the way that the gospel churches were first planted by the apostles, who went from place to place directing the people to the teacher in themselves, even to Christ 'the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world';⁶ and then they withdrew and left the people to wait upon the Lord in their places of worship, gathering to that light, and that power that was to teach them; and then it was not long before there were living witnesses raised up to bear their testimony to the truth of that doctrine, as having received a measure of that teaching, and thereby able to direct others to the same, as also instruments of building them up in their holy faith in and dependence thereupon. And glorious was the state of the church at that time of day, for purity of doctrine, holy order in discipline, love to God, to one another, and to all men, even enemies, having much of the power and presence of the Lord among them. The members of which church, consisting of such that were born from

⁶John 1:9.

above, circumcised in heart, baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, squared stones, hewn by the Spirit, fit for the spiritual building; not old, rough, fierce, cruel, implacable, unholy, unregenerate spirits, but meek, gentle, lowly, poor in spirit, merciful, peaceable in themselves, making peace among men, renewed and sanctified in spirit, holy in life and conversation. Of whose states and conditions, the apostles have given some general hints, declaring of them to be such as had received like precious faith with them, such that rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory; such that had received, and were receiving, a kingdom that could not be moved; such that were come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, etc.; and such that were fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God, that were built together in Christ for an habitation of God through the Spirit; even such that God had blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. And what state on earth can exceed this? But alas, it was not long before there began to be a declining from this state, according as it was foretold by the apostle to the Thessalonians, that there would be a *falling away*, that the man of sin might be revealed.⁷ He not only telling them how that it was to be fulfilled in time, but that it was *then begun*. For the mystery of iniquity did already begin to work, only that which letted would let, until it was removed out of the way (even the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, that was then upon the churches, which did then let, or hinder). But when that was withdrawn or removed, then the man of sin, or that wicked one, was more fully to be revealed and made manifest, whom the Lord in due time will consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his arising. The coming of which man of sin, or great whore, is generally understood by most Protestant professors in religion, to be literally fulfilled in, or by, Rome Antichristian; although they themselves are not exempted from the fulfilment thereof, so far as they have drank, or are drinking of the whore's cup. For the great whore is not alone by herself, but she is the mother of harlots, and all her daughters are harlots also, even all they that are building up churches in her spirit (and with her materials) out of the guidance of the Spirit of truth. For all the different and various doctrines, opinions, and denominations in religion have proceeded and sprung up from the different interpretations that the corrupt, depraved minds of man hath put upon the Holy Scriptures of truth; the right understanding of which they will never be able to come at, until they are made partakers of the same Spirit by which *they were first* wrote. Therefore all the many and different forms, and ways of worship that man according to his own wisdom hath invented, set up, and rested in, for some ages past, have been little less than so many dead weights that have kept down and hindered the *pure life of Christ rising up in the soul*, therefore may justly bear the name of antichrist.

But I hope and trust that the time is drawing near when the Lord will again appear in his glory, and cause Sion to arise and shine in her ancient beauty, by dispersing that anti-Christian darkness that hath for a long time overspread the hearts of men. For satisfied I am, and again repeat it as my judgment, that the Lord will first shut up and cut off all that life and spirit from the mind of men that it has in the many outward ways of worship, and cause all that outward dark dispensation to bow and give way, before that everlasting kingdom of life and peace will take place, even that true substance which all the types, ceremonies, and ordinances that in time past were but only shadows of.

From your sincere friend,

Thomas Burton

Who heartily wishes you all to *fare well* in the truth.

Source: published letter; Thomas Burton, *A Letter to the Methodist Preachers belonging to the Foundery; Especially to John and Charles Wesley. Wrote for the sake of their followers who are or may be dissatisfied with their ways of worship, by a person that found occasion to withdraw from their society and join with the people called Quakers* (2nd edn. with additions, London: for the author, 1748).⁸

⁷See 2 Thess. 2:3.

⁸1st edn.: *A Friendly Letter to John and Charles Wesley. Wrote for the Sake ...* (London, 1747).

From John Fry¹

[p. 3]

1748

Dear Friend,²

I have lately had the sight of an *anonymous pamphlet*, printed I suppose in Bristol, dated February 10, 1747–48.³ By the perusal of which I imagine the author to be a sect-master, or principal leader of a people, whom he has brought very much to depend upon his doctrine and government; but seems highly displeased when one of his followers who,⁴ in searching after truth, discovered a dissatisfaction of mind with his doctrine and opinions, and so left him to join with the people called Quakers, whose principles he found more consistent with the truth as it is in Jesus. And on this change of judgment [Plummer] wrote him [i.e., JW] a *private letter*, to which if he had written but a *private answer*, in an affectionate manner, no other person might have found himself concerned to have interfered betwixt them. But as he has thought fit to publish his *remarks* in print, and therein to charge the said people with *errors in principle and practice*, it became the business of any member of [p. 4] that society to give him any satisfaction possible (if that be what he aims at); but if he wants none, and is resolved to act the part of an *adversary*, then to endeavour to prevent well-intending and sincere minds from being deceived by him and prevented from a search after truth.

For this reason I have sent thee the following *remarks* on the said *pamphlet*, to make what use thereof thou mayst see meet.

In page 3, he tells the *letter writer* that he does ‘by no means intend to deny—that many Quakers (so termed) are real Christians; men who have the mind that was in Christ; with some of whom he thinks it a blessing to converse ...’. To which give me leave to observe that it does not seem worth his while to reclaim, or draw back to himself, a quondam member of his society (whom he owns in page 15, to have an honest heart but a weak head) from a people, some of whom, notwithstanding their difference from him in opinion, and holding tenets which (for want of his being thoroughly acquainted with them) he may suppose erroneous, are nevertheless such substantial and real Christians as to have the mind that was in Christ. For whoever attains to that, cannot be rendered more complete by conforming to any outward ceremonies of religion whatsoever.

In page 4, he seems not to understand Robert Barclay’s words, that ‘revelations are not to be subjected to the examination of the scriptures⁵ as a touchstone’. For suppose it was revealed to me that I ought to go and visit a sick person and admonish or comfort him in his distress, or to reprove an obstinate sinner; how shall I know by the scriptures when will be a proper time to pay him that visit, or when his mind will be best disposed to receive advice or reproof to his benefit and to my comfort? Whatever this author may think of the difference of times and seasons, the *true* Quaker knows a very great one, both in relation to private and public duties. For though the Lord is ever near to his people, yet he is sometimes as it were behind the curtain, and doth not [p. 5] cause his face to shine upon them. And as the Israelites

¹John Fry (1701–75), the youngest son of a Quaker family in Sutton Benger, Wiltshire, moved to London about the age of 14 and made a sufficient fortune (likely in shipping) to marry at the age of 25 and retire to a country living back in Sutton Benger. He spent his time writing poetry, in unpaid ministry for the Society of Friends, and as the occasional apologist for their faith, as in this response to JW.

²While JW is the topic of Fry’s remarks, he is not addressing JW with this salutation; the recipient is instead Samuel Farley, the Bristol printer, who was also a member of the Society of Friends.

³[JW,] *A Letter to a Person Lately Joined with the People Called Quakers* (n.p., 1748).

⁴This follower was almost certainly Stephen Plummer; see JW, *Journal*, Sept. 10, 1753, *Works*, 20:473–74.

⁵Fry/Farley consistently spell ‘scripture’ without the initial capital letter.

were forbid to journey 'when the cloud was over the tabernacle',⁶ so it is with all 'whose light is the Lamb, and whose leader is the Lord'.⁷

In the same page he complains of a great impropriety of expression in Robert Barclay's saying that 'the scriptures are not the principal ground of truth and knowledge, nor the adequate primary rule of faith and manners; but the Spirit is the first and principal leader'. The *latter* he acknowledges; but in relation to the scriptures is guilty of greater impropriety of speech, in asserting that 'the Spirit is no rule at all', but that 'the scriptures are the rule whereby the Spirit leads into all truth.' Whereas if the 'Spirit leads only by the scriptures', then the *heathen*, and such as have not the scriptures, have not the benefit of the leadings of the Spirit. Too many in popish countries have been, and are, deprived of the use of the scriptures. And some have been shut up in prisons, and even suffered martyrdom for their religion, though they had not the scriptures in their own language, and perhaps knew but very little of them. Yet by the light of the Lord shining into their hearts their understandings were opened to see the error of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and to testify against it with the loss of their lives.⁸ [p. 6]

In page 5 he asserts 'a wide difference between Quakerism and Christianity', in respect to Robert Barclay's words; viz., that 'by the spiritual birth we are sanctified, and so justified'. This he calls 'a flat justification by works', and says the Christian doctrine is that 'we are justified by faith'; and so cites the words of the apostle Paul as contained in Romans 4[:5]—viz., 'that unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness'. But whoever would [p. 7] learn the doctrine of Christianity from the apostle's writings must take the whole together, and not suppose one single verse to contain an explanation of the whole. We ought to consider that whole chapter. For in the preceding verse Paul saith, 'Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.' The faith he pleads for here is in opposition to the works of the creature, exclusive of

⁶See Exod. 40:37–38.

⁷Cf. Rev. 21:23.

⁸Note in original: 'What better foundation could any man lay, in order to a righteous life, than a light in ourselves that shines continually, manifesting every unrighteous action? A guide, that truly followed, will lead unto God—from whom, by unrighteous living, all men depart. This Paul experienced, and his experience made him an able minister, capable of preaching without book or study, and confidently to affirm unto the Galatians that their way to a righteous life was, to "walk in the Spirit", or keep to this guide; this true light, which never consented to any unrighteous action. To this many of the *heathens* turned, taking it for their guide, and confiding therein as a sure foundation; which was true faith in him who was given for a light to the Gentiles, and one in nature with the faith of Abraham. Thus people came to be convinced that, after they were turned unto the Lord, they had a race to run. They did not content themselves, as too many of us do, with a Christian name; but following *this leader*, they walked in newness of life, soberly, righteously, and godly. Which Paul commended, telling the Galatians that they "run well". And we should run well also, if we run the like race, growing from day to day more just, more upright, more honest, more faithful, and more circumspect; which cannot be expected until we take their guide for our leader. But the churches of Galatia being at that time (as Paul called them) "little children", a people of small growth in the knowledge of the mystery of godliness, were by some (whom Paul wished cut off) persuaded, as many now are, that an upright, sober, godly life, and blameless conversation, was not enough—but they must be also in the exercise of some outward worship. And the Jews religion carrying the greatest show of godliness, they were persuaded to imitate their customs and observations. If Christ be the way, if walking by the Spirit be the means, by which we must mortify sin and come to a righteous life; whosoever goeth from this way, whosoever slighteth this means, hath no more benefit by Christ than a traveller that forsaketh his guide hath from his guide, in order to a righteous godly life. As Christ is a quickening Spirit, it must be by following him in his spiritual manifestations that a righteous life is recovered. Nothing less can change our natures, and make us new creatures. — [Hugh] Turford's *Grounds of a Holy Life* [London, 1747], pp. 6–9.'

grace, as appears from the words of David cited by him thus, verses 6–7. ‘Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.’ From whence it is clear that he only is justified that worketh not (by his own power and strength), but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, or maketh the ungodly just and righteous by giving grace and offering divine help to them, to bring them out of sin into a state of reconciliation, wherein their iniquities are forgiven and sins covered, and so justified, as they believe in and receive his Spirit and power into their hearts, by which this change is wrought. ‘So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth’ (in his own will and time) ‘but of God that showeth mercy’, Romans 9:16. For while men are in the actual commission of sin, and are refusing the offers of God’s love and doing despite to the Spirit of grace, they cannot be justified. For David saith, ‘The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth’, Psalm 11:5. The Corinthians were once, doubtless, very wicked. But they were washed and sanctified; and in that state justified, see 1 Corinthians 6:11. From whence it is very evident that justification does not go before sanctification, nor is experienced by wicked men until, by the abundant grace and mercy of God, he is pleased to sanctify them by leading them to repentance and then forgiving them their sins, and so bringing them into amendment of life, to ‘show forth their faith by their works’, and such works only as are brought forth by the operation of the grace or Spirit of God. Thus when ‘the tree is made good, the fruit will be good also’. For ‘a good tree cannot bring forth [p. 8] evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit’, Matthew 7:18.

In the same 5th page he supposes Robert Barclay understood not the meaning of the word ‘justification’. He would then have done well to have told his reader the meaning of it before he left the subject, if he himself had understood it better; but that he warily avoids.

In the 6th page he dissents from Robert Barclay, who says that ‘by the light of God in the heart every true minister is ordained, prepared, and supplied in the work of the ministry’; and only acknowledges that every true minister is by the light of God ‘prepared and supplied in the work of the ministry’, adding that the apostles themselves ‘ordained them by laying on of hands’.

He might also have told his readers that by the same power and authority they raised the dead, healed the sick, and wrought many miracles; which no person in this age will pretend any authority for. And by what authority anyone, how great soever, should even dare to imitate any of these things, without the least shadow of a command for them in scripture, and without the same authority the apostles had, remains on him to show. Besides, it appears to me to be very scandalous and apish for a person to lay his hands on another and say ‘Receive the Holy Ghost!’, when neither of them believes it possible to be so conveyed, nor scarce thinks it necessary in the performance of the ministerial function. Nor do any who use that ceremony pretend to minister from the ability that God giveth. But after the imposition of hands, being first qualified with human learning, they obtain authority from men to preach; and so become ministers of the *letter* and not of the Spirit. And too many of them are so far from being serious, much less religious, that their conversation and conduct is scandalous and a reproach to the Christian religion—a certain proof that they received not the Holy Ghost from the laying on of hands, nor believed in the inward manifestation of it in their own hearts ‘as a light that shines in a dark place’, to discover evil and redeem from it. And I dare affirm [p. 9] that if this author (whether he be a priest or teacher) was so ordained by man, and in the will of man, and never experienced a real and inward call from God, by the manifestation of his grace and Spirit in his own heart. He never received a real commission to preach, to the edification of the people, nor to the glory of God. But if he has such a commission, he must own it to proceed from an ‘unction from the Holy One’, and not from such ordination.

In the same 6th page, he quotes Robert Barclay saying, ‘They who have this light of God ought to preach the gospel, though without human commission or literature. On the other hand, they who have it not are not true ministers of the gospel.’ To this his answer is, ‘I cannot quite agree with you in this. But it is a difficult point. I think, and let think.’

How this should be a difficult point to so learned a man as he would be thought to be in page 14, I cannot conceive. For true ministry is still the same in every age. And if so, he that ministers, let him do it in the ability that God giveth, and not from human learning nor human appointment.

In the same 6th page, and 7th, in relation to *women's preaching*, he runs with the common stream and falls into the common error that priestcraft and human ordination have led many into—who are willing to keep the ministry to themselves ‘for filthy lucre’s sake’.⁹ For as the old adage has it, ‘None are so blind as they who will not see.’ Otherwise it is very evident by the text that those Corinthian women were not exercised in preaching or praying, but wanted information and were interrupters of the public service, and were therefore ‘to keep silence in the churches; and if they would learn anything, were to ask their husbands at home’.¹⁰ How evident soever this appears to him to be understood or spoken of women in general, it doth not appear so to many others. And his bare opinion is no proof of it. He must confess that male and female are all *one* in Christ Jesus; and I hope he will not deny but that God, in his mercy, has given a [p. 10] measure of his grace to the females, as well as to the males. And if so, who dare limit the operation thereof, and assert that it may lead men but not women to pray, preach, exhort, admonish, or reprove their fellow creatures, or administer comfort to the distressed? I shall, for my own part, declare that I have frequently been witness of the prevalency and good effect of the ministry of diverse women, as well as men, who have given the utmost proof of their ministry being from above, by the powerful effect and energy of their gifts. Which have led them, where they have been wholly strangers and unacquainted with the states or conditions of the hearers, to point out clearly the inward condition of some person or persons present, and to give suitable advice, reproof, or consolatory relief, according to such condition. And these we call proofs of a gospel ministry, which human learning, or the ordination of man, can never qualify men or women for; and which the formal, dead, and insipid minister of the *letter* has no part or lot in.

In page 7 and 8, in respect to *worship*, he does indeed confess that ‘all true worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving of his own Spirit’; but fears the letter writer does not understand what ‘being moved by the Spirit’ means. And I am fully convinced, if it be so, it is not in the power of this author to inform him. For he says, ‘God moves man according to reason—moves him by his understanding, by his affections, by light, by heat, by conviction—full as often as by desire.’ And then says, ‘You are as really moved by the Spirit when he convinces you you ought to feed him that is hungry, as when he gives you ever so strong an impulse, desire, or inclination so to do.’ A very uncommon distinction of that which cannot be distinguished! For if the Spirit move my understanding and affections, and give me light, heat, and conviction, and thereby convinces me of my duty; if these operations be not with impulse, what sensation can I have of them? If the Spirit gives me light, I must be sensible of it; and if heat, I must feel the warmth. And [p. 11] if I am convicted, or self-condemned, I must know it, and of and for what also I am so convicted. ‘In like manner’ (saith he, page 8) ‘you are really moved by the Spirit to pray, whether it be in public or private, when you have a conviction it is the will of God you should.’ But how shall I be convicted that it is the will of God I should pray to him, unless I feel an impulse from the Holy Spirit? Which bows my Spirit into deep reverence, and brings me into a sense of the want that I am in of divine help, and raises me into an admiration of the goodness and mercy of God, as well as his almightiness and willingness to assist me, a frail creature? Is not this a divine impulse? But if by having a conviction, he means only being convinced and firmly persuaded in our own minds that it is the will of God we should pray to him, this is not a sufficient inducement to prayer. For, saith the apostle, ‘the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but as the Spirit itself maketh intercession’, Romans 8:26.

It is one thing to be convinced we ought to pray, and another thing to experience the Spirit helping our infirmities, etc.

’Tis true they who plead as this author does, don’t seem to want the help of the Spirit, nor the waiting for it. They have learnt their prayer by rote, and are never at a loss.

In page 8 he seems offended at what he calls the main proposition (of Robert Barclay); viz., ‘All worship which man sets about in his own will, and at his own appointment’—on which his observations

⁹Titus 1:11.

¹⁰Cf. 1 Cor. 14:34–35.

are needless, for we never denied but a true gospel minister might appoint meetings, as it is not in his own will but in conformity to the will of God when such appointments are made by the divine impulse and leading of the Spirit. This is what we have been in the practice of. The latter part of that proposition he calls 'an amazing sentence'; viz., 'All praises, prayers, and preachings which man can begin and end at his own pleasure do, or leave undone, as himself sees meet, are superstitions, will-worship, and abominable idolatry in the [p. 12] sight of God.' In his reasoning on these expressions he also *is too hasty a great deal*—for whensoever any person who is wholly unacquainted with the leadings of the Spirit (though qualified with human learning, and ordained by man, to preach, pray, etc.) composes a sermon in his closet, or picks it out of the writings of other men, which he preaches, or rather reads (for it does not deserve the name of preaching) when and where he pleases; can such preaching, or appointed times, be called anything less than 'superstition, will-worship, and abominable idolatry'? And may not this just reproof be truly applied to him, and all such: 'Who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts?' Isaiah 1:12. 'For unto the wicked, God saith, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes; or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?"' Psalm 50:16.

I shall therefore, for my part, take it for granted (without being too hasty) that in all preachings which a man 'begins or ends at his pleasure', he is not 'moved by the Spirit'. But then I consider man as acting in his own will, as in the above circumstances, and not as acting by a divine influence; of which, I fear, we have too many instances in this nation among men of high pretences.

As for proving this proposition, which he requires, if it can be done, in page 9, that 'every man who preaches or prays at an appointed time preaches or prays in his own will, and not by the Spirit'—it is no part of our principles nor practice; and therefore requires no proof, but seems calculated to serve a turn and deceive the simple.

In the same page, he seems to triumph over Robert Barclay for saying, 'However it might please God, who winked at the times of ignorance, to raise some breathings and answer them.' In which he ought to consider that in the apostasy that overspread Christendom, and yet prevails in popish countries (where we Protestants believe their worship to be superstitious will-worship and idolatry) there were doubtless (and yet are) some who, through the influence of their guides, submitted to their way of worship, and [p. 13] thought it right too. And yet, as they were sincere, their inward cries, or breathings of soul, were heard with acceptance by the Lord. But woe to such leaders of the people who cause them to err! 'That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek', Amos 2:7.

In the same page he imagines he discovers Robert Barclay contradicting himself, in acknowledging that 'praying and preaching at set times may yet proceed from the Spirit'. This, as before observed, we never denied. And his drawing such a conclusion from Robert Barclay's writings was owing to his own perversion, or mistake. From whence he very falsely and unjustly returns the charge of superstition on the letter writer. Which he could not do on Robert Barclay's principles, for neither he nor the people called Quakers ever laid more stress on indifferent circumstances than on faith and the love of God, but believed where those prevail in the souls of men, who are regenerated and redeemed from evil, that they produce such a complete reformation as descends into every minute branch of their duty towards God and man.

In page 10 he discovers himself a total stranger to *retirement of mind* in public assemblies, or to an *inward contemplation of soul* before the Lord previous to *public acts of devotion* as a necessary preparative to acceptable worship; and in relation to sitting together in *silence* says, 'This is will-worship, if there be any such thing under heaven, for there is neither command nor example for it in scripture.' And then pretends to transcribe some of the *texts* brought by Robert Barclay in favour of it.¹¹ But out of

¹¹Note in original: 'That "to wait upon God, and to watch before him", is a duty incumbent upon all, I suppose none will deny. And that this also is "a part of worship", will not be called in question, since there is scarce any other so frequently commanded in the holy scriptures, as may appear from "Ps. 27:14 and 37:7, 34; Prov. 20:22; Isa. 30:18; Hosea 12:6; Zech. 3:8; Matt. 24:42, 25:13, and 26:41; Mark

the first (viz., Psalm 27:14) he has left [p. 14] these words ‘Wait, I say, on the Lord’, and part of some other verses. Whereupon he says, ‘By *these* one may judge of the *rest*. But how amazing is this ...’ And amazing indeed it is, if he has read over *all* these scriptures referred to, that he is not convinced of the necessity of ‘waiting upon the Lord, and being continually in a watchful state’.

Could he have produced one single scripture against the practice of *silent waiting upon* God, it would have been something to his purpose. And how he can call *silence* ‘will-worship’ I know not, for there can be no will-worship where men and women are brought into the ‘silence of all flesh’.¹² But he that rushes into acts of devotion, or reads or says over a formal dead prayer or sermon, without waiting to feel the renewings of the quickening Spirit to raise fervent cries in his soul to God for help and preservation, etc., performs will-worship in the true sense of the word. And if no more scripture could be brought for it than the Rechabites could bring for their adhering to the injunction of their father Jonadab, as their conduct therein was highly acceptable to God, and as the *true* Quakers find that they are *owned* of God by the descending of his consolating love and peace into their souls, it is sufficient inducement to them to continue in [p. 15] that practice; though the service and benefit thereof be hid from the wise and learned of this world, who put light for darkness, and darkness for light, and call good evil, and evil good, and yet pretend the scripture to be their rule while they are in the use of bells, organs, surplices, sprinkling of infants, etc., crossing their foreheads (the mark of the beast, see Revelation 13:11 and 16) using the ring in marriage, and therein their vain expression (‘with my body I thee worship’) and singing psalms in public worship; with many other things practised in *colleges*, etc., for which there is neither command, precept, nor example in all the scriptures, nor any authority but what was derived from the apostatized Church of Rome.

In page 11, notwithstanding his criticizing on Robert Barclay’s words in relation to *baptism*, he is obliged by the prevalency of truth to own that ‘Christ’s baptism was not the baptism of John; nor John’s baptism the baptism of Christ.’ Which is owning that they are *two distinct baptisms*. And it is very plain to me by the words of John concerning Christ, viz., ‘He must increase; but I must decrease’ (John 3:30), that John’s dispensation of water-baptism was to terminate at the commencement of Christ’s baptism and spiritual dispensation. And it is evident that the apostle Paul understood it so, when he asserted that ‘there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism’, Ephesians 4:5. And this was agreeable to his conduct in ‘thanking God that he had baptized so few’ (see 1 Corinthians 1:14), and declaring that ‘Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel’, verse 16. Which, if water-baptism was to have been continued, he would doubtless have been employed more in promoting the practice of than he was. To which let me add that if this author believes that Matthew 28:19–20 contains a command for water-baptism (though not mentioned there) through all ages, he must suppose the command for ‘anointing the sick with oil’ to be of the same extent, for which the apostle James (who doubtless had the mind of Christ) gave a command. [p. 16] And for the same reason that this author, and all other Protestants in this age, dispense with the non-observance of that command as temporary, I hope he will admit the people called Quakers to dispense with what he calls a command for water-baptism.

Besides if he and the rest of the members of the Church of England, who pretend to believe such a command obligatory on them, can acquit themselves of it and not *baptize* any, but substitute *sprinkling*, without any command for it in scripture, I hope he will not be too severe upon us, nor indeed blame us at all, for adhering to the *spiritual baptism*, and disusing the *water-baptism* wholly, since there is but *one*, as aforesaid. And so the Church of England (as appears by her practice) understands it. For as she uses but

13:33 and 35:37; Luke 21:36; Acts 1:4 and 20:31; 1 Cor. 16:13; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:6; 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Pet. 4:7”. Also this duty is often recommended with very great and precious promises, as Ps. 25:3, 37:9, and 96:6; Isa. 42:23; Lam. 3:25–26. “They that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength ...” Isa. 40:31. Now how is this “waiting upon God, or watching before him” but by this silence of which we have spoken? Which, as it is in itself a great and principal duty, so it necessarily in order both of nature and time precedeth all other. Barclay’s *Apology*, p. 361’.

¹²See Zech. 2:13.

one (or pretends to it, without using it at all), it is but too evident her members content themselves with it, without endeavouring to attain to the *other*, or even recommending mankind to press after the experience of it. And it is obvious that multitudes of people are so deceived thereby that they are taught to believe they are thereby made 'members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of his kingdom'. Nay it further appears by the *liturgy* of that *church* that the ceremony of *sprinkling* is called and accounted 'regeneration'— a notorious proof of the pernicious and hurtful consequence of continuing an 'outward and visible sign', and neglecting the 'inward and spiritual grace'.¹³ For what horrid murders, thefts, adulteries, profaneness, and all manner of wickedness are committed by some of these *pretended children of God*?

In page 12 (relating to *breaking of bread*, etc., in remembrance of Christ) he allows that believers partake of the 'body and blood of Christ' in a spiritual manner. For he could not avoid that concession, because it is impossible to be partaken of outwardly and literally. And then says, 'All this will never prove that we need not do what Christ has expressly commanded to be done.'

But he will do well to recollect, that our Lord, when he washed his disciples feet, said unto them,

If I [p. 17] then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent, than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.
John 13:14–17.

If he will not allow this to be a command, he must own it to be a practice strongly recommended by Christ to his disciples by his example, and pressed on them by moving arguments.

If I should query of him why he, as a pastor and minister of the national Church (if such he be) does not wash his hearers' and followers' feet, from the example of Christ? I do not see how he can excuse himself therefrom without supposing that the literal observation of that command or precept of Christ was not intended to be continued to after ages; but that we are only thereby taught readily and cheerfully to perform the meanest act of goodwill and real service one to another, with all humility of mind, as self-denying followers of humble Jesus. If this be granted, I hope he will give the people called Quakers, and the letter writer, the same liberty of understanding what he calls a command in relation to 'breaking of bread, and drinking of wine, in remembrance of Christ'. And to suppose that that outward act and performance of breaking bread, etc., was only to point out to his followers, in all ages, the spiritual remembrance they should have of him, and that inward communion of soul and near fellowship which subsist between Christ and his members, *mystically*. And that he is to them what food is to the body; their sustenance, strength, and continual support of life. And this agrees with his own words, 'I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst', John 6:33. And again, 'I am that bread of life', verse 48. I shall only add that too many, in pursuing the empty shadows and forms of religion, are often wholly [p. 18] diverted from earnestly desiring after the enjoyment of the substance; which this author seems not afraid of.

In page 13 he says that 'Christians may give titles of honour, such as are usually annexed to certain offices'. But overlooks, or passes over in silence, all Robert Barclay's arguments against applying titles falsely to men who possess not those virtues implied in their titles, and of giving no titles to poor men, though they possess those virtues. And brings nothing to prove the use of titles, but a misrepresentation of the conduct of Festus the governor, to show, if he could (or lead weak minds to believe), that Paul was led by custom to apply the title of 'Most Noble' to Festus, when he deserved it not.

In order therefore that no person may be imposed upon by him, I recommend the reader to the perusal of the whole 25th and 26th chapters of Acts. By which it will appear that Festus was not Paul's

¹³The description of sacraments in the catechism of the BCP.

enemy, but his friend. For when Festus was at Jerusalem, and the Jews desired favour of him against Paul, that he would send for Paul to Jerusalem in order for them to lay wait in the way and kill him, he told them, 'Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would shortly depart thither.' And when he came thither (with those Jews who were accusers of Paul), to please the people of the Jews, he asked Paul if he would go up to Jerusalem and be judged there? But when he said, 'I stand at Caesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged'—thus appealing to Caesar—Festus attempted not to send him to Jerusalem (knowing doubtless the Jews' design) but unto Caesar.

How unfairly therefore the author has stated the case, to serve his turn and to traduce Robert Barclay's words, is very evident to every impartial reader. So that his saying, 'Festus did give way to the fury of the Jews against Paul, and that he was a very wicked person, who to do the Jews a pleasure would have betrayed the innocent blood' appears to be a manifest untruth; very unbecoming a man of his pretensions. Though as Festus believed not Paul's doctrine, he might through ignorance suppose 'much learning had made him mad', which made Paul say, [p. 19] 'I am not mad, Most Noble Festus, ...'. Yet this does not prove that 'he would have betrayed innocent blood'. So that this author has been very far from gaining his point, by his 'fallacy' and 'quibble' (to use his own words). And he very artfully avoids taking any notice of Barclay's arguments against *vain compliments and empty titles*, because he could not defend them. As for the giving such titles as are annexed to certain offices, no *real* Quaker denies that. For we distinguish men by their offices, as 'King, Prince, Duke, Bishop, Lord, Judge, Justice, etc.' But why one ought to be called his Majesty, another his Highness, another his Grace, etc., must be left to him to be shown.

In page 14 he affects to appear very learned (though very weak) in his arguments for the *corruption of languages*, contrary to the scriptures; and in effect pleads for putting the accusative case before the verb, and destroying the distinction of singular and plural numbers, in opposition to the rules of grammar, and sound learning—as a *time-server* and *man-pleaser*, and in contradiction to the apostle Paul's exhortation to the Romans—viz., 'Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God', Romans 12:2.

In the next place, he accuses the letter writer with 'a far greater abuse of words than what he would reform', by calling the distinction of singular and plural numbers 'the plain language'. Which is very absurd, because he knows what is intended thereby is to speak plainly 'thou' and 'thee' to one (as he doth to God in his prayers) and 'ye' or 'you' to more than one. We know it is *plain language*, or rather *plain truth*, to speak the truth from our hearts. But there is so much *dissembling* and *lying* among such as use the customary way of speaking (and much more than among the people called Quakers) that it is equally detested by all truly religious people.

In the same 14th page he quotes Robert Barclay's words, viz., 'It is not lawful for Christians to kneel, or bow the body, [p. 20] or uncover the head to any man ...', and then says, 'If this is not lawful, then some law of God forbids it. Can you show me that law? If you cannot, then the scrupling this is another plain instance of superstition, not Christianity.'

This looks too much like cavilling. I may as justly retort those words upon him, and say, 'If it be lawful to bow the body, or uncover the head to any man, then some law of God commands it. Canst thou show me that law? If thou canst not, then the pleading for it is an instance of superstition, not Christianity.'

However, if he will produce any scripture under this dispensation of the gospel, or any example from the practice of Christ or his apostles, for bowing or uncovering the head to any man, how great soever, he will be likely to gain his point, and convince us of our error. And till then all *true* Quakers, so called, will disuse it. Because they are convinced by the *law of God in their hearts* that they ought not to do it, and *that law* they dare not transgress.

As to Robert Barclay's proposition relating to *superfluity of apparel, games, sports, and plays*, he assents thereto, in page 14; but with this observation, that the sin of superfluous apparel *lies chiefly in the superfluous expense*. In which he is not less wrong in his judgment. For superfluity is very extensive, and relates not only to the expense of apparel, but to the gay colours, foolish modes, and *never-settled*

fashions of it, and the ridiculous and immodest manner of wearing it as intended to gratify the vain minds of sinful and unregenerated persons. It is evident that a *servant* can wear as *large a hoop-petty-coat* as her *mistress*—at a fourth part of the expense—and with the same vanity of mind. Does the superfluity of this then *chiefly lie in the expense*? The same may be observed as justly in relation to almost *all the clothing of both sexes*!

What he says likewise in page 14 and 15 of ‘making a point of conscience to differ from others, as to the *shape* or *colour* of our apparel’ is very [p. 21] unfriendly and unjust, because he must know that the people called Quakers refuse to wear no *plain* and *modest colour*. But if they think the wearing of *gold* and *silver lace*, and *scarlet* clothing, or other gay colours, not suitable to the gravity of religion, ought he, as a *pretended reformer* of mankind, to account *that* an error? Surely he is hard put to it, in finding faults with the Quakers, to deal in such trifles, for want of greater errors in their principle. But as the poet observes,

*Impedit ira animum ne possit cernere verum.*¹⁴

We are not so *formal* as a *late formed society*—to confine our members very much to the colour *grey*. Nor so superstitious as he, and all other preachers or teachers besides—who confine themselves mostly to *black* or *grey*—to oblige our ministers or preachers to wear such colours. An evidence that we, as a people, place no religion in *colour*, but in a *self-denying* life in all things.

Do the scriptures direct ministers to wear a *black robe* at one time of the public service, and a *white one* at another? Is not this superstition? If not, what shall we call so, and where shall we find it? The charge therefore of superstition returns upon himself.

In the 15th and last page he says, ‘Refusing to *swear* is no part of Christianity, for Christ himself answered upon oath before a magistrate. Yea, he would not answer until he was put to his oath.’

In this he has made (if true) an entire new discovery, not thought of by the most violent persecutors of our Friends for not swearing. But seems wise ‘above what is written’,¹⁵ in asserting that Christ ‘would not answer till he was put to his oath’.

We only read that when the High Priest had heard his accusers (the false witnesses) he said unto him, ‘Answerest thou nothing ...? But Jesus held his peace,’ Matthew 26:62–63. Now how this author came to find out that it was for *want of an oath*, I cannot conceive. [p. 22]

It appears to be very clear that when the High Priest adjured him to answer, and thereby exhibited his authority and command, our Saviour submitted thereto and obeyed his command by answering. But for what reason he held his peace we know not. But this we know, that the High Priest’s saying, ‘I adjure thee ...’ was his own act, and not the act of Christ.

If he could prove that Christ had said ‘I swear by the living God!’, or that he had taken the book of the prophets in his hand and kissed it, it would have been an ample precedent for the method of swearing now too much used; for which, no gospel proof can be found. But in this case, so far was Christ from taking an oath that he only answered the High Priest in plain words, without saying, ‘by the living God’, or anything like it. For the text only says, ‘Jesus saith unto him ...’, verse 64. Which cannot be esteemed an oath. And which, if he had taken an oath, would have been a flat contradiction to his own precept before given to his disciples in these words:

But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay: for whatsoever is more than

¹⁴Dionysius Cato, *Disticha Catonis*, II, 4b; ‘Anger so clouds the mind that it cannot perceive the truth’.

¹⁵1 Cor. 4:6.

these, cometh of evil. Matthew 5:34–37.

And so that of the apostle James, 'Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath. But let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay; lest you fall into condemnation', James 5:12.

Thus, my friend, have I gone through my *remarks* on the said *pamphlet*, though I have no delight in controversy. Nor should I have engaged in it, had it not been for the sake of truth, and to take off the false gloss that the author thereof has covered his real designs with, 'of deceiving the weak, and leading them to believe all he thinks fit to impose on them'. [p. 23]

As for the letter writer [i.e., likely Stephen Plummer], I know him not, nor who he is. Neither have I seen the said letter, or any copy of it, and therefore am no judge of his performance. But I observe this author [JW] (on whom I have made these remarks), in the conclusion of his letter, tells him that 'he troubled not himself with the personal reflections, which made up so great a part of his letter'. Whereas if they were not just reflections upon him, or his conduct, he would have done well to have said so much in his own defence. And as he has not thought proper to set his name thereto, I think myself under no obligation to expose mine to him. But it seems clear to me he had some other end in publishing his answer to the letter writer than for his information (else he would have wrote to him privately); which was rather, through envy, to misrepresent our principles in the eyes of the world, and more particularly among his own people, whom he is unwilling to lose. And I fear from some sinister views, of which I wish he may be clear in the sight of God, before whom we must all appear, to give an account for all the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil. Which that he, and all mankind, may be above all things concerned for (that their lives may be blessed, and their latter ends happy) is the earnest and fervent desire of,

Thy Sincere Friend

Source: [John Fry,] *Some Remarks on a Pamphlet entitled 'A Letter to a Person Lately Joined to the People called Quakers, in answer to a letter wrote by him', in a letter from a friend in the country to another in Bristol* (Bristol: S. Farley, 1748).

From John Nelson

Birstall
February 1, 1748

This with my duty to you, and earnest prayers for you and all the church of God in London. I have been down at Epworth, and God revived his work amongst them. Most of the backsliders came weeping to me and said God had given them another offer of salvation, and they hoped they should never more turn their backs on God or his people. I stayed there near a week, and had greater congregations, both night and morning, than I used to see there in time past. I heard nothing of brother [William] Holme's death till I got to Norton. I believe God hath done more by him at his death than in all his life. I never saw the people at Sykehouse so earnest.

I preached at Norton, and there seems to be a revival there also. The death of brother Holmes hath stirred them also. He died a great witness for God. We have a great awakening in this place also, occasioned by the death of an old gentleman that was concerned in sending me for a soldier. About two months before he died he sent for me, and I spoke plain to him. He trembled and wept bitterly, and desired me to come again. And I found him under as great convictions as ever I saw a man. And my third visit he told me God had visited him with great love, so that all pain both of body and soul departed from him for some time. His pain of body returned, but he found God had yet a deal of work to do in his soul. He had many conflicts in his soul after, but was not a day for five weeks together without some returns of the love of God. I was with him the day before he died and he said, 'Last night at twelve o'clock God changed me, and I have as great encouragement to die as ever man had.' He desired me to preach over him. He continued to praise God and to tell everyone that came near him what God had done for his soul. He never complained of either pain or sickness, but seemed to be sanctified—body, soul, and spirit. I preached over him, and God laid his hand upon many that had been enemies before. Now they flock to hear the word, and the Lord works amongst us.

I hope you will continue to pray for,
Your unworthy son in the gospel,

John Nelson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1(1778): 529–30.¹

¹Titled in *AM*: 'An Account of a Remarkable Penitent'.

From John Cennick

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]
March 14, 1747/8

Dear Sir,

A few hours ago I received your kind note,¹ and thank you heartily for your favour.

I assure you seriously that in the matter of Skinner's Alley house some of the Baptists, and particularly Mr. Samuel Edwards, have wronged us. And it is out of doubt that if Mr. Williams had not told Mr. Edwards he would be glad to have given £6 per year for such a house we had enjoyed [it] to this day as before; that account or state of the case which I gave your brother is simply true, and will be found so in that day. I don't choose to consult Mr. Edwards any more about the matter, because I apprehend he has not now any authority to let the house or do anything in it till your term is expired, but if you are not easy in your mind about it, as I believe you cannot [be]—nor, indeed, am I, for their sakes who [have] laid out so much money in the house and are deprived of their improvements, though in my conscience I am contented before God for my own sake—and you offer to assign over your lease to me, I will take it to make you and them easy, and pay your expenses, or what charges you have been at in procuring the lease.

If you have not read the paper I gave your brother, I wish you would, and thereby you will be sensible how much our people have laid out, and the circumstances of the whole in order, and then you will judge the better how to conclude.

I ask only that you act in nothing contrary to brotherly love, as you wrote, and for conscience' sake, and then as you determine before him whose you and we are, and to whom belong all the souls, [you] shall make quite easy and satisfied

Your very affectionate brother,

John Cennick

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives, Skinner's Alley Account.²

¹JW to Cennick, Mar. 14, 1748, *Works*, 26:281–82.

²One copy endorsed, 'Bror. Cennick's answr. to Mr John Wesley'; also another copy, from which 'it' and 'have' have been inserted in this transcription. Transcriptions published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 406; and *Works*, 26:282.

From John Cennick

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]

March 15, 1747/8

Very Dear Sir,

I like your proposal of doing all with as little noise as possible,¹ and am heartily sorry that any has been made at all; but I am innocent in this respect, because it was from beginning to end a grief to my heart, and in all I was resolved to commit the whole into his hands who rules all things well, and be still.

Whatever now you think best to be done, and most inoffensive, I will approve of; and to make all things easy will be even as your own heart, nor have I the least against delaying it a few days, or doing anything which might end the affair the most agreeably and happily.

Our dear brother [Johann] Töltzschig salutes you affectionately, and so does

Your loving and tender brother,

John Cennick

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives.²

¹JW's second note to Cennick on Mar. 14, 1748, *Works*, 26:283.

²One copy in Cennick's hand; another copy in Skinner's Alley Account, endorsed, 'Bror. Cennick's answer to Mr. John Wesley's 2d. Letter'. Transcriptions published in ; *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 406; and *Works*, 26:284.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[Holyhead, Anglesey]
March 21, 1748

*Teneo te Italiam! Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum*¹

In twenty-five hours exactly, as before, the Lord brought us hither.² To describe our voyage were, *renovare dolorem*.³ But here we are, after all. God be praised, even God that heareth the prayer. Thanks, in the second place, to our praying brethren. The Lord return it into their bosom. But let them pray on for us, and we for them. And I pray the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to send down his blessing and his Spirit on all you who are now assembled together, and hear this read. Peace be unto you, even the peace that passeth all understanding. Look for it every moment! receive it this — and go in peace to that heavenly country, whither we are hastening to meet you!

Source: published transcription; Whitehead, *Life*, 1:322–23.

¹Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.204 — ‘I hold for Italy ! Through various misfortunes, through so many kinds of danger.’

²JW had replaced CW in Ireland, allowing him to return to England.

³Virgil, *Aeneid*, ii.3 — ‘to renew grief’.

From John Curtis¹

Maryport-Street, Bristol
the 23rd of the 1st month, called March, 1747/8.

A pamphlet entitled *A Letter to a Person lately joined to the People called Quakers, in Answer to a Letter wrote by him* lately came to my hand, wherein it appears to me that the subtlety of the serpent has manifested itself through the author, by endeavouring to cover his head, according to his old way of working; not being willing to come to the light, lest he should be discovered to be what he really is, *a deceiver of mankind*, both by not subscribing his name to his *Letter*, as if he was ashamed to be known, and also by his fawning expressions, wherein he allows, ‘That many who are termed Quakers are *real Christians*, men who *have the mind what was in Christ!*’ and yet endeavours to prove a *difference* between Quakerism and Christianity. And further, the subtlety yet more appears in that the author, instead of giving a *private answer* directly to a *private parting letter*, he has craftily endeavoured to lessen and bring a *cloud over* the writings of Robert Barclay (who I have reason to believe was such a sort of a Quaker as he terms a ‘Christian’) in order to puzzle the minds of those whose eyes are, in some degree, *opened* to see the power and sufficiency of the *universal and saving light of the glorious gospel*, which is manifested *in them*, lest they should come to follow the leadings thereof, and be made *wiser* than their *earthly teachers*, and they lose the honour of being their leaders.

As the author has not mentioned his name, I am not certain who he is. But be his name or profession what it may, inasmuch as he has asserted that ‘the Scriptures are the touchstone whereby Christians examine all revelations, etc.’, and has also asserted that ‘the Spirit is not our rule at all, etc.’ (as in page 4), I would therefore desire him to appear in his own name, in answer to the *following queries*, in a plain, honest, intelligible manner, so that (as there is a great bustle made in this city, and diverse other places, about *religion*) the poor illiterate mechanics, etc., may come to be rightly informed of a *true touchstone, a certain rule, and true guide* that will lead them and guide them in that way of which it is said, ‘the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein’—for one says *this* is the way and rule and touchstone; and another says *that* is the way and rule and touchstone—which puzzles many sober enquirers. Therefore, I may reasonably require the author (as he has been so curious to make a distinction between Quakerism and Christianity) to *clear up* this matter in such a manner as to make it intelligible to the meanest capacity; which if he will be honest therein, may be of service to many tribulated souls.

John Curtis

- Query 1. What is the law and testimony unto which Christians, in all cases, appeal, to try every spirit by?
[Query] 2. What was the touchstone which the apostles, and those that were converted at the time of Pentecost, and at the house of Cornelius, tried spirits and revelation by?
[Query] 3. What touchstone did Christians try revelation and spirits by that were converted two, seven, or ten years after?
[Query] 4. Are we under the same dispensation which the first Christians were? Or is the dispensation changed?
[Query] 5. If the dispensation is changed, when was it changed and by whom?
[Query] 6. If the dispensation is not changed, query whether we are to try revelation and spirits by the same touchstone which the primitive Christians tried them? — Or, are we to try them by another?

¹John Curtis, of Quaker origin, became active among Bristol Methodists for about a year in the mid-1740s, before reclaiming strongly his Quaker roots and receiving a call to ministry among them. He replies here to a pamphlet JW published that was critical of the Quakers. Later this year Curtis took his ministry to Ireland, where he persuaded some Quakers to distance themselves from the Methodists, leading JW to charge him publicly with sowing dissension (see letter of Aug. 14, 1749 below).

P. S. I expect a *single answer* under *every single query*, and nothing short of that will be to my satisfaction.

Source: published transcription; John Curtis, *A Letter to the Author of a pamphlet entitled 'A Letter to a Person Lately Join'd to the People Called Quakers, in answer to a letter wrote by him'* (Bristol: S. Farley, Mar. 23, 1747/8).²

²Transcribed from the copy held by the Library of the Society of Friends, London.

From the Rev. Johann Töltschig¹

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]

March 26, 1748

Sir,

Mr. [John] Cennick has left no orders with me concerning Skinner's Alley. As far as I know he is of the same mind as he was then, when he wrote to you. And as I myself do not choose to meddle in that affair, I should like it better if you would send your opinion about it to London, who will not fail to let you know his mind. Sir,

Your humble servant,

John Teltschig

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives, Skinner's Alley Account.²

¹Replying to JW's note of the same date; see *Works*, 26:194–95.

²Copy endorsed, 'Bror. Teltschig's answer to Mr. John Wesley's 1st Letter'; and another copy. Transcription published in *Works*, 26:295.

From the Rev. Johann Töltzschig

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]
March 29, 1748

Sir,

Yours I received last night.¹ Mr. [John] Cennick has surely let you know his mind concerning Skinner's Alley meeting-house before he left the kingdom. Which his own letters to you will be a sufficient proof of. I acquainted you in my last that I did not choose to meddle in this, nor in any other affair with you. Although you speak in your letters several times about conscience and how you only have to clear it in the sight of God. Which expression shows plainly that it was then a matter of conscience to you. And that something acted unfairly had disturbed your breast.

Now in your last to me you say: 'since he has left all things undetermined, my conscience is satisfied'.

How can that be? Did not you desire him to delay it for a few days, to which he agreed willingly? And waited only for an opportunity when *you* should think proper to proceed?

But the hour for his setting out for England being come he could not stay any longer. But I desired you in my first that you would write to him about it—who would not fail to let you know his mind. I should think that if you had a mind to act fairly in the matter you should have waited at least ten days longer, in which time you might have had a full answer from him from London.

Now, dear sir, what has satisfied your conscience? And what has cleared your conscience in the sight of God, that you now can have freedom in your conscience to go and preach in the house before you had settled the matter with Mr. Cennick? The above asserted reason can't satisfy your conscience. Mr. Cennick's setting out for London can't be a reason to clear *your* conscience in the sight of God; your *own heart* will tell you that plain enough. Did not Mr. Cennick tell you in his first and second letters he would take the house, in order to ease your conscience, and to satisfy the people which had laid out so much money? Why did you not settle that affair with Mr. Cennick before you went to preach in the house, which you could not preach in a fortnight ago for conscience' sake? How is it that you can do it now? How can you venture to take God's name in your mouth, and to call upon God, in a house at which time your own conscience must tell yo(u) that you (as I have been told) have taken the house over people's heads? In my opinion, if you had the least feeling of God's and Jesus' love in your heart you could not do it, except you had first made up the matter with Mr. Cennick and the people. I shall not expect any answer to this. Nor do I intend to answer you if you write to me. I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

John Teltzschig

Address: 'To / The Revd: Mr: John Wesley'.

Source: manuscript copy; London, Moravian Archives.²

¹JW to Johann Töltzschig, Mar. 28, 1748, *Works*, 26:195–96.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 26:296–97.

From Jonathan Binns and William Mondet¹

Skinner's Alley
March 29, 1748

Sir,

Mr. [Johann] Teltschig received yours last night. Mr. [John] Cennick has surely let you know his mind concerning Skinner's Alley house before he left the kingdom, which his own letters to you will be a sufficient proof of. Mr. Teltschig acquainted you in his last that he did not choose to meddle in this affair with you. Although you speak in your letters several times about conscience, and how you only have to clear yourself in the sight of God, which expression shows plainly that it was then a matter of conscience to you, and that something acted unfairly had disturbed your breast. Now in your last to Mr. Teltschig you say, Since he (Mr. Cennick) has left all things undetermined, my conscience is satisfied.

How can that be? Did not you desire him to delay it for a few days, to which he agreed willingly, and waited for an opportunity only when *you* should think proper to proceed?

But the hour for his setting out for England being come, he could not stay any longer. But Mr. Teltschig desired you in his first that you would write to him about it, who would not fail to let you know his mind. We should think that if you had a mind to act fairly in the matter you should have waited at least ten days longer, in which time you might have had a full answer from him from London.

Now, dear sir, what has satisfied your conscience? And what has cleared your conscience in the sight of God, that you now can have freedom in your conscience to go and preach in the house before you had settled the matter with Mr. Cennick? The above asserted reason can't satisfy your conscience in the sight of God. Your own will tell you that plain enough. Did not Mr. Cennick tell you in his first and second letter he would take the house, in order to ease your conscience, and to satisfy the people which had laid out so much money? Why did you not settle that affair with Mr. Cennick before you went to preach in the house, which you could not preach in a fortnight ago for conscience' sake? How is it that you can do it now? How can you venture to take God's name in your mouth, and to call upon God, in a house at which time your own conscience must tell you that you have taken the house over people's heads?

In our opinion, if you had the least feeling of God or Jesus' love in your heart you could not do it, except you had first made up the matter with Mr. Cennick and the people.

Concerning the month's warning which you now in your last letter to Mr. Teltschig require, it appears as if you was but equivocating with us. Signed,

Jonathan Binns, and
Wm. Mondet

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives, Skinner's Alley Account.²

¹In a petition asking John Cennick to return to Dublin, dated Aug. 22, 1745, William Mondet described himself as a gentleman; one of his co-signers was Jonathan Binns, described as a trimmings-seller. Both belonged to a group of Baptists who from that time supported Cennick and the Dublin congregation of Moravians, and when Samuel Edwards leased Skinner's Alley to Thomas Williams they had camped in the building until forcibly ejected by a constable.

²Copy endorsed, 'Brors. Binns & Mondet's answer to Mr. John Wesley's 2d. letter to Bror. Teltschig'; and another copy. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 406–07; and *Works*, 26:297–98.

From John Cennick

London
April 2, 1748

My Dear Brother Wesley,

Yesterday I received a letter from brother Teltschig wherein he desires to know if I am of the same mind about taking the house in Skinner's Alley, that he may answer you, who (he says) have wrote again to him about it. I don't know that you had the least reason to think otherwise, nor have I altered my mind, but waited for you to appoint the time and I was ready to consent, as I said before, to do anything which might ease your mind and do justice, as far as justice can be now done, to those injured people who have repaired the house, etc. Our brother [William] Horne¹ is in Dublin. If you please to make the assignment to him it is the same as if I was present. I am

Your affectionate brother,

John Cennick

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives, Skinner's Alley Account.²

¹William Horne (born at Wakefield in 1716) had been a member of the Fetter Lane Moravian society since 1742, had been ordained deacon in Germany, and in 1744 served the Moravian enterprise in Yorkshire, with William and Elizabeth Holland as colleagues. In August that year he married a Leeds dissenter, Mary Bowes. In 1746 the Hornes went to serve the Moravian cause in Wiltshire, apparently coming thence to Ireland.

²Copy endorsed, 'This is Bror. Cennick's letter which was enclos'd in one to Bror. Teltschig for Mr. John Wesley'; also another copy. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 407; and *Works*, 26:298.

From the Rev. Johann Töltshig

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]
April 14, 1748

Sir,

The enclosed¹ I received from Mr. [John] Cennick, who desired me to send it you. Mr. [William] Horne is now with me in Skinner's Alley, who will supply brother Cennick's place in treating the affair with you concerning the meeting-house there, and receive the lease of you for Mr. Cennick. Mr. Horne only waits for the time and place you'll appoint to meet with him. As concerning the month's warning you require, it is thought there is no occasion for it, since Mr. Cennick has all along declared himself to take the house. But, however, if it does not suit with you to part with it in less than a month, we are willing to wait so long. I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

John Teltshig

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives, Skinner's Alley Account.²

¹He includes a copy of Cennick's letter to JW of Apr. 2.

²Copy endorsed, 'Bror. Teltshigs letter to Mr. John Wesley on Bror. Horn's arrival and power of acting in Bror. Cennick's stead. '; also another copy. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 407; and *Works*, 26:303.

From William Horne

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]
April 22, 1748

Sir,

I have now, according to your desire, waited till an arbitration should be made about the expenses of Skinner's Alley Meeting-House, and two of the society went to Mr. [Samuel] Edwards to propose referees to him. Mr. Edwards rejected the first proposed, but accepted of the second as undeniable. But two days after he rejected him also, without assigning any sufficient reason, thereby demonstrating that their mind was not to have the matter impartially arbitrated, and therefore it is thought best to drop it. I thought proper to acquaint you, according to your desire, and if you'll appoint a time and place shall meet you to receive an assignment of the lease for Mr. [John] Cennick.¹ I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

Wm. Horne

Source: manuscript copies; Moravian Archives.²

¹See JW's response, dated the same day, in *Works*, 26:313–14.

²A draft (with alterations) by Horne; and a copy in Skinner's Alley Account, endorsed 'Mr. Horne's letter to Mr. John Wesley after the proposal of referees to Mr. Edwards'. Each document is preceded with the following memorandum: 'After Mr. Wesley had desired by a note that Bro. Horne would meet him, and then advised him to get our trustees to propose to Mr. Sam. Edwards to leave the matter of the repairs to referees, etc., etc., he had done so with no good effect, then he wrote to Mr. Wesley as follows.' Cf. another copy, with the marginal note: 'Mr. Edwards has since been with some of the society, and would now gladly have Mr. Hobourn to stand as referee, whom he had before rejected, but we have absolute(ly ref) used to do anything more in this matter.' Also at Moravian Archives is a letter from Edwards offering to accept 'Mr. Hobourn', dated Apr. 27. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 23, 1929), 417; and *Works*, 26:312–13.

From William Horne

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]

April 27, 1748

Sir,

I have now waited on you three times according to your appointment, in order to receive from you an assignment of the lease of Skinner's Alley Meeting-House, which you wrote word you would put into my hands as soon as you was indemnified in regard to the bonds and covenants you was under, and which I offered to do as Mr. [John] Cennick's agent. Then you deferred the matter by desiring us to get an arbitration made of the expenses of the house first, wherein you owned we had been much wronged, and ought to have justice done. This we also complied with, though not of choice, knowing that nothing was likely to come out of it, and it was only delaying the matter. Now since it proved accordingly, and Mr. [Samuel] Edwards rejected publicly the referees proposed, with which you was acquainted in my letter, as also that we should now drop the arbitration. I find by the message you sent last night that you seek further to delay the assignment of the lease by soliciting Mr. Edwards again for an arbitration, and at a time when you are going into the country. Now your motive of proceeding thus cannot be our interest, because so far from our desiring it, that we had signified directly the contrary; consequently it must be either to retard the assignment of the lease, and if possible find out some specious pretence for keeping the house, or else to cover that apparent injustice which the society have received from you or yours.

As I expect to leave this kingdom in a few days, and probably shall not have an opportunity of seeing you for the present, I therefore thought proper candidly to mention to you my sentiments of this affair as an impartial person, not by any means as making unkind reflections, but rather to discharge what I think my duty.¹

It is too apparent that one of your preachers (viz., Mr. [Thomas] Williams) has been the root of all the trouble and tryings which the Skinner's Alley society have sustained in regard to the Meeting-House there, by his intimating to the Baptists that the house was worth double the rent that they (viz., the society) gave for it; and that this was not spoken inadvertently, but with design to get the house from them, is manifested by another of your preachers, Mr. [Charles] Perronet's, taking the house afterwards, and giving double the rent for it at a time when Mr. Cennick had sent your brother Charles a full state of the case. Your taking the lease of Mr. Perronet evidenced your approbation of this proceeding, and you could not plead ignorance, because it is utterly improbable that your brother and Mr. Perronet should conceal it from you. As to the house being advertised to be let, that can be no just plea, because an advertisement to the contrary was immediately published by the society, forbidding anyone to take the house till matters were adjusted betwixt the contending parties, which also was communicated to you or yours. Therefore it is no wonder if afterwards your conscience should be alarmed about the great injustice done the Skinner's Alley society. How you can now satisfy your conscience, or make these injured people sufficient amends, I can't tell. Even the assignment of the lease will be far short of it, for you have brought double the rent upon them that they paid before, and obliged them to take another house and be at a very great expense upon it, besides the confusion and hurry brought upon weak minds, and the general interruption of the necessary regulations of the society, and consequently of the benefits accruing from thence. I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

Wm. Horne

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives.²

¹See JW's response, dated the same day, in *Works*, 26:315.

²A draft; and a copy in Skinner's Alley Account, endorsed, 'Bror. Horne to Mr. John Wesley'. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 30, 1929), 417; and *Works*, 26:314–15.

From John Cennick

Skinner's Alley [Dublin]
May 14, 1748

Dear Mr. Wesley,

I am sorry the settling the matter of Skinner's Alley house between us needs so many words.

I thought, very dear sir, by your first letters you was convinced in your heart from the Lord that we were wronged, and desired to ease your mind by offering us the house again for the time you had taken it, at your rents. I then told you I would take it, and even pay the charges which you had been at in obtaining a lease, and at your desire waited till you had time to transmit it to me. In the meantime I went to England, and left brother [William] Horne to act for me, but at my return found things far from being settled. The difficulties my friends thought in the way were that you proposed to them such things which would lay them again under obligations to Mr. [Samuel] Edwards, which you know I refused in the beginning, and after which you still promised me the house, and some other encumbrances which neither they nor I would choose to be involved in. Neither of these things you proposed to me before, and if only upon these conditions you are willing to give us again the house I am entirely contented to be without it, and will strive to the utmost of my power to make all our people receive their wrong patiently. And now, dear sir, if you can answer it before our Lord Jesus, and be satisfied in your own conscience, keep the house, and let the end prove if you do well.

I am your affectionate and loving brother,

J. Cennick

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives.¹

¹A fair copy by Cennick; and a copy in Skinner's Alley Account, endorsed, 'Bror. Cennick's to Mr. John Wesley'. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 30, 1929), 417; and *Works*, 26:318.

From William Mondet¹

[Dublin]
May 14, 1748

Sir,

One would imagine you felt the warmth of the truths mentioned in our letter came with some feeling upon your heart, but you can't from thence fairly conclude any warmth of spirit in us, as the conduct of those who have acted under your influence and authority, when weighed by honest disinterested persons, has been found repugnant to equity, and your further proceedings, I mean in regard of Skinner's Alley meeting-house, a confirmation of the same. I for my part have no reason to retract anything in that letter. Mr. [John] Cennick's going away was publicly spoke of some time before he left the kingdom, and I think that affair was so far settled to prevent that change of mind which you afterwards showed in preaching in that house. You confess Mr. Cennick appeared to you, from his behaviour and what you surmised from his words to others, to trifle with you, and therefore could not in conscience delay preaching there any longer. Could not the plain simple meaning of Mr. Cennick's letter prevail (above an appearance only, and your comparing his words to others, perhaps differently repeated or misrendered to you) to convince you he was not trifling? You tell me we entirely mistake your motive of acting. I am yet really a stranger to your motives, except your desire of having the house from us. I am very sensible you are not unacquainted with the method which was used to dispossess us.

As to the advertisement, I suppose Mr. [William] Horne has in his to you fully satisfied you, so that I have no occasion to take notice.

But you say we positively refused to take it again. Who told you so? I am sure I never did, but on the contrary, when we would have taken it, it was positively refused us.

You add, sir, that now you are ready at a month's warning to relinquish the house, etc. I own for my part you have made and yet make so many offers and proposals, and yet with so much contradiction in all your behaviour, that I really cannot tell what answer to make, because indeed I think you do worse than *trifle*. An instance of such acting (after many before) I cannot but take notice of, namely that Mr. [John] Meriton at your appointment and order sent for me and Mr. Gilbert without Mr. Horne (who was the only person entrusted to act for Mr. Cennick), [and] would have had us sign a paper and a bond of £500 to indemnify you, etc., things which we neither could nor would [it] have been just for us to have done of ourselves, we being only to be bondsmen to his deeds, at which time I told Mr. Meriton they were proposals not fit for honest men to make, and Mr. Meriton himself owned that it was such a matter in which he would not care to act. This appeared as if clandestinely you would have involved us in difficulties, and leave us to be under the same or worse obligations to Mr. Samuel Edwards than ever[, and] when Mr. Cennick and we [too] had shown you our resolution to have nothing more to do with him. He has both in respect to the house at first, and since in respect of leaving the matter of the repairs to referees, behaved as if he intended to lay aside the appearance of the least honesty. And when you act so intricately, and don't speak your mind plain at once, you force me to think much of your real intentions. However, as Mr. Cennick is arrived, I had rather now you would write him your mind, and though I know he has much to do yet, I believe he would spare so much time to give you his answer. Only your proposals must be more free of difficulties and reserves, else I fear he will find it as hard as myself to know what you would have done. I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

Wm. Mondet

Source: manuscript copies; London, Moravian Archives.²

¹Replying to JW's of Apr. 16, *Works*, 26:303–04; see JW's reply dated May 14, *Works*, 26:317.

²A copy in Skinner's Alley Account, endorsed, 'Bror. Mondet's 2d. letter to Mr. John Wesley'; a partial draft in Cennick's hand; and another copy of the complete letter. Transcription published in *Irish Christian Advocate* (Aug. 30, 1929), 417; and *Works*, 26:316–17.

From William Lunell¹

Dublin
June 27, 1748

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

Your affectionate remembrance of me in your letters was very agreeable, and your desire of hearing from me was still more obliging. It is therefore with much pleasure I sit down to write to one I so much love, as I do dear Mr. Wesley.

As to the state of my family at present, it is but melancholy. For since our arrival we have known little else but sickness and disappointments. My wife, to hide herself from the idle and impertinent world, retired to a lodge by the sea-side some days after you left us. But in a few days she was seized with such violent disorders as obliged her to hurry to her own house, where we now are. She is somewhat composed to what she hath been, but is so weak and low-spirited that she cannot with safety walk the room; so you may judge. This, joined to the loss I have had in not being able to attend the preaching, hath greatly distressed my mind. But the Lord hath shown me that all this affliction was necessary, and I trust he will bring me through, as God refined.

At present all kind of persecution seems to be at an end. We had preaching twice yesterday in the Green, to a large congregation, where a smile was scarce to be seen. The soldiers and one of the officers sent for Mr. [James] Wheatley, to converse with him. My Lord Chancellor's gentleman was so affected likewise under the word that he desired earnestly to see him. I trust our dear Lord will so strengthen and support his servants that the gospel may be received by all; and indeed it appears that it will quickly spread over the whole land.

Mr. [Thomas] Williams hath met with no obstructions, but was attentively heard by the greatest multitude he ever preached to in this kingdom. This would be matter of the greatest joy, if there were but labourers sufficient for so great a work. But I trust the Lord, whose work it is, will provide.

I know you have many trials as well as comforts. O may the Lord give you more fully to enjoy the rest which he has purchased for his children! And may his work prosper in your hands, that, at the great day, thousands may be the crown of your rejoicing!

My wife and daughter,² who are often refreshed with heavenly showers, salute you and your dear brother most affectionately, with, dear sir,

Your very unworthy, but sincere friend,

William Lunell

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 532–33.³

¹William Lunell, son of a Huguenot refugee, became a wealthy cloth merchant (and sometimes banker) in Dublin. He lived in a large house at 15 Francis Street. He was apparently won for Methodism by Thomas Williams in early 1747. His second wife Anne (Gratton) Lunell died Aug. 6, 1748 (see CW's epitaph in his letter of Aug. 21). See *WHS* 22.4 (1939): 73–76.

²His only surviving daughter, Martha, was born in 1733. In 1754 she was married to Anthony Grayson.

³Titled in *AM*: 'Some Farther Account of the Work in Dublin'. Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:319–20.

From the Rev. George Whitefield¹

Deal
July 5, 1748

Will you not be glad to hear that the God of the seas and the God of the dry land hath brought me to my native country once more? I came last from the Bermudas, where the friend of sinners has been pleased to own my poor labours abundantly. I hope I come in the spirit of love, desiring to study and pursue those things which make for peace. This is the language of my heart:

O let us find the ancient way,
Our wond'ring foes to move;
And force the heathen world to say,
See how these Christians love.²

I purpose, God willing, to be in London in a few days. In the meanwhile I salute you and all the followers of the blessed Lamb of God most heartily.

Be pleased to pray for, and give thanks in behalf of, reverend and dear brother,
Yours most affectionately in Christ,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Works*, 2:146–47.

¹This letter was apparently sent to London, to the attention of either Wesley brother, announcing Whitefield's return to England from his third visit to America. He had been absent since Aug. 1744. JW was currently in the north of England. CW was in London and met with Whitefield and Howell Harris two days later to discuss how there might be greater union among the branches of the revival.

²CW, Hymn on 1 John 3:18, st. 9, *HSP* (1740), 119.

From William Spencer¹

Kingswood
August 9, 1748

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I have undertaken to give you a particular account of the work of God that continues among our little ones, which is by the desire of brother Moss,² whose soul was for some time exceeding sorrowful on account of the ill behaviour of some of the children, especially Robert Jones.³

Last Friday, as he was musing (it being his turn to be with the children), he concluded to beseech the Lord for him in particular. This he did, and found his burden removed, and expounded the eighth chapter of St. Mark to them. As he spoke he found the Spirit of God was with the Word. Robert Jones, Gab[riel] Wayne,⁴ and Fred[erick] Mullard were pricked to the heart, and cried out, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Edward Jenkins⁵ seemed something touched. He [Moss] prayed with them till he was almost spent, while their cries increased continually. Brother Moss called brother Sellon,⁶ brother Grou,⁷ and me, who joined in singing and prayer till eight o'clock. Sometimes their cries were so great we could not hear ourselves pray. While we were singing Jacky Williams⁸ (after he had been to Robert Jones and the others, who cried out, and exhorted them, one by one, to believe on the Lord Jesus) went to those who were not affected at all, and asked them, 'How if God should require your soul of you this night? What would become of you? Without the knowledge of Christ you are lost for ever!' Then he went to Edward Jenkins and said, 'O how hard is your heart, Neddy! Fall on your knees, and pray to the Lord.' And with his words there went power. He fell on his knees immediately, and cried out more than they all for mercy. The sense of his state drank up his very spirits. But he did not continue so long, for in the midst of his anguish he heard a voice which spoke to his soul, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' The wind bloweth where it listeth.⁹ The Spirit of the Lord has blown on him, and breathed life into his soul, and lo, he lives and

¹William Spencer (d. 1779) was recruited by John Cennick to help start Kingswood school in 1740. JW approved the appointment and when Cennick left a few months later, Spencer was left in sole charge. When JW enlarged and upgraded Kingswood in 1748, Spencer was one of the original masters. By the early 1760s a cloud had formed around Spencer, leading to his departure from both Kingswood and Methodism. He became rich, and died intestate in 1779. See *WHS* 28 (1952): 149–50, and Ives, *Kingswood*, 26–27, 227–33.

²Richard Moss (1718–84) became a Methodist about 1744 and was soon living at the Foundery and accompanying JW on preaching trips. While mainly a servant, Moss preached occasionally on these trips, and in 1747 was listed as one of JW's Assistants. In 1748 JW made Moss master at Kingswood School. See *AM* 2 (1798): 3–8, 53–59; and Ives, *Kingswood*, 26.

³Robert Jones Jr. (c. 1734–93), the eldest son of Robert and Mary (Forrest) Jones of Fonmon Castle, who was sent for training to Kingswood upon its opening in 1748. See Ives, *Kingswood*, 35–39.

⁴This is surely the grandson of John Wayne (1696–1747), the eldest son and heir of Gabriel Wayne (1653–1722), who had established a major copper smelting operation in Conham. CW often preached at a chapel built and endowed by Sir Abraham Ellison for the workers in this smelt works.

⁵His nickname was 'Neddy'; cf. JW, *Works*, 25:468.

⁶Walter Sellon (1715–92) had just been appointed as classics master for Kingswood school.

⁷Abraham Grou served as French Master at Kingswood school 1748–50, but his temperament proved ill-fitting to teaching children. See Ives, *Kingswood*, 27, 44.

⁸Possibly the son of John Williams that was a member of a married men's band in Bristol in 1739; see *Works*, 25:635.

⁹See John 3:8.

praises God! For the love of God is shed abroad in his heart. And last night in particular, when I had been exhorting them to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and to endure with patience whatsoever he should permit. Jackey Standworth likewise received a fresh sense of pardon on Friday [Aug. 5]; he had all the afternoon been under great buffetings of the enemy. So that Jacky Williams, Jacky Standworth, and Edward Jenkins walk in the love of God, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Last night Neddy's cup run over, and Jacky Williams received more strength and holy courage. But Gaby Wayne and Robert Jones's convictions were soon trifled away; yet the Lord is striving with them. O may he continue to strive till he hath gotten himself the victory! Fred Mullard is much comforted, if he has not a sense of pardon. This morning Robert Jones desired me to write him a letter to his aunt Jones, which I did. He said if he could write he had a deal in his heart to say, especially two verses of a hymn which was much in his mind, and was his whole desire:

I ask that I may do thy will
As angels do above;
I ask thee all my soul to fill
With pure seraphic love.

Whate'er I ask in faith I have,
As sure as God is true;
From all my sins thou soon shalt save,
And all my soul renew.¹⁰

Brother Moss's soul is much comforted, and his hands strengthened in the work. Dear sir, pray for us, that our souls may prosper. I long for full redemption. My soul is athirst for the whole image of God. I am quite weary of inbred sin. O my Saviour, who art at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for thine own who are in the world, pray for me, Lord Jesus, that I depart no more from thee for ever. Holy Father, do thou fulfil the petitions of thy Son, and grant that I may be kept from the evil of this present world! Make me one with him, even as thou and he are one; that the same love that is in thee may be in me, and Christ in me; that from henceforth it may be no more I that live, but Christ that liveth in me. Dear sir, so pray you for me, and that God would continue to bless our little ones more abundantly. I remain,

Your unworthy son and servant for Christ's sake,

William Spencer

P. S. The family give their duty to you. We all love one another, and each esteems the other better than himself.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778), 533–35.¹¹

¹⁰CW, Hymn on Mark 11:22–24, sts. 9–10, *HSP* (1742), 251.

¹¹Titled in *AM*: 'An account of the children at Kingswood School'. Abridgement published in *Works*, 26:320–21.

From Rebekah Bennet¹

[Kingswood]
August 13, 1748

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

I rejoice greatly that the Lord inclined your heart to receive such a weak and unworthy member into the sweet and comfortable fellowship of this your happy household. For surely the Lord Jesus, the Most High God, dwelleth in the midst of us and maketh the harmony of praise and thanksgiving to flow sweetly in the heart of every member! O, *it is a pleasant thing to be thankful!* And though Satan has been suffered to tempt some of us, yet God has showed himself the greater, and has endued them with power from on high to resist him, steadfast in the faith. Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ! I can only lisp his praise. It would suffice for me, could I but love him with all my heart and serve him with all my strength. But O, what a falling short do I find! Lord Jesus, when shall it once be? Lord, behold thy handmaid; be it unto me even as thou wilt!² Dear sir, pray for me that I may be faithful unto death.

Reverend sir, I thank you for your kind letter.³ You ask was I serious formerly?⁴ No, to my great shame do I speak it. I then drank in iniquity like water, and rushed into sin daily without remorse, even as a horse rusheth into the battle. Having often stifled convictions, God gave me over to that abominable sin of drunkenness. O Lord, grant I may love much, for surely I have much forgiven. I then lived with one who was much given to this, and fought against God with all my might, till my companion in wickedness died. I was much shocked at this, for we parted but a few days before, after which I never saw her more. I was left in a great deal of outward distress. But it was good for me that I was afflicted. I then went to A. Lodge, but was still a bond-slave to the devil. One day she desired me to go with her to hear you. I had no desire to go, but I went to oblige her. Your text was, 'Repent, and do the first works'.⁵ Before you had done the Lord convinced me that unless I repented I should be lost. But, alas! I was like a man beholding his natural face in a glass. I soon forgot what manner of creature I was. Yet from that time I had a great love to you, because you speak so loving to sinners. So that I now went out of a desire to hear you, more than a desire of salvation, for I was very ignorant. Yet I continued to hear you.

When I had heard you about a month, I dreamed the devil appeared in a most dreadful form and said to me, 'Will you name the name of God?' I told him yes, I would name the name of God as long as I lived. And I found my heart more drawn out in prayer to God than ever I had done in my life. He threatened me that if I named the name of God any more, he would pull me backwards. I told him I did not care what he did to me, for I was resolved to call upon God while I had breath. I then heard a small still whisper, which said, 'Dost thou believe the grace of God is sufficient to save thee from him?' I answered I believe God is both able and willing to save me from the power of the devil. And so I found it, for he came near me no more. But my soul was filled with praises and thanksgivings that he had given me to overcome the devil. Soon after the arrows of conviction stuck fast in my soul. I could have no rest in my bones by reason of my sin. Then Satan stirred up all my friends and relations to beat me and revile me. Sorrow and affliction increased daily, insomuch that I knew not which way to turn. If I thought of flying to God, my guilty conscience stopped me, for I saw the divine justice was ready to cast me off for ever. But, glory be to God, all could not hinder my hearing the gospel. Though every sermon tore open the wounds which sin had made and made me exceeding miserable, insomuch that many times I thought

¹As shown in the title in *AM*, Rebekah Bennet was 'one of the servants at Kingswood school' when it opened in 1748. Nothing else is known about her.

²See Luke 1:38.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴'Formerly' added in the errata.

⁵Rev. 2:5.

my soul could not support it any longer. My eyes were like fountains. And I forgot to eat my bread, for my soul longed more for the mercy of God than my body did after the food that perishes. I could speak to nobody, but was always ashamed to look any in the face, because I saw the glory of God shine so bright in them. But as for myself, I knew I was fit fuel for eternal fire, not worthy of a place on the earth, much less to converse with the children of God. But though I was the chief of sinners, yet they did not reject me, but used me with the utmost tenderness and love. Then I found a strong hope that I should know the pardoning love of God. And one day, being alone in great distress for fear of death and hell, I heard an inward, sweet voice, saying, 'Come unto me, come unto me, and I will give thee rest.'⁶ And then did Jesus reveal himself to my soul, evidently set forth as crucified. Not long after, being at St. Paul's church, the power of the Most High overshadowed me, and I heard a voice, 'Christ died for thy sins; for thy sins Christ died', and with these words was the power of an endless life brought into my soul.

This was no dream, but a sensible passing from death unto life. In the hour before, my sins were as a sore burden too heavy for me to bear. And now they were cast as a stone into the depth of the sea. Now I was saying to all, 'Come, see what the Lord hath done for my soul!'⁷ The Lord is my strength. My heart trusteth in him, and I am helped. Therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my songs will I praise him. This is the beginning of the goodness of God to me a sinner. Now may the God of all grace preserve your soul and body! This is the prayer of

Your weakest child,

Rebekah Bennet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 581–84.

⁶Cf. Matt. 11:28.

⁷Cf. Ps. 66:16.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Holmes¹

[Kingswood]
August 28, 1748

Reverend and Dear Sir,

My strength will soon return, if it please God. But if not, I trust he will renew my spiritual strength, so as I may run the way of his commandments and obtain not a temporal, but an eternal crown. I aim at nothing else but only that I may be holy in body and soul. I think I desire no other portion or happiness in earth or heaven but the pure love of God alone, in which I am now blest and happy in part, but trust to be more so to all eternity. I know the comfort I now feel is but a drop of that river of pleasure which flows at God's right-hand for evermore. But I praise him for giving me a taste of his love, and pray that I may be filled with that perfect love of God which casteth out all sin. I have great reason to praise God that I am in this happy family, most unworthy as I am. I find it is good for me to be here, and have no desire to remove again, until I am made meet for that place which Jesus is gone to prepare for me. I feel strong consolation through that blessed hope that he will come again and receive me to himself; that where he is, I shall be also, and behold his glory for evermore.

There I shall my lot receive,
Soon as from the flesh I fly;
Happy in thy love I live,
Happier in thy love I die:
Lo! the prospect opens fair,
I shall soon be harbour'd there.²

I bless God he has cleared my way through much inward trial since I came to Kingswood. I many times thought he would greatly bless me, because the devil stirred up so many hindrances. And so it proves, for he does bless my soul and enable me to go on my way rejoicing in his holy comfort. O that I may continue to do so more abundantly, from this time forth for evermore! Dear sir, pray for me, as I believe you do for us all; for the Lord is with us daily, pouring his blessings upon us.

That the Lord may guide and bless you in all your ways, and in his due time bring you amongst us in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace, is the earnest desire of

Your most weak and unworthy daughter,

Elizabeth Holmes

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 584–86.³

¹This is likely the same Elizabeth Holmes who wrote JW from Oxford on Jan. 20, 1742; now having moved to Kingswood at JW's request.

²CW, 'The Life of Faith', Pt. I, st. 7, *MSP* (1744), 3:275.

³Titled in *AM*: 'The Experience of Another of the Servants [at Kingswood]'.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London
September 1, 1748

Reverend and Dear Sir,

My not meeting you at London has been a disappointment to me.¹ But our Lord orders all things well. His time is and will be best. I suppose you will hear of my preaching to some of the nobility, and I trust the hour is coming when some of the *mighty* and *noble* shall be called. What have you thought about an union? I am afraid an external one is impracticable. I find by your sermons that we differ in principles more than I thought, and I believe we are upon two different plans. My attachment to America will not permit me to abide very long in England. Consequently, I should but weave a Penelope's web² if I formed societies; and if I should form them I have not proper assistants to take care of them. I intend therefore to go about preaching the gospel to every creature. You, I suppose, are for settling societies everywhere. But more of this when we meet. I can now only say a few general things. I hope you don't forget to pray for me. You are always remembered by, reverend and dear sir,

Yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Works*, 2:169–70.³

¹Whitefield had written to London on July 5, announcing his return to England from North America. Unfortunately during the whole of July and August CW was in Ireland and JW was touring the north and midlands.

²A character in Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope was the wife of Odysseus. She put off potential suitors while Odysseus was away (and reported dead), by asking time to weave a burial shroud, which she unraveled every night. So this saying connoted an unending task that is constantly unraveling.

³Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:327–28.

From the Rev. Thomas Vivian¹

[Cornwood, Devonshire]

October 10, 1748

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I was in hopes of seeing you at the [Plymouth] Dock, and for that purpose went thither on Thursday sennight, but you was gone that morning.²

Perhaps you scarce remember to have seen me. But though I am unknown to you, yet you, by your writings, are intimately known to me. It was to these more than anything else that, under God, I owe the blessing wrought upon my soul. By these I obtained a clearer discovering of the nature of gospel salvation, and in reading them found the *experimental* knowledge of what I sought after.

I hope you will not refuse to lend your assistance in nourishing and supporting one that you have been the instrument of 'begetting to a lively hope and faith',³ that I may neither 'run uncertainly',⁴ nor 'faint in well-doing'.⁵

You have heard, I suppose, in Cornwall that my speech was too plain and irksome to be suffered to be continued any longer at Redruth. My words were no longer tolerable when I began to preach Christ crucified, and the necessity of an inward change, *Jesus and the resurrection* to a new life. But before I was obliged to quit one place another was prepared for me. When in answer to an account I had writ to the bishop concerning⁶ the Methodists I was expecting a reprimand, I received the collation of this parish, in consequence of an application made by a friend of my wife's. And the resolution of my principal at Redruth to part with me, though sudden and unexpected, came very seasonable to determine a difficulty I was under about tarrying at Redruth or coming hither. For though to be *turned away* was grievous to flesh and blood, yet I was glad the Lord had taken the matter into his own hand.

When I came hither I was very kindly received by one great man. But the rest of the parish cried out against me, as if instead of being a messenger of gospel glad-tidings, I had been sent from Satan to destroy them. At present, the favour of my friend seems to be abated, and the dislike of the rest less general. There are several that begin to see and say differently, and my words have wrought *a concern* in some, but I cannot say it has yet taken *deep root* in any. But the Lord's ways 'are far above our sight'.⁷

My conduct has been in general very canonical—I mean, in those particulars that are objected to you. Unless that I have now and then given a few words of exhortation in a private house; though not even that in this parish, because I hardly knew any yet that would permit me. But notwithstanding this, my brethren are greatly offended at me on account of my character as a Methodist, and the people coming from Plymouth, [Plymouth] Dock, etc., to hear me, and many gross falsehoods which the father of lies has spread about me.

¹Thomas Vivian (1720–93), ordained in 1743, served as curate in Truro, then Redruth, where he was removed after less than a year due to his sympathies with Methodism. He took the parish of Cornwood, Devonshire in 1747 and served there until his death. No other correspondence between him and JW is known. This is explained in part by JW's comment in *AM*, 'N.B. He is fallen into the pit of the decrees, and knows me no more!'

²JW arrived in Plymouth Dock the morning of Thursday, Sept. 29, preaching that day and at 4:00 a.m. the next morning, before heading on to Tavistock; see *Journal, Works*, 20:251.

³Cf. 1 Pet. 1:3.

⁴1 Cor. 9:26.

⁵Cf. 2 Thess. 3:13.

⁶Orig., 'of', corrected in the errata.

⁷Cf. Isa. 55:8–9.

Being obliged to build a house, I have employed some believers brought from Cornwall, who meet in a class, and some of the parish are usually there. But there are many adversaries, powerful and zealous, the people here being remarkable, even among their neighbours, for a rough disposition.

Thus have I been particular in laying my state before you, hoping you will be free in giving me advice. With regard to myself, in general I enjoy much peace, but little sensible love. I trust I go forward, but slowly. Recommend me some books for my own reading and to be dispersed among my parishioners, to whom I have given some of yours and they seem to desire more.

A learned and pious schoolmaster, a dear friend of mine, that has lately known the Lord, desires your opinion of this question: 'Whether you think he can with a good conscience continue to teach his scholars Latin and Greek out of heathen authors such as Horace, Virgil, Tully, Homer, etc.?'⁸

To read this, and answer it as particularly as I desire, will, I fear, take up too much of your precious time. But I hope what is thus employed will not be entirely lost. I desire that before the throne of grace you would remember

Your unworthy brother in Jesus Christ,

T. V.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 586–88.⁹

⁸JW reiterates his response in a footnote: 'Doubtless he may.'

⁹Entitled in *AM*: 'From a Clergyman lately awakened'. Abridgement published in *Works*, 26:333–34.

From Colonel Samuel Gumley¹

[London?]
October 13, 1748

Dear Sir,

God's thoughts are not as ours. I proposed waiting on you at the Foundery, but it is the Lord's will that I should be called to another country. And I bless his holy name that he makes me desire that his will may be done on earth, as in heaven. I shall want the assistance of all my dear brethren, and I pray God that he will be graciously pleased to put me in your minds in all your prayers, as well in public as in private. I doubt not but the Lord will give me strength for my day in all places and at all times. O that he may be pleased to make me ever mindful of him, and never to cease returning most humble and hearty thanks to his divine majesty for his great goodness in calling me, so miserable a wretch, as I find myself in this moment. Blessed be the name of the Lord that he shows me I am nothing without his assistance.

My dear friend, be so good to offer your prayers often for me, that I may be kept humble, right humble, watching, and ever in prayer, looking up always to my dear Redeemer, who is, I find, always ready to give.

I pray God that the Lord Jesus Christ may keep you every instant, and that you may be found blameless at the great white throne in that awful day when the faithful shall receive their reward. This is the most sincere prayer of

Your affectionate child and brother in Christ,

S. Gumley

P. S. Please to direct for me at Eindhoven,² Holland.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 588–89.³

¹Samuel Gumley (1698–1763) was the only son of John Gumley, Muster-master General (d. 1728). He became a lieutenant in the Duke of Marlborough's Regiment of Dragoons in 1718, a captain in 1724, and a major in 1740. In 1742 he became lieutenant colonel in the First Regiment of Foot Guards (later the Grenadier Guards), and their colonel in 1748. He inherited his mother's considerable estate, and his name disappeared from the Army List for 1754, though he retained his title. By this time he had also acquired a reputation as a pious and earnest supporter of Methodism. He seems to have been officially admitted to membership of the London Society on Easter Day, 1749. He died in Spa, Germany, in 1763. Samuel's widow Martha (Meighen / Colvill) Gumley (1711–87) was a close friend of CW's family. See *WHS* 59 (2013): 3–11.

²Orig., 'Eyndoven'.

³JW added a note in *AM*: 'Was not he a believer at this time?—But did he die in faith?' Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:334–35.

From Colonel Samuel Gumley

Harwich [Essex]

11 o'Clock, Sunday Morning, October 17, 1748

Dear Sir,

I doubt not but you will be glad to hear that the Lord was with me in my way to the place, and that he had been graciously pleased to bring me safe. The wind, I thank the Lord, is very fair, and the weather fine and clear, God be praised for evermore. Oh, his almighty power is now with me, in giving me prayer for you and all the congregation now met. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you! May tears of joy be found in the eyes of every poor watching soul! Oh, my Saviour, make them believe in thee! Oh, may they see every moment a crucified Jesus by the eye of faith!

Be ever content, my dear sir, with having the love of God. I bless his holy name that he makes me feel we want nothing else in this world. Oh, let not the love of power be a temptation to us, so as to make us less happy in the Lord. But may we live to him, and for his sake only desire to be here!

May the Lord Jesus be with you and your dear brother! Oh, may you both be ever blessed! May the Lord Jesus keep you both every instant! And that you may hold out to the end is the sincere desire of, dear sir,

Your most affectionate servant and brother in Christ,

S. Gumley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 589–90.¹

¹JW added the note: 'Was he not a believer when he wrote this?'

From John Bennet¹

Chinley
October 22, 1748

Sir,

After the Sessions at Preston were ended I went and visited the brethren at Roughlee, and found them all strong in faith, giving glory to God that they were accounted worthy to suffer for his name's sake.²

I went in the dark of the night, when the rebels were couched in their dens; I preached in the night to an exceeding great congregation, and the Lord breathed love into our souls. We parted before the noisy world was awake. The rebels breathe out threatenings daily, and watch their houses, so that some course must be took with them, or we must give up preaching, and then the brethren fall an easy prey into the German paw, which I could not wish. I think I could rather choose to hazard my own life, and fight my passage through blood, that so the gospel may be preached. From thence I went to Haworth, Leeds, Birstall, and the adjacent parts, and indeed multitudes have attended preaching since you was last in Yorkshire.

Brother [William] Shent thought it might be well for brother Dunston³ to come to Leeds as soon as possible, and be nursed awhile there, since he is so exceeding feeble, and brother Gillespie⁴ to go down into Lincolnshire, since he hath been a considerable time in Yorkshire.

I was with Mrs. Holmes.⁵ She seems open-hearted towards us, and yet I really think she has drunk deep into the German spirit. She intends to invite Mr. [George] Whitefield to call and preach at her house, though she supposes it will not please the Brethren at all.

On Tuesday the eighteenth of this instant was a meeting (at Todmorden Edge) of the leaders in the several societies belonging to William Darney, etc.⁶ Four stewards were appointed to inspect into and

¹Periodical reports were made to JW by his lay itinerant preachers about the groups of societies under their pastoral care. Three such groups in the north were closely related to each other, and their preachers to a limited degree interchanged with each other: those around Birstall and Leeds (John Nelson's special territory), those of South Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire (John Bennet's 'round'), and those raised by William Darney near Haworth and Keighley. William Grimshaw was now giving general pastoral oversight on behalf of JW to all of these (more especially the latter group) as he was able, but the 'Assistant' preacher for each round was expected to send periodic reports about his work to JW. This report, in fact, was posted, not to JW himself, but to his steward at the Foundery, William Briggs. This was not simply a report, but the reply to a letter sent from JW, which Bennet quotes, about the best Methodist response to the local persecution.

²Bennet was at the Preston Sessions on Oct. 7 to secure the release of John Jane (arrested and put in the stocks by the Rev. George White of Colne for preaching there), and to gain legal protection for other persecuted Methodists—though he had given up his earlier intention of prosecuting White as the chief instigator of the persecution (see Bennet, *Journal*, Sept. 19, Oct. 5, 7, 1748; for the culminating riot at Roughlee (Barrowford) organized by White see above, pp. 324–27).

³Edward Dunston appears as an itinerant preacher in the 1747 Minutes (see *Works*, 10:205, 827). He died on Jan. 6, 1749.

⁴Robert Gillespie, a former tailor, was listed at the 1749 Conference as a probationer preacher (see *Works*, 10:235). But by 1751 CW judged him lacking in ability (see his letter to John Bennet, Aug. 11, 1751), and at a conference in Shoreham in Nov. 1751 it was agreed to lay him aside (*Works*, 10:246).

⁵Elizabeth Holmes (1712–85) of Lightcliffe, near Halifax, Yorkshire.

⁶This was the first circuit quarterly meeting of Methodism, presided over by the Rev. William Grimshaw. The following year JW asked Bennet to introduce into other areas this same method of

regulate the temporal affairs of the societies. Every leader brought his class-paper, and showed what money he had received that quarter, which was fairly entered in a book for that purpose. The several bills of charges were brought in at the same, and after they were thoroughly examined were all discharged. But alas! The people are exceeding poor, and will not be able to maintain the preachers and William Darney's family—the overplus after the bills were discharged was only 9s. 2d.

The number of the brethren at that meeting, as appeared by the books wherein the names are entered, was 358. Brother Darney is gone for Newcastle. I hope his going thither may be well.

On Thursday the 20th of this instant was our quarterly meeting held at Woodley, of the leaders in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and part of Lancashire. The same method was used here as above. The Lord did bless our meeting in a very extraordinary manner. After business was ended we sang a hymn, several of the brethren prayed, and I gave a short exhortation. O dear sir, let this method be used in other places! Once a year we propose to meet all the leaders, and at the other quarterly meeting the stewards in each respective society need only to be present with the particular accounts. This way will not be very expensive. I have made a small book, which shall be kept in the box with the accounts, wherein an exact account of the marriages, deaths, backsliders, etc., shall be noted down, that I may be able to give you an account thereof each quarter. Our number of brethren at Woodley meeting was 527.

I received Esquire Glanville's⁷ letter last night, and have observed his thoughts, together with yours, in the same letter dated Oct. 17th. I desire more particular directions from you before I proceed. You say, 'The fees must be regularly paid to both the counsels.'⁸ But where is the money?' Indeed I know not. The societies in those parts are very poor, and I find many startle at the thought of a Chancery suit, they supposing it will be so very expensive. It cost Roughlee before, when William Darney was abused, about £20. It has cost, loosing John Jane⁹ at this time, betwixt four and five pounds, and I fear it will be difficult to procure money here unless some other societies are acquainted therewith and assist them. I believe in a little time I can raise £20 or £30 in these parts, and that will be all. I am willing to do what is in my power, but not to go on my own head to enter such an action without further advice and a more unanimous consent of my brethren. Who must lodge the information? In whose name must this action be carried on? Mr. [William] Grimshaw and Mr. [Thomas] Colbeck seem unconcerned in the matter, though they were the chief sufferers.

Do you intend to proceed wholly on the affair of Barrowford? If so, who must I get informations against? And what number, think you, must be prosecuted? Mr. Fenton¹⁰ lives about twenty miles from the place. Had we not best procure him to come over to Roughlee and take the informations? I think this will be the easiest and safest way.

As soon as you receive this letter, please to let me know what I must do, and how I must proceed in this affair, and [I] shall be ready to obey you. I believe we can be able to get the affidavits to London before the term.

What must be done with Mr. White and his drunken companions?

Sir, if it is in your power you should send me a labourer. I believe there is no one part of our Lord's vineyard that is in greater want. No one man is able to supply half of the places. This hurry of

administration, which soon became universal.

⁷William Glanville Esq. (c. 1651–1748), of Plough Court, Fetter Lane, London, who had become a serious Christian earlier that year through reading JW's *Earnest Appeal*; see JW, *Journal*, Jan. 6, 1748, *Works* 20:204.

⁸Orig., 'Councils'.

⁹John Jane (d. 1750) appears in the Minutes only once, in 1747 (*Works*, 10:205), and died after three years of the exertion of itinerancy; cf. JW, *Journal*, Sept. 8, 1750, *Works*, 20:360–61.

¹⁰An attorney in Preston who advised Bennet to prosecute.

temporal business robs me of that little time I have, and strength too.

When I was in Yorkshire last there was near twenty preachers that I could reckon up, within a very small compass one of another.

Several doors are opened about Preston, had we labourers to supply their want. John Jane is under the doctor's hand at Bolton, Lancashire.

I have good news to tell you. The minister of Hayfield,¹¹ a church town within two miles from my father's, is lately converted, and preaches the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. The town is up in arms against him, already breathing out slaughter. Notwithstanding, he is bold as a lion, and not ashamed of the truth. Let thanks be given in the private society. I am to meet him the next Tuesday, and take him most of your books. The first volume of *Sermons* he has read, and this is the letter he sends me:

Sir,

Having perused the *Sermons*, and weighed their orthodoxy (so far as my slender judgment may serve) by the standard of primitive Christianity, I do ingenuously acknowledge myself unapprehensive of anything therein advanced either opposite to my own opinion, contrary to sound doctrine, or repugnant to that faith which was first delivered to the saints, and therefore deem their author (in my sentiment) highly worthy of double honour for his labour of love, and work's sake,

John Baddeley

I was with Esquire Low¹² yesterday, who received me kindly, and expressed his concern for the prosperity and peace of Jerusalem. He is a man of a broken and contrite spirit. He remembered you with tears. I find the doctors have kept him back from using your small medicine. He is somewhat better, even so as to walk into the yard. He believes your medicine will do him service, and intends to use it after this season. He has more confidence in it from this—a man in the neighbourhood was very deaf, and coming one day to see him Esquire Low looks in your receipt book¹³ and prescribes, upon which the man was restored.

I thought I had given you an account of Bridget Bostock.¹⁴ On Wednesday the twentieth of September last I went to Copenhall.¹⁵ I was told at Sandbach, a little town short of the place, by a substantial man, that he saw a judge come to her in his coach, and was carried to her into the house by his own servants, but returned walking himself without any help. *This the man saw.*

As I went forward I overtook a poor man that was driving horses. We soon began to talk of the great doctor. The poor man said she was a good woman and had done many miracles—a neighbour of his that had kept his bed for some time by reason of violent pain was carried in his bed unto her, and was made so whole that he walked up and down. This poor man said he saw the man the day before.

Before I came at the house I met many people returning, amongst the rest three or four men of distinction, with their servants, who had been with her.

¹¹Rev. John Baddeley (1706–1764) was assigned as perpetual curate of Hayfield, Derbyshire in 1735 and served until his death. He underwent an evangelical conversion in 1748 and for a while welcomed JW in his parish. But Baddeley eventually distanced himself from JW, for not taking a firmer hand with Methodist lay preachers in resisting separation from the Church of England.

¹²Perhaps the man visited by JW on Aug. 31, 1748; cf. JW, *Journal, Works*, 20:247.

¹³JW had published his first collection of medical remedies as *Collection of Receipts* (1745); this was enlarged as *Primitive Physic* in 1747.

¹⁴Bridget Bostock, of Sandbach, Cheshire, was an elderly woman lately noted for being the agent of miraculous healings. See JW to CW, Sept. 15, 1748, *Works*, 26:329.

¹⁵Orig., 'Copnell'.

When I came there I must own I was surprised to see the number of people attending on the old woman. Two carts stood at the door with sick people in them, such as could not help themselves.

Amongst the rest was the minister of the parish. I looked upon him as a person the most able to give me a just account of her character. I walked with him into a field, and he said the woman was a good woman (though very ignorant, for she could not read). She attended the church constantly, and was one that for many years had done good amongst the poor. Mr. Harding, the minister, said his own son had a white swelling in his ankle, and had been under the doctors round about, but could be cured by none of them; but at last this woman cured him. The minister said there had been seven thousand people at her [house] in fifteen days. The old woman has no form or comeliness—a poor thin old woman about seventy years of age, with an old brown gown made of linsey or some such thing. She had a coarse linen brat¹⁶ about her waist, an old nightcap with a flannel clout underneath, hanging into her neck, a coarse check handkerchief over her shoulders, and a pair of clogs on her feet. She was in an old stable near the house. She anoints the part with spittle, and prays God to bless them—I observe she asks all their names.

I saw a young man at Rochdale that was one of her patients. His fingers were bended to his hand, so that it was become useless, and by her touching him he can use it as the other, and write with it.

I am

Your unworthy brother,

J. Bennet

Address: 'To/Mr. William Brigg(s) / At the Custom-house / London'.

Postmarks: 'CHAPPEL / IN FRITH', '26/OC'. *Charge:* '8 HR'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jo Bennet / Oct. 22, 1748 / a[nswere]d 29 / L.'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/5.¹⁷

¹⁶A makeshift piece of clothing.

¹⁷Transcription published in *Works*, 26:335–38.

From Mary Davey¹

Kingswood
October 30, 1748

Dear and Reverend Sir,

When I look back upon my past life, and see the directing and over-ruling hand of my gracious God, I am astonished and cry out, Lord, what is man? And what am I? An ungrateful, rebellious worm, not worthy the ground I tread upon. Even in this last call of providence, how have I resisted, and mixed bitter draughts in my own cup, which the Lord never designed for me? But it was my perverseness and littleness of faith. I listened to the voice of the enemy, rather than the voice of God. I could not trust him, though he had been my refuge in every time of trouble. How did he gently strive to subdue my stubborn spirit, calming my fears, and shining in upon my soul with such clear, demonstrative light, that I could no longer withstand. I then rose up, and feebly followed the small still voice. I soon found obedience brings its own reward. My anxiety, my doubts, and distrust all vanished, and a sweet calm succeeded, which has continued ever since. I know not what the Lord is about to do with me, but I am enabled to leave it all to him. O may I never again take the matter out of his great hand, but lay my body, soul, and spirit, all that I have and am, at his feet! O that he would make me as a weaned child, simply looking up to him for all things!

The spirit of this family is a resemblance of the household above. As far as I can discern, they are given up to God, and pursue but the one great end. The Lord in a peculiar manner preserveth us from the rocks on either hand, and we safely walk between them. Having our God for our guide, what can harm us? Nothing but losing sight of him, and for this there is no necessity.

If any is afraid this school will eclipse and darken others, or that it will train up soldiers to proclaim open war against the God of this world, I believe it is not a groundless fear. For if God continues to bless us, 'one of these little ones shall chase a thousand'. I doubt not but there will arise ambassadors for the King of kings from this obscure spot, that shall spread his glory all abroad, and bring many souls unto the knowledge of the truth.

Dear sir, we beg your constant prayers, with those of all the brethren with you. May the Lord bear you all as on eagles' wings, and comfort and establish your hearts together! This day I felt my spirit mingling with my beloved London friends, and it was sweet consolation. It will not be long ere we shall meet in our Father's house, to rejoice together throughout an happy eternity. Pray always for

Your unworthy, affectionate servant in the gospel,

Mary Davey

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 41–42.

¹JW identifies as a housekeeper at Kingswood school in *AM*. On Nov. 15, 1749, JW performed her marriage to his preacher, Thomas Richards.

From Jeannie Keith¹

Newcastle
November 1, 1748

Reverend Dear Sir,

I think we never had a more blessed time in this house since it was a house. I know of nothing amiss betwixt sister [Grace] Murray and me. But we cannot be as one soul (as you express it), for you know she must have a little pre-eminence. I am exceeding willing that she should, and so we live in great peace and, I believe, in love.

You may expect plain dealing from me, and if I thought you distrusted me I would not write. But I am fully persuaded you do not, and therefore why should I hide a heart from you that is quite uncovered before the all-seeing eyes of God? I may possibly deal too openly with others, but I am fully convinced I never can with you. Nay, I could heartily wish that you saw all that is in my heart, you could then be a better judge of it than I am myself.

I know not how to agree to the *not working*. I am still unwilling to take anything from anybody. I work out of choice, having never yet learned how long a woman can be idle and innocent. I have had as blessed times in my soul sitting at work as ever I had in my life, especially in the night-time, when I see nothing but the light of a candle and a white cloth, hear nothing but the sound of my own breath, with God in my sight and heaven in my soul. I think myself one of the happiest creatures below the skies. I do not complain that God has not made me some fine thing, to be set up to be gazed at. But I can heartily bless him that he has made me just what I am, a creature capable of the enjoyment of himself. If I go to the window and look out, I see the moon and stars. I meditate a while on the silence of the night, consider this world as a beautiful structure, the work of an almighty hand. Then I sit down to work again, and think myself one of the happiest beings in it. I do not murmur because I have not what they call goods of fortune, or a little skin-deep beauty. But I am happy because as long as God lives, I shall enjoy him; so long as there is a heaven, I shall possess it. If this thought cannot make me happy, without anything else, I deserve to be miserable. Then how can I enough adore that Redeemer who bought all these privileges for me with his own blood? But here words fail me, and I can say no more. I sink deep into my own nothingness, and cry out with astonishment, 'O what has God done for me!'

O pray for me that I may no more be found unfaithful. Dear sir, pray for me that I may be always watchful and serious, that all my conversation may adorn the gospel. To the divine protection I commit that which is dearest to me on earth, and remain

Your affectionate and loving child,

Jeannie Keith

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 42–44.²

¹See the earlier letter of May 17, 1747.

²Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:339.

From John Robertson, M.D.¹

Pitcombe
November 22, 1748

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Last month, when I was at Bristol, I was favoured with yours of the twelfth,² which you left for me when you went from thence. It would have been a great pleasure for me to have found you there in person, and to have talked with you on the subject of your letter and other useful ones. You condescend to ask my opinion on two difficulties that fall in your way as to your school. The first of these is that you cannot determine whether you should teach Hebrew with or without points.³

As to your other doubt: the natural philosophers busy themselves about two things, the history of facts and assigning the causes of effects. No man, I think, can with any reason pretend to the second till he has enriched his memory with a large stock of natural history, which alone, if we should never get further, is very profitable *for life and godliness*, teaching us many things useful in common life and creating in an attentive mind a high reverence of the Creator, whose power, wisdom, and goodness the considerate view of the creatures very *sensibly* demonstrates, and more feelingly than abstract reasonings. Mr. Derham's *Physico-Theology*,⁴ which you mention, seems a proper *rudiment* of this branch of natural philosophy, and fit to awake the appetite to a more plentiful repast, which may be found (for your purpose) in Shaw's abridgement of Boyle's works,⁵ and in the *Philosophical Transactions*.⁶ Our public works (*Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences*, etc., etc.) and those of private eminent writers, will not come within the compass of an elementary institution, for which Derham and Boyle alone may suffice. The second point flatters man's vanity most, and is most ardently sought after by vain mortals. But it seems to me too arduous a task for such shortsighted creatures to finish, nor have I been able to persuade myself, for many years past, that the mainsprings of the divine machine can ever be discovered by any mortal, or understood by any means but the revelation of the Divine Architect. Whether, or how far, he has made such revelation, I know not.

Therefore the world-builders have all lost their credit long ago, save Sir Isaac Newton, who yet survives. But how near his end may be is hard to tell. I say this of his general system, for his *experimental* history of light and colours, and his *mathematical* reasonings on it, I think will stand the test.

¹John Robertson (c. 1691–1761) was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen and was awarded his M.D. at King's College, Aberdeen in 1730. Born at Wells, Somerset, he married a widow, Jane Webb, of Pitcombe and settled down on her beautiful estate there to the leisurely pursuits of a devout and very scholarly gentleman. In 1747 he had published under a pseudonym *The True and Antient Manner of reading Hebrew without Points*, and in that same year wrote CW suggesting some emendations to the AV—mostly from Johann Bengel. It was almost certainly he who fired JW's enthusiasm for Bengel when JW began preparing his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, and a number of Robertson's suggestions were incorporated in that work.

²This letter is not known to survive. It clearly sought Robertson's advice on the use of Hebrew points at Kingswood school), and about a reading list in natural philosophy for the students there. (See also JW's letter to Robertson, Sept. 24, 1753, *Works*, 26:515–24.)

³JW added the footnote: 'We now teach it with the points.'

⁴William Derham, *Physico-Theology; or, A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God from His Works of Creation* (London: William Innys, 1713).

⁵Peter Shaw, ed., *The Philosophical Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq.; abridged ...*, 3 vols., 2nd edn., corrected (London: W. Innys & R. Manby, 1738).

⁶Royal Society (Great Britain), *The Philosophical Transactions ... abridged and disposed under general heads*, 10 vols. (London: W. Innys, 1720–50).

As little can I commend any hypothesis in physic, which is a part of natural philosophy, as in the whole of it reason and reflection are as necessary to cure diseases well as experience and observation. But speculatively-given physicians are apt to reason too subtly, and so often get out of their depth, and lose themselves—and their patients. If we knew the structure and motion of the machine we are to mend, and the proper materials and tools with which it is to be repaired, we should know as much as we can hope for. The best physician, then, is he who knows anatomy, mechanics, and hydraulics; and the nature and operations of medicines, by chemistry and other means; and reasons solely from these principles upon the phenomena his attentive observations on the healthy and the sick make him a spectator of. I think no man has kept himself more modestly within these bounds, nor reasoned more satisfactorily on diseases (the nature and cure of them) than Hoffman in most of his works, particularly his *Medicina Rationalis Systematica*.⁷

I wish you had a more learned and judicious instructor in all these points; and I hope you will seek out and find such, and not proceed in a matter of such consequence on the single judgment of a man more willing than able to assist you. I pray God to prosper you in all your undertakings which you intend, and he sees to tend to his glory and the good of mankind. My wife joins with me in sincere respect for you and your brother, and in heartily begging your prayers for me. I have scarcely room to add that I am, reverend and dear sir,

Yours with affectionate regard,

J. Robertson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 89–91.⁸

⁷Friedrich Hoffmann, *Medicina Rationalis Systematica*, 5 vols. (Magdeburg: Officina Rengeriana, 1718–40).

⁸Titled in *AM*: 'From Dr. Robertson. Concerning Systems of Natural Philosophy.' Transcription republished in *Works*, 26:342–43.

From Sarah (Evans) Gwynne¹

Garth
January 9, 1749

Reverend Sir,

I received the favour of yours,² and entirely concur with you in every particular mentioned in the first part of your letter, and wish I could join in approving of the proposals you was pleased to make in the latter part of it. My objection is that nothing can be settled where no money is laid down, or lands secured for the due payment thereof. If that can be compassed without inconvenience to your brother and self, I find it would be [satisfactory] to as many of this family as have been made acquainted with it, who all join with me in hearty respects to you, being, reverend sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

Sa: Gwynne

Address: 'To / The Revnd. Mr John Wesley'.

Endorsement: by CW, '[[January]] 9, [[Mrs. Gwynne]], 1748 / [[to my brother]]'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 5/17.³

¹Born to a wealthy family in Cardiganshire, Wales, Sarah Evans (1695–1770) married Marmaduke Gwynne in July 1716. As this letter indicates, she initially resisted the possibility of her daughter Sarah marrying CW. She eventually relented when the Wesley brothers pledged appropriate financial security.

²JW's letter, apparently sent Jan. 3, is not known to survive. But CW's letters to both Mrs. Gwynne and her daughter Sally of that date do survive and enumerate some of the financial arrangements that JW's letter surely mentioned as well.

³Transcription published in *Works*, 26:346–47.

From Marmaduke Gwynne

Garth
February 9, 1749

Reverend Sir,

My wife is fully satisfied that you will make good the proposal you mentioned to her. In order therefore to accomplish what I trust in God will redound to the temporal and eternal happiness of all parties, my neighbour Miss Jones of Cribart,¹ by the directions of my wife, has wrote to her uncle, Mr. Hope of Lincoln's Inn,² which I have enclosed for you and your dear brother's perusal. I desire you will seal it and let it be given either by you, your good brother, or whatever friend you are pleased to entrust, into the gentleman's own hand. My wife is at present much out of order with a complication of distempers, or she would have wrote to you. Your prayers are desired for myself and all mine. My spouse and daughters join with me in our best respects to yourself and brother, and I am, reverend sir,

Your very affectionate and obliged humble servant,

Duke Gwynne

P. S. Having but one frank made me (to save expense) send but half the paper that formality required.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 5/26.

¹Anne Jones (c. 1725–1802), daughter of John Jones and Mary (Hope) Jones of Cribart.

²John Hope (1691–1761), of Llanrindod Hall and a lawyer at Lincoln's Inn; see *Radnorshire Society Transactions* 59 (1989): 59–62.

From Colonel Samuel Gumley

London
February 15, 1749

My Dear Friend and Brother,

I thank Almighty God, in the name of our Lord, that he has blessed your work. But I pray the Lord that you may never forget that grace is the gift of the Lord. O may my Lord keep you as humble as I think you are at present! Remember your kind advice to me, 'Be fearful of those cut-throats who commend men to their faces,¹ for we are flesh and blood.' The Lord Jesus guard you, as he has been pleased to do hitherto. O may he go out and come back with you! O Lord Jesus bless my brother! Give him a double portion of thy grace, and may he bring thousands to thy fold. O Lord assist him in his work! Give him strength. Let him come boldly to the throne of grace. And why should he fear, when Jesus calls? O may you ever hear him near you! May you spend and be spent for Jesus's sake. And you must have the crown, for he has promised it, who is our all. I bless our Lord that he has left me no will of my own.

O dear brother, pray the Lord to continue me in the desire of doing nothing but his will. O Lord Jesus, take from my dear brother and me every thought, word, and everything else that is not pleasing to thee! O be with us, and let our hearts be purged from all dross! Amen. Amen.

I am, sir,

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

S. Gumley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 91–92.²

¹'Who commend men to their faces' added in Errata.

²Titled in *AM*: 'A Pattern of Christian Simplicity!'

From Charles Skelton

Bristol
April 8, 1749

Reverend Sir,

I came to Bristol this day, and received yours;¹ and as you desire it, will lay all the affair before you.

February the 20th, being in London, I went up into my room to sit and read. As I was sitting, it came into my mind that there were six malefactors to be executed that day, and it was exceedingly impressed upon me to go and see them executed. But I thought it was only curiosity, so I rested myself contented. In a few moments it was so much the more impressed upon my mind that go I must. I then went down stairs and asked of our brother Salthouse² whether there was a horse in the stable, that I might go and see the men executed. He answered, 'There is. But if you would be advised by me, do not ride—it is dangerous.' I then thought I would not go, so went into my room again and sat down to read. But before I had sat half an hour I was quite uneasy, and found that go I must. I went down and put on my great coat. One asked me where I was going. I told her to see the men. She asked how far I would go. I told her only to Holborn.

When I came to Snow Hill, three [of the malefactors] had passed by in a carriage, and the other three were just coming, drawn upon a sledge. Two of the three were praying to the Virgin Mary. They passed by with several horse following them, and thousands of foot. I then turned to go home, when it came into my mind exceeding strong, 'If the Scriptures are of God, those poor men can never enter into his kingdom, seeing there is no other name given whereby man can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ.' And again, 'How can they hear without a preacher?'³ I looked back, but the men were quite gone out of my sight. I then thought, what can I or any man do for them in such a circumstance but pray for them? And I turned again to go towards home. But I had not taken above three or four steps till I was strongly impressed upon my mind to follow them. But I thought, how is it possible that I can get at them, seeing there are so many thousands of people between them and me? The more I reasoned, the more I was lost, till the Lord almost dragged me to it. At last I turned and began to run. The people all opened wherever I came, so that my way was entirely free. I do not know that I bade one soul stand by, but as God opened the way so I went through thousands of foot and hundreds of horse. I came up to the men at the upper end of Holborn.

When I came up to them, the same two were praying to the Virgin Mary, and likewise to the other saints. I spoke to them in the presence of God, and told them that not all the saints in heaven would avail them; but unless Christ saved them, they must perish. I told them that there was no other name given whereby they could be saved but the name of Jesus Christ. I then proved to them that Christ was the same yesterday, today, and forever; and that if they would now cry to Jesus for mercy, mercy and salvation were nigh them. The word came like daggers to their hearts, and the arrows of God stuck fast within them. They let their books drop out of their hands, and their cry was, 'Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon us! One drop, Lord Jesus, one drop of thy most precious blood shall soften and break our hearts in pieces!' The waters of repentance ran like rivers down their cheeks, their hearts bursting within them. The Lord broke in upon one of them and filled him with his love. At the same time he received the gift of prayer, and prayed the most evangelically I have ever heard. When the other had seen what God had done for his soul, it made him cry out so much the more, 'Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon

¹JW's letter is not known to survive.

²Nathaniel Salthouse appears in a 'trial band' for single men in the first surviving Foundery Band Lists (for Apr. 1742) and consistently through 1745. He married Anne Hamilton in Sept. 1746. He was buried in Bunhill Fields on Apr. 4, 1758.

³Cf. Rom. 10:14.

me! Lord, save me, or I perish!' He then arose, and got round the other to get at me, and cried, 'O dear, dear sir, is there mercy for me?' I insisted upon the promise that there is, even for you the chief of sinners. He then flung himself back and cried out again in vehemence of spirit, 'Lord, save me, or I am damned! O God, break my heart, that is like a rock. Now, now, O Lord! let me feel one drop of the blood of Jesus.' While he was thus wrestling, the Lord broke his heart in pieces, and immediately tears of joy ran from his eyes like a fountain. So that both could now rejoice in God their Saviour.

When we came to the gallows the other three men waited in the cart for the hangman to come up, who was with us. He went up into the cart to tie them up, and while he was tying them I went to prayer with the three that I was with. I then stood up on the side of the sledge, in the midst of many thousand souls. Many took off their hats while I was at prayer, and at the end of every sentence did say such hearty 'Amen's' that the place echoed with the sound. Then the hangman came and took them out of the sledge, to tie them up with the other three. While he was doing this, I was talking to the other man that was on the sledge. He was sixty years of age, but utterly unconcerned. When all their ropes were tied, the ordinary of Newgate read the form of words, and orders were given that they should draw down their caps. Those two men looked round upon the people smiling, and then lifted up their hearts and said, 'Now, O Lord, into thy hands do we commit our spirits!'

O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory!

I am, reverend sir,

Your obedient son in the gospel,

Charles Skelton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 92–95.⁴

⁴Titled in *AM*: 'A Remarkable Instance of the Goodness of God.' JW adds a note: 'Did God design that this light should be hid under a bushel, in a little, obscure, dissenting meeting house?' About 1754 Skelton left the Methodist itinerancy to become a dissenting minister in Southwark.

From 'N. D.'¹

To the Reverend Mr. John Wesley

April 15, 1749

Reverend Sir,

Your *Plain Account of the People called Methodists, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Perronet*² is just now fallen into my hands. Christian charity obliges me to hope that you are very *sincere* in your labour of love for the salvation of souls. As I most heartily wish you success in so important a work, I shall be sorry that any *oversight*, any *omission* of yours, should afford *ground of cavil* to those who are disposed to think unfavourably of your sect, and to misrepresent it. Give me leave therefore, sir, to ask you a serious question.

Page 6 you say 'that it is expected that the members of your society should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, first, by doing no harm; by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is *most generally practiced*. (Such as the taking the name of God in vain; the profaning the day of the Lord; drunkenness, fighting, quarrelling, brawling, the doing to others as we would not they should do unto us; unprofitable, or uncharitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or ministers.)'³

The question I now beg leave to propose, sir, is: Why have you omitted *lewdness, fornication, and adultery* out of this catalogue of the sins which are 'most generally practised'? Nay, why have you never mentioned or given the least caution against these sins throughout your whole letter, in many parts of which other sins are *particularly* named, condemned, and the society warned against them? Is it because these sins are *less generally practiced* than the others which you have named? I fear you cannot say so.

Dr. Hartley, in the truly excellent conclusion of his book, has these words: 'The strictness and purity of the Christian religion (in regard to *chastity*) is probably the chief thing which makes vicious men first fear, and hate, and then vilify and oppose it.'⁴

Your silence in regard to the breaches of *chastity* could not proceed from your being convinced of the truth of this opinion and believing that it was your duty not to enforce a doctrine which would probably rather lessen than increase the number of proselytes to the faith.

But though the reasons for your absolutely passing over the several species of the sin of *uncleanness* without the least mark of dislike do not appear, yet there are reasons which seem to me plain and forcible why you ought to have shown a warmer disapprobation of all the sins of this class than of any of those which you have set down in your catalogue to be avoided by the faithful.

First, because God has set a stronger mark of disapprobation upon them in the Holy Scriptures.

Secondly, because they are, in their own nature, more pernicious to civil society.

Thirdly, because many persons of great eminence amongst you have been publicly charged with the commission of these crimes; and it is said there has been a preacher of your sect who has dared to assert from the rostrum that the greatest breaches of *chastity* are consistent with—holiness to the Lord! Nay, that he has published doctrines on the subjects contrary to the doctrines of the gospel.⁵

¹JW's reply of May 27 (*Works*, 26:358–60) expresses the suspicion that 'N.D.' is in fact Conyers Middleton, whose *Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church* (London, Manby and Cox, 1749) JW had attacked in an open letter of Jan. 4–24, 1749.

²See *Works*, 9:254–80. It had just been published.

³*Plain Account*, I.8, quoting the *General Rules*, *Works*, 9:257.

⁴Cf. David Hartley, *Observations on Man* (London: C. Hitch & S. Austen, 1749), 2:446–47.

⁵'N.D.' is likely referring to Westley Hall, as JW notes in his reply.

Fourthly, have not your 'love-feasts' and your *little bands of confession*, suffered much scandal, from which most pathetic declarations of yours and your followers' detestation of the sins of *adultery* and *fornication* seem to be a necessary vindication?

These considerations appear to me to call loudly upon you to be plain, explicit, and warm in the recommendation of these virtues, and of your abhorrence of these vices which, in a full account of your principles and practices, you have most surprisingly passed over in profound silence.

You are right in asserting that your manner of confession is very different from that of the confession of the papists (page 18⁶). They indeed confess to a priest, from whom, on certain conditions, they hope for absolution from their sins. They confess privately to a person who neither knows or sees the penitent, and under so secure a seal of secrecy that there have been very few instances of its having ever been broken. Is not this a much more reasonable way of proceeding than that which you prescribe to your bands (page 17⁷), who declare 'that they meet to speak freely, and plainly, the true state of their souls, with the faults they have committed in *thought*, *word*, or *deed*, and the temptations they have felt since their last meeting'. All this is to be done face to face. Surely one would think from this institution of yours that either the members of your society are not subject to like temptations as other men, or that the sins of uncleanness in *thought*, *word*, or *deed* were not among the faults which, by your ordinance, they are obliged *openly* to confess one to another. Think seriously, sir, what a scene you have here exposed to profane eyes, and an unholy imagination! 'A set of people, met together under a promise of secrecy, pouring out their souls into each other's bosoms by declaring freely, and of their own accord, or by answering *truly* all the *searching* questions of their leaders; all the unchaste *thoughts*, *words*, and *deeds* they had been guilty of, or had been tempted to be guilty of, since their last meeting. From these confessions, you say, they began *naturally* to care one for another; they felt a more tender affection for one another, came into a closer union, and were more effectually *provoked* to abound in every good work.'⁸

I hope, sir, though you use the word 'naturally', yet you mean nothing but what is *spiritual* by these and the like expressions. But why will you run the risk of offending a weak brother? Why will you not hearken to Dr. Hartley's friendly advice, given you in the before-quoted conclusion? Viz., to avoid *spiritual selfishness*, and zeal for *particular phrases* and *tenets*, by observing of which you would avoid the just scandal which is given by so near an approach to a *double entendre*. Had you taken this good advice you would likewise have avoided the imputation of arrogance, self-conceit, spiritual selfishness, and presumption, which many sober Christians thought you guilty of when they read the following paragraph:

They prayed for one another that they might be healed of the faults they had confessed; and *it was so*. The *chains were broken*, the bands *were burst in sunder*, and *sin had no more dominion over them*.⁹

Dr. [Conyers] Middleton, to whom you appeal (page 28, 29¹⁰), absolves you from all *boasting* in relation to the miracle you worked upon [William] Kirkman. He says that you have shown peculiar modesty and humility in claiming but one miracle, whereas many of the *thaumaturgi*¹¹ from whom you

⁶*Plain Account*, VI.8, *Works*, 9:268.

⁷*Ibid.*, VI.3, p. 267.

⁸Although within quotation marks this lengthy passage is N.D.'s own summary, the second sentence drawing upon *ibid.*, II.7 (on the classes, p. 262) and VI.6 (on the bands, p. 268).

⁹*Ibid.*, VI.6 (p. 268), italics added by N. D.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, XII.5, p. 276.

¹¹'Wonder workers'.

derive your art would have made them three at least out of the same circumstances.

First, Kirkman must have been miraculously preserved, probably for this very purpose, threescore years, under a cough, 'a very sore cough, which would not let him rest night or day'.

Secondly, the instantaneous cure you own was miraculous.

Thirdly, it appears to be as great a miracle as either that you, with very little skill in physic, as you own, should be able to dispense forty pounds' worth of drugs to persons labouring under desperate, and to common means *incurable*, distempers, without having one patient die under your hands; and, I dare say, your candour would have made you declare it, if it had happened.

But to return to our first point. Let me beg you, as a fellow Christian, to do all that lies in your power, in conversation, in preaching, in your printed works, by your most serious and warm declarations of your love to *chastity*, and an unfeigned abhorrence of every breach of its sacred laws, to remove that great load of scandal that now lies upon your sect; and that you will not, by a careless or premeditated silence in points of such great consequence to religion and the commonwealth, bring yourself and your followers under a just suspicion of not being enemies to certain vices which you seem afraid even to name.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

N. D.

Source: published transcription; *Bath Journal*, No. 269 (Apr. 17, 1749), 13.¹²

¹²There is also an imperfect manuscript transcription on the margins (later cropped in binding) and other blank areas of a copy of the 2nd edn. of the *Plain Account* in the Library of the University of Hull, England. Transcription published in *Works*, 26:349–51.

From John Bennet

Chinley
April 25, 1749

Sir,

I doubt not but you have received my last letter wrote from Preston, wherein I gave you an account of the rioters at Roughlee. I have got Mr. Fenton's bill: £7. 17s. 6d.¹ It is poor management indeed. Mr [William] Grimshaw is somewhat troubled and wishes he had never been seen in the affair, since it is so shamefully dropped, to the detriment of the cause of Christ.

It is reported that the rioters will move the Court this term for costs; or rather serve Mr. Grimshaw, etc., with copies of writs, and prosecute them in their own court, where they know, as you once told them, 'they were judge, jury, and executioner'. Mr. Grimshaw little thought of this, since you sat at the helm. The brethren at Halifax (I suppose) proceed, for they requested the stewards of our several quarterly meetings that collections might be made through our respective societies. Accordingly it hath been done, and in a very liberal manner.

The quarterly meeting at Todmorden Edge was on Tuesday last [April 18]. We had a unanimous meeting. The business of the day was ove(r in good) time. Mr. Grimshaw was with us, and preached in the evening to a larg(er) congregation than hath been seen in those parts for some time. It pl(eased) the Lord to favour our assembly with a renewed visitation of his love, to the comfort and refreshment of the souls then present.

The societies in these parts increase daily, so that we have fresh occasion to praise the name of the Lord for the continuance of his goodness to us; and, in a sense of our own weakness, to magnify his power and might who hath hitherto preserved us. 'Thou Lord art good and ready to forgive and plentiful in mercy to all that call upon Thee.' Psalm 86.

Dear sir, pray that a sense of his gracious dealings towards us be a means of enlarging our hearts in fervency of affection one towards another, that we may mutually exhort and encourage each other to a steady perseverance in the path of truth and righteousness, which by the guidance of his grace, he hath directed our feet into.

By the accounts brought in from the several societies in Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Lancashire at our quarterly meeting held at Woodley on Thursday last [April 20], we have comfortable relations of love and unity in the churches, and that many have come to experience a growth and establishment in grace. They are brought to an inward fellowship and communion in the one Lord, one faith, one baptism by which they are become sensible, not only of their own inward state, but have also a sympathy and concern raised in them for the welfare of others, watching over one another for good and in Christian freedom and plainness of speech exhorting the remiss, reprove offenders, encouraging the weak, and bringing forward the hindermost of the flock, which brotherly concern conduces to the gathering of many, a practice which I fear is too much neglected though worthy of all our imitation and which I earnestly recommend to all who have the truth at heart. Many doors are opened for preaching in these parts, but can't be supplied for want of preachers. I think someone should be sent to assist me, or otherwise we shall lose ground. My circuit is 150 miles in two weeks, during which time I preach publicly 34 times, besides meeting the societies, visiting the sick, and transacting the temporal business. I think the above is too much for me, considering my weak constitution.

Brother [William] Darney is at present in his own country, but must return into Yorkshire speedily to answer one of his majesty's Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions near Osmotherley.

Lydia Oates of Sheffield is ready to depart and be with God. She desires you may be acquainted with her affairs, and have your advice. She desires to leave £20 to the society at Sheffield, either towards building a house or towards any other use you think best. Elizabeth Oates desired upon her deathbed that Hannah Bennet might have liberty if she pleased to live [in] Lydia Oates's house during Hannah's life. It

¹The lawyer who helped deal with the case of John Jane.

was granted. Now if Hannah Bennet insist of her property in this house, Lydia Oates cannot sell it, (an)d if she do not sell it she cannot be possessed of money to give for (the use) of the society. I think I shall go over in a few days and sett(le) the affair betwixt 'em if possible.

Are you acquainted with Francis Walker's brother,² who is now at Newcastle? I am informed by several persons that he hath neither gifts nor grace for the ministry. He had wellnigh stumbled many near Sheffield, as also at High Green. Excuse my freedom, since I think it is very necessary that you should know these things.

Touching your letter from Kingswood dated the second of this instant, I think you are warm.³ However (I thank God) I received it kindly, and verily believe that not only in this, but in other directions, you wish well to my soul.

I acknowledge I did ask your advice, 'declaring I would do nothing without it'. And what have I done? I am not sure that I said I would 'do nothing contrary to it'. If I did, it was not wisely done. This would be paying too great veneration to a father, unless I thought you possessed with a spirit of infallibility. I believe you to be a minister of Christ, an elder of the Church, and account you worthy of double honour; and desire that I may both in this affair and all others show that reverence and obedience to you which is suitable in young ones towards their elders.

You desire I may speak to you without reserve, therefore I would speak freely whatever is in my heart. But first, how far do you desire me to submit to your judgment? I hope no farther than I can without wounding my conscience, or than I am convinced in my judgment. You asked me once in a letter whether I was gone too far to turn back. I answered you, 'No', meaning thereby I was not married. I told you my thoughts. Your letters, I must acknowledge, have puzzled me, so that I have not seen clearly the will of God. I never intended to marry until both she and I had seen you face to face.

I assure you I do not want a woman. If so, I needed not to have acquainted you, and given you so much trouble. I thought (and still think) that it will be more for the glory of God was I to marry. I am at present resigned. And I trust shall not act imprudently. I can only say this: I would rather die than bring a reproach upon the gospel.

Dear sir, make yourself easy. I will assure you I shall not marry without giving you further advice, and consulting you th(ereup)on.

I am more and more confirmed since this affair happened that you are in an error touching your thoughts of marriage. You know that in the Conference objections were made against your *Thoughts*⁴—I thought sufficient ones to overthrow them had you been open to conviction. They are so dark and intricate that persons of weak judgment have been led into strange errors.

Sir, I believe I know as much of Grace Murray's weakness and temptations as any one person. She has lost ground, and (is w)eaker in grace, ever since she appeared publicly. She hath lain (under) sore temptations, and hath been a snare to others (though not design(edly),) both teachers and hearers. She is in danger (whether you know it or not) of waxing wanton against Christ, growing weary of the Church service, and by despairing of marrying in the Church, revolt from the faith.

²Francis Walker (1722–87) began serving as an itinerant preacher as early as 1744. He is listed as an Assistant in the *Minutes* starting in 1745 (*Works*, 10:159), until he married and settled in Gloucester, leading to his classification as a local preacher in 1755 (*Works*, 10:274). His brother is probably William Walker who appears in the *Minutes* in 1746 and 1747 (*Works*, 10:183, 206) and then disappears.

³JW's letter to Bennet of Apr. 2, 1749 is not known to survive. It clearly dealt with their increasingly strained relations over Grace Murray, who had promised marriage in turn to both of them, JW first. JW had just taken Grace Murray with him to Ireland. So impressed did JW become by her daily companionship that three months later (still in Ireland) they entered into a contract of marriage *de praesenti*—in words of the present tense, 'I do take thee for my wife, husband.'

⁴JW, *Thoughts on Marriage and a Single Life* (1743).

If you hurry her on from place to place, and thereby she is more and more exposed, until at last her weakness is betrayed, I am free—look you to it. It is against her mind she is gone this journey—more, I believe, to please you than a conviction it is the will of God.

Whether ever I see her more in the flesh or not, I desire you will be tender of her character, and consider she is a woman. I am

Your unworthy brother and son in the gospel,

J. Bennet

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / ((at the Foundery)) / in Ireland [in another hand] / ((London)) / Speed [underlined]'.⁵

Postmarks: 'CHAPPEL /IN FRITH', '1/MA'. *Charges:* '4'; '8' and '2', one written over the other.⁵

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jo Bennet / Apr. 25, 1749 / a[nswere]d May 21'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/6.⁶

⁵The regular charge from London (whence the letter was redirected) to Dublin was 6d., but by the time it arrived in Dublin he was on his way to Limerick.

⁶Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:351–54.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

Bristol
April 29, [1749]

[[Dear Brother,]]

I hope this will find you prospering in Ireland. I left Garth yesterday sennight. Mr. [Marmaduke] Gwynne, with Sally and Betty,² accompanied me to Abergavenny. There I left them on Saturday morning, and got hither by one. Over-riding occasioned a fever, but Jesus rebuked it by the means of bleeding, vomiting, and sweating, and on Monday I was just able to preach. Much of his hand I have seen since we parted. Our fears of Mrs. Gwynne were altogether needless. She had assured her daughters that rather than we should come into any danger of inconvenience by her son³ or any man, Mr. Gwynne should leave us ourselves executors. He made his will, to which I was witness; and even then proposed making me his executor. I desired (as you may well suppose) that he would appoint Mrs. Gwynne, which he did. She leaves Becky⁴ hers (to whom, I think, you can have no exception). Her tenderness towards me increased as long as I stayed at Garth. I cannot but believe she will one day be a great blessing to the Church.

I was *too eager* for the work, and therefore believe God checked me by that short sickness. Till on Wednesday evening at the [Weaver's] hall my strength and understanding did not return. But from that time the Lord has been with us of a truth. More zeal, more life, more power I have not felt for some years (I wish my mentioning this may not lessen it), so that hitherto marriage has been no hindrance. You will hardly believe it sits so light upon me. I forgot my wife (can you think it?) as soon as I left her. Some farther proof I had of my heart on Saturday last, when the fever threatened most. I did not *find* (so far I can say) any unwillingness to die, on account of any I should leave behind. Neither did death appear less desirable than formerly—which I own gave me great pleasure, and made me shed tears of joy. I almost believe nothing shall hurt me, that the world and the flesh and the devil shall keep their distance, or by assaulting leave me more than conqueror.

Here is a small convenient house for £11 a year, next [to] Mrs. [Elizabeth (Stafford)] Vigor's. I have wrote to Garth for counsel. But *my mother* is unexpectedly *against* our keeping house for some time, if not years. You, I think, will not hinder our living as pilgrims. Write your mind, and turn the scale.

On Thursday I propose setting out for London by Oxford with Thomas Maxfield (if they will give me a year of grace⁵ I shall wonder and thank them); visit the classes the next week; keep the Octave,⁶ and return to the press. [Felix] Farley and the school go on well. More scholars. Where will you stow them? Come, and build.

¹CW married Sarah Gwynne Jr. on Apr. 8, 1749. He remained close to Garth, preaching, for about two weeks, until setting out for Bristol on Apr. 21, and parting company with Sally and her sister on Apr. 22. In Bristol he busied himself with Felix Farley, from whose press the two volumes of his *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (which were helping to finance his marriage) were appearing; he also seems to have been reading proof for the early volumes of JW's *Christian Library*.

²Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley and her sister Elizabeth Gwynne (1730–95).

³Howell Gwynne (1718–80), the oldest son of Marmaduke and Sarah (Evans) Gwynne remained opposed to the marriage of CW and Sarah.

⁴Rebecca Gwynne (1724–99), the oldest daughter of Marmaduke and Sarah (Evans) Gwynne.

⁵With his marriage CW was expected to end his 'studentship' (or status that the other colleges of Oxford called a 'fellow') at Christ Church. He was hoping for an extension of the support.

⁶The eight-day season of Easter.

I hope you come⁷ [in] time enough to save Joseph Cownley, etc. Set your time for returning. *Whenabouts*, at least, will you meet me at Ludlow? It is a thousand pities you should not be here when the *Library* makes its first appearance.⁸ The Lord cut short your work and his, and make a few weeks go as far as many months!

What say you to Thomas Maxfield and my taking a journey (when you return) through all the societies northern and western, and settling correspondencies with the stewards, alias booksellers, etc.? His heart is whole with us, to my great satisfaction. Take an exact account how many of my book must be sent to Ireland *bound*. My kindest love to Mr. [William] Lunell, Mr. Lloyd⁹ (with thanks for his letter and my promise of a speedy answer¹⁰), Mrs. Fowks,¹¹ Mr. Gibbons, and all friends at Cork and Dublin, etc.

The youth from Fermoy is come.

We make mention of you in all our prayers. Be not unmindful of us.

The Lord preserve us all unto his day!

Farewell

Endorsement: by JW, 'C. / Apr. 29, 1749 / a[nswere]d May 22'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 1/22.¹²

⁷Orig., 'came'.

⁸The first volume of JW's *Christian Library* was published by Farley in May 1741.

⁹Rev. Richard Lloyd, rector of Rathcormack, who had welcomed CW into his parish the previous year, and would soon welcome JW.

¹⁰Neither Lloyd's letter nor CW's reply is known to survive.

¹¹CW likely means Mrs. Fouace, of Tyrellspass, whom he had come to know in Aug. 1748 during his time in Ireland.

¹²Transcription published in *Works*, 26:354–55.

From Jonathan Reeves¹

Cork
c. May 12, 1749

Please to let me know which way you come, and what day, that I may meet you. For otherwise your life will be in danger. The town is set on fire of hell, and all the powers of hell are stirred up against your coming.

Source: manuscript transcription; quoted in JW letter to CW, May 14, 1749.²

¹Jonathan Reeves (d. 1787) was drawn into the Methodist revival in Bristol in 1739. He became one of JW's earliest lay preachers.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 26:358.

From Oliver Ozello, et al.

Our club at the great music room at Cork
The calends of July [i.e., July 1] 1749

Reverend Sir,

Having the good of mankind and our own improvement entirely at heart, we some years ago formed ourselves into a society for the advancement of natural knowledge, and by the help of our first president, who is an adept in metaphysics, we soon arrived at such a proficiency as to surmount many of the difficulties that occur in these abstruse sciences.

On our journals will be found a discussion of that important question, 'What is matter?' All we shall say about it at present is that the world will be surprised when we throw it out to them naked and abstracted from all its modes and properties.

As for the nature and qualities of angels, spirits, witches, etc., they are so familiar to us that we make no difficulty of talking them over even to our wives and children.

Two blazing meteors that lately appeared in both hemispheres naturally attracted our attention; and as learned men divide upon almost every question, we ran into difficult opinions on so extraordinary a phenomenon. Some thought them new suns erected on purpose to give an additional light to the world; others, *Ignes fatui*,¹ to confound and lead astray such as do not make use of their natural eyesight; and some, only the return of comets which had at different periods made their several appearances before. You will be beforehand with us in applying this to Mr. [George] Whitefield and yourself, and in the allusion to the many real or pretended reformers that proceeded.

Although we could not be unanimous, yet for the most part we agreed that you must be very extraordinary men; and therefore made an order on our book that our secretary compliment you, and in your name, give you an invitation to take a seat with us, whenever you come hither.

We had impatiently waited that event when last summer a set of your harbingers appeared. The first in an open place and a sacerdotal habit.²

The novelty of hearing a preacher out of a church, and the emphatical manner in which he described his own conversion, with the terrors and judgments he pronounced against this wicked world, and the inhabitants thereof, and the power he attributed to the devil, over those he had left, did not fail to have the desired effect on his audience, which was soon very great.

We agreed that some of us should attend constantly and make a report of their observations at our meetings, intending to consider them in our philosophical capacity only, without entering into the controversies that we foresaw arising, as our professed design was to keep a perfect neutrality, and not to meddle with the spiritual, supernatural, enthusiastical, superstitious or interested notions of any of the parties in which the town was almost instantly divided.

The prospect, we own, was not to us disagreeable, knowing that disputes of that kind can never do much harm in a country of liberty. They have often salutary effects, and some have already appeared in this very case.

For although individuals may, and do, suffer some inconveniences and troubles, yet they contribute to the main, to the general good, in as much as they serve to take off people from a supineness, and incogitancy in religious matters, and put them upon thinking for themselves. Though they will unavoidably think differently, yet even that will lead them to make the same allowances for others which they claim for themselves. And this appears actually to be the case of such as are not under the influence of leader.

After the above introduction, the preacher inveighed most movingly against the pride, laziness, luxury, and covetousness of the clergy—which, if true, he had little time to be informed of. However, it is

¹'Will-of-the-wisps' or illusions.

²The reference appears to be to CW's first visit to Cork from mid-August to mid-September, 1748. He was accompanied by Robert Swindells.

like he hit the mark he aimed at, since the people came so readily into his sentiments.

He and his colleague gave up their whole time to preaching, visiting, and instructing in private, such as gave them opportunity. On all those occasions, they solemnly averred that they came not for their silver or gold, but to unveil to them the direct way to heaven, which they said they and their teachers were woefully ignorant of.

At all their meetings singing of hymns was a great part of the entertainment. As the tunes were new, and sprightly, those inclined to music were immediately taken and it's surprising to see in how little time many others became proficient in the science of harmony.

The doctrine they chiefly insisted on was the necessity of faith, which they resolved into a strong and personal assurance of salvation, which assurance whoever wanted³ they taught were in a state of damnation. That new doctrine was soon embraced and it is amazing to see in how short a time several of their disciples declared they had got that assurance, relating in the manner, time, and place not with too much charity to those they left behind.

The preacher's treatment of the clergy soon surprised and roused them, and provoked some to preach publically and argue privately with several people against what they called such dangerous tenets. And when on those occasions they endeavoured to expose the enthusiasm of such principles and demonstrate the excellency of their own religion and its conformity to Scripture and reason (whereby they must judge of the duties and virtues we are enjoined to the practice of), they found themselves only laughed at, as carnal men, that knew nothing of the power of godliness, or spiritual matters; and this chiefly by those very people who were their most distinguished votaries before. They despised what they called their moral preaching and instruction as quite insufficient; looked on them (as they were taught) to be only concerned about their own emoluments, without any regard to the souls of the people; and thought themselves superlatively happy to have found out a religion in which that troublesome intruder *reason* had nothing to do.

Faith, say they, is the criterion of a good Christian. In this they both agree. But one will have it to be a compound of reason and something supernatural, and the other a simple, strong presumption. It is the principal article upon which the several churches have divided, excommunicated, and abused each other; and that a disagreement about it now should produce something of the like nature, is not at all surprising. Such an effect would tempt considerate and impartial men to think that they have all taken too much of credulity and incredulity into their accounts, not perhaps laying stress enough on the moral disposition of the heart; which may notwithstanding, be mainly concerned in this matter.

Your first set of missionaries, after having got your General Rules reprinted and dispersed here, went off, and were succeeded by others who pursued the same course—with this variation only, that they intimated the labourer was worthy of his hire, and that they thought such as laid out themselves for the instructions of the people should be supported by them, which was readily assented to.

They were soon superseded by another set, and those again by others; which is a convincing proof to us of the extent of your judgment in the art of managing mankind by rousing them, keeping up their astonishment, and letting nothing become familiar to them until they are carried to the point intended.

They soon established private societies and bands (according to the General Rules) under leaders, who made the prescribed enquiries into the state of the people's souls committed to their charge, and collected their contributions; for both which they accounted in form with the ministers and treasurer, while in the meantime the public meetings were held twice a day in a house taken for that purpose at the approach of winter.

There were many good effects attending it. Several are said to have reformed from habitual drunkenness, cursing and swearing, and other vices. They were, in general, of an orderly deportment, and remarkably silent as to what passed at their private societies or bands.

³I.e., whoever lacked.

Some of them so macerate their bodies by fasting, in which they glory, that they are known by their looks to be Methodists. While others have a cheerfulness and confidence that nothing can give but a well-grounded hope or an extraordinary degree of enthusiasm. Perhaps you can best account for the contrast!

If the pleasures of imagination contribute as much as some think to the happiness of life, it's pity ever to ruffle these. The danger is that they may not be always able to keep up to a certain pitch. When that fails there will follow a succession of gloomy ideas, perhaps of pernicious tendency. An instance or two of the kind are said to have already happened. For a long time things went on smoothly. There was great expectation of your appearance and that something extraordinary would ensue when matters took another turn.

*Dat veniam Corvis, vexat censura Columbas.*⁴

A ballad singer,⁵ with a rabble at his heels, was put on troubling that peaceable and orderly set of people, who have, to their great honour, born it with remarkable temper and patience; and some of the warmer sort, exult on the circumstance, as an evidence of the divine favour, that they are thought worthy to suffer for the cause of truth.

We own we cannot entirely come into their way of thinking, yet we would gladly prevent what is doing against them, if we could. Is it lawful to countermine? That fellow is poor, he acts his part for money—what if his employers were outbid? He is artful, and if properly taken in may, from a persecutor, appear to be a zealous disciple—and if he acts his part well, may frighten other people from the course he was in. After he and his myrmidons⁶ had occasioned the house to be shut up, several of the most sanguine Methodists, apprehending they were abetted by the clergy, struck hands and made a *solemn league and covenant* that they would never go to the established Church again, and the next Sunday divided themselves among the dissenting congregations. At a meeting in a private house that week their preacher (in whose absence this was done) highly resenting such a rash proceeding, immediately dissolved that bond and ordered them peremptorily to attend their several parish churches as usual, and was obeyed.

This shows the great authority they have gained, from which we infer that it may be a proper time to publish and put in practice those particular Rules (one printed copy of which only, brought by a preacher, some of have seen) for regulating their commerce with the world in respect to eating, drinking, fasting, wearing apparel, taking drams and snuff, and their more particular confessions and heart-openings to their leaders of bands and ministers. And this, we think, will be a good foundation, if applied, for establishing that wholesome doctrine of *restitution of ill-gotten wealth*. But perhaps it may not be altogether convenient to put your penitents into the power of the several leaders of bands. For as they are our neighbours and friends, we would not have them exposed for any former slips, which restitution to individuals would, we fear, occasion. This may be a proper business for the preacher only. And let what may be so got be paid into the treasurer for the use of the society, and other occasions, under the notion of bounty or charity; and it may do as well, as in some other churches.

Those hints we intended communicating to you on your arrival here, but were greatly surprised that notwithstanding the general expectation and great preparations that were made for your reception, you either passed through or only went by the town in your way to Bandon, and hovered but a few days about us, in the adjacent villages, without coming to confirm such of your converts as could not go to you.

⁴Juvenal, *Satires*, i.63; 'The censor forgives the crows and harasses the doves.'

⁵Nicholas Butler; for a detailed account of this persecution see JW to CW, June 17, 1749, *Works*, 26:366–73.

⁶'Hired ruffians.'

Your enemies, we assure you, have made a great handle of it, and would persuade the Methodists that your zeal for the cause is all affectation and grimace. What? say they. Would any man that thought himself commissioned from heaven for the propagation or restoration of religion meanly hide himself and keep out of the way when he had such a call, for fear of a little ill words or rough treatment, and at the same time order his deputies to attend their ministrations under those difficulties promising them a heavenly support? It is well known, say they, that they will not meddle with life or limb. Their commission goes no farther than ribaldry and abusive language.

To this it was answered by some that that could not be depended on, since it was evident they had gutted the meeting house, burned the pulpit and seats, broke windows, and disturbed several private families. That you being the absolute director of their economy, and having in yourself the sole disposal of the large funds of the faithful in Great Britain and Ireland, your life was too valuable to be put on such a casualty. Others seem staggered at your behavior and think you ought to have ventured everything, nay even martyrdom (if called to it) for such a cause—with such, you will be in danger of losing ground without some caution.

What if you imitated the two famous African bishops who, in a time of persecution, secreted themselves, but when it was over, returned to their sees and, when charged with cowardice and temporizing, alleged their conduct was directed by particular divine revelations to themselves. You will now have a fair opportunity of doing it, in an address we find you are about publishing to the people of Ireland.⁷ There is something so like it in your journal for 1738 and 1739 that we think those that give entire credit to the one will certainly believe the other. The sooner it is done the better, or your substitutes here, whether from your own example or any new troubles given them by the ballad-singer (who is grown notoriously profane and obnoxious to sober people of all denominations, though supported where he should not) have left this place and gone to Bandon.

A soldier, we are informed, and some others now preach to large companies about the skirts of the town. He, or some other of them, may probably soon think of setting up for themselves. So that you appear to us to be in some danger of losing your spiritual authority, which has hitherto been very great here.

Thus we have given you such information and intimations as we thought may be of service, and have given it in charge to our members to be more particular in their observations for the future, intending from time to time to communicate them to you, as anything occurs worthy your attention. And now we bid you heartily farewell.

Signed by order: Oliver Ozello, Secretary

Source: published transcription; Oliver Ozello et al., *An Account of the Rise, Progress, and Nature of Methodism in Corke. ... In a Letter to the Rev. John Wesley. ... By the Philosophical Society* (Cork: s.n., 1749).

⁷JW published his *Letter to a Roman Catholic* on July 18, 1749.

From Jonathan Reeves

Tyrrellspass
July 24, 1749

Dear Sir,

Many have found a sense of the pardoning love of God at Athlone since you left it, and the society in general are on the stretch for the kingdom of God. The Lord has kindled a fire in Aughtrim likewise. The last time but one that I was there several were struck with deep convictions, which continued till I came again. While I was meeting the society there, the governess of Mr. S[impson]'s 6 children was struck to the ground and in a short time filled with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The next morning his steward was cut to the heart and fell upon his knees in the midst of the sermon, as did Mr. S[impson] himself, together with his wife and great part of the congregation. The steward went home full of peace and love. This has set the whole society on fire, so that now everyone is crying out, 'What must I do to be saved?'

The same fire is kindled at Portarlinton. I went there the next Sunday after you. One then found a sense of God's pardoning love. And last Saturday in the society some cried out, and some fell to the ground, three of whom found peace to their souls.

I was at Mountmellick likewise the next Sunday after you, and the power of God was present to heal. Two that were heavy laden found rest that night. The next time we met we scarce knew how to part. We continued singing and praying till five persons received a clear manifestation of the love of God. Another found the same blessing while I was preaching this morning. We spent some time afterwards at James Moss's house, in praying with some that were under deep convictions, and two of them went home rejoicing in God their Saviour. I was now informed of two more that were rejoicing in God. So that in Mountmellick twelve persons in all have found the peace that passeth all understanding since you left that place.

I preached at Rahugh likewise the week after you was there. The man of the house had fetched his mother from a considerable distance. She had never heard a Methodist preacher before. She was soon cut to the heart and cried out aloud. One behind her bid her fall upon her knees, which she presently did, and the whole house was as in one cry. I broke off my discourse and began to pray, which I continued till I was so spent I could hardly speak. I went out to take a little breath, and came in again. She was crying out, 'I am dropping, dropping into hell; its mouth is open, ready to swallow me up.' I went to prayers again, and before we had done, God spoke peace to her soul. She was filled with joy unspeakable and could but just say, 'I am in a new world! I am in a new world!'

From the whole I cannot but observe two things: 1) What a blessing it is when any who finds that peace declares it openly before all the people, that we may break off and praise God. If this was always done it would be good for many souls. The first that found it on Sunday evening spoke before all, and we praised God. The moment she spoke, another, and then another, found peace, and each of them spoke aloud and made the fire run through the whole congregation. I would observe, 2) the woman at Rahugh had never before seen anyone in the like trouble. Therefore she could not cry out because she had heard others do it, but because she could not help it—because she felt 'the word of God sharper than a two-edged sword'.¹ And generally the sharper the convictions are, the sooner they are over. This is from

Your son in the gospel,

J. R.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, July 30, 1749 (*Works*, 20:293–94).

¹Cf. Heb. 4:12.

From John Martin Bolzius

Ebenezer in Georgia
July 25, 1749

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The sincere love to your worthy person and faithful performance of your holy office, which the Lord kindled in my heart at your presence at Savannah, hath been not abated but rather increased during the time the providence of God was pleased to call you from us and show you another field for the labour of your ministry. That I break my long silence in conversing with you by familiar letters, and take now the liberty to trouble you with these few lines, is occasioned by some expressions in your last letter to Mr. Brown at Savannah; part of which, as relating to our settlement, the said gentleman hath communicated to me. You are pleased to remember Ebenezer kindly, and desire to know what is our settlement's present state and condition, which Mr. Brown intended to acquaint you with from that account he wanted of me. But relying upon your favour, I doubted not but you will excuse the trouble of my writing this account to you rather myself, than by another pen—by which I lose my fear of being mistaken in my expressions relating to our state and concerns. To intrude not too much upon your precious time, I will be for the present very short in my narrative of our circumstances, till you give me leave to enlarge it in our further correspondence, if you think it worth your while.

Though we have felt greatly the inconveniences of the long war, on account of the dearness of clothes and other necessaries of life from Europe, the northern colonies, and the West Indies; yet we must confess, to the glory of God, he hath maintained us in many respects, so that there appear great alterations for the better in our town and plantations since the time you was pleased to visit us. We have two large, convenient houses for public worship, one in town, and the other in the middle of our plantations; two schools in the same places; two grist-mills, one pounding mill for rice and barley, and one saw-mill; all standing upon a good foundation in a river at the Cove, part of our plantations; and all being exceeding beneficial to ours, and other people at Purrysbury, Abercorn, and the settlement of the last German servants on the Rock of Abercorn; also to those of Savannah and Frederica, as long as the regiment was there. In the first lumber of boards we sawed we were greatly disappointed by a certain impostor, who, under fair pretences, undertook to ship it off with a great quantity of cypress, shingles, white oak-staves, and hoops to the West-Indies; by which disappointment we lost a considerable sum of money, though not our courage to attempt, in the name of God, something further in trade, though we met, and still meet, with almost insuperable mountains of difficulties to attain our end, till our circumstances with respect to a wharf, servants, proper persons to undertake something of a commerce, etc., are mended by the hand of the Almighty, to whom we look up by faith and patience. We are still in the favour of the honorable Trustees and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; as also of many good Christians in Germany, who love us, pray fervently for us, and contribute all in their power to promote our spiritual and temporal prosperity.

From very hard labour, several of our good people have left us, and their pilgrimage, by a happy departure to a better country in heaven. And the rest are very weak and feeble in their bodies, and not able to hold it long out, if not speedy relief is sent them by an embarkation of faithful servants from Germany. Besides widows and orphans, we have several that want assistance towards their maintenance, which our good Lord hath sent us hitherto from Europe.

After my dear fellow-labourer, Mr. Gronau,² died in peace about three years ago, the Lord was pleased to send me another, who follows likewise exactly the footsteps of his Saviour, to my great comfort and a great blessing of our congregation. The Lord hath graciously kept us in mutual love and harmony in our congregation, and hath not permitted any false teacher to creep in among us. We are hated by wicked people, which prevents them to settle among us, though we love all men sincerely, and would have as many settled among us, as would keep such order, as Christianity and the laws of England advise

²Israel Gronau; orig., 'Gronan'.

them to do. This is all for the present I thought necessary to acquaint you with; being, with due regard,
and cordial wishes for your prosperity in soul and body, reverend and dear sir,

Yours most affectionately,

John Martin Bolzius

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 148–50.³

³Titled in *AM*: ‘An Account of the German Settlement, at Ebenezer in Georgia’. JW had earlier published an abridged transcription in *Journal*, Sept. 30, 1749 (*Works*, 20: 303–04).

From William Tucker¹

Bandon
July 27, 1749

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I received yours five days after date,² but could not at your request set out for Dublin immediately, seeing brother [Charles] Skelton was gone thither four days before yours came to hand. If you remember, you ordered him by letter to come to Dublin, and from thence to Limerick. I have sent for brother [John] Haughton or Fenwick³ to come here immediately, and then I will go to Dublin.

You ask shall I depend on you in the following particulars: 1) 'That no books shall be *wanted* or *wasted* in any place.' I will endeavour that there shall not. 2) 'That you will constantly go to bed between nine and ten.' I desire, and endeavour, so to do. But I find it very difficult. And in order to do this I must fix an exact time to *end* preaching and meeting the society and leaders, which I cannot always do. Sometimes I preach longer than at others, and the society detains me sometimes for two or three hours: the power of God so fills the place that we cannot part, and many have [[received]]⁴ remission of sins in meeting the society since you left this place. 3) 'That you will secure time every day for private prayer.' This I do, and am resolved, by God's grace, to continue to do. For without it I could not hold fast whereunto I have already attained. Much less could I grow in grace and wisdom day by day. By waiting upon God I renew my strength. Nothing delights me more than to be in communion with God all the day long. I find it is a hard thing to have this among the multitude. It is much easier to be a *solitary* Christian than a *social* one. I find it is best to divide the time—part in the mountain, and part among the multitude. The Lord hath prospered the word here, so that there are near a hundred joined since you left.

I breakfasted today with Madame Jones,⁵ which I frequently do. And it greatly rejoices me to see her set her face like a flint against the world. She is so far from being *ashamed* of a good Master that she boldly *confess[es]* him by leaving off her former visits, by coming among us very frequently, and by bearing reproach. She is often called by the gentry 'Madame Swaddler', but she is so far from being offended thereat that she counts it a matter of rejoicing. I will endeavour to write largely to you (as you desired) once a month. When I read your letter, and saw the confidence you placed in *me*, it melted my heart, knowing what a poor, weak, sinful creature I am, not worthy to be employed in any good work.

There is a young man here, his name is Richard Ward, whose parents is willing to send him to Kingswood School for three or four years. He is a very serious lad, and one that truly fears God. He is upwards of sixteen, or near seventeen, years of age, and has made already good progress in Latin.

James Ward was brought up among the Presbyterians, and was known to live the strictest life of any man in Bandon, but now is in great measure convinced that all his righteousness is but filthy rags. Nevertheless sometimes he is greatly distracted in his mind, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn: if our doctrine be true, then⁶ others that are counted good men is false. Though in the main he is

¹William Tucker (fl. 1745–50) became a Methodist travelling preacher about 1746, was received as an Assistant in 1748, and accompanied JW to Ireland both in 1747 and in 1749 (during which he occasionally served as JW's amanuensis). A year or two later he gave up travelling, and was listed by the Conference of 1755 as one of the chief local preachers.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Possibly William Fenwick, who is listed as one who preaches in limited locations in the 1747 *Minutes* (*Works*, 10:205).

⁴Orig., 'has remission' with 'received' inserted in Byrom's shorthand above the line.

⁵The wife (1689–1760) of Thomas Jones (d. 1762) a leading merchant in Cork, with an estate in Bandon.

⁶Orig., 'than'.

persuaded that we preach the truth. He is a man of good sense, and I believe it would be of great use if *you* would write to him.

Pray, sir, excuse my many blunders, for I write in great haste. Brother Hil(1) is going to Cork, and from thence he takes ship.

Address: 'To / The Revd / Mr Jno Wesley'.

(not posted; probably carried to Wesley in Bristol by brother Hill)

Endorsement: by JW, 'W. Tucker / July 27, 1749 / a[nswere]d Aug. 4'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/118.⁷

⁷Transcription published in *Works*, 26:373–74.

From Joanna Hawkins¹

[Sticklepath]
August 3, 1749

This morning the word of the Lord came to me at 8 o'clock, being the 3rd of the 6th month, 1749: Write to my servant John Wesley, for thus says the Spirit of holy, humble, meek Jesus Christ. I sent him on my divine and holy errand many times and often, yet there was not a th[o]rough, a steady fixing on my divine voice and holy command in the very inward of his heart and mind. No, no, he has too much overlooked and slighted my inward and spiritual appearances, and has too much applied himself to the letter for help and instruction in many doubtful and uncertain causes, when I would have cleared it up to him, without all doubt, if he had applied to my inward and spiritual appearance in his own heart. For surely saith the Spirit of Christ, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the letter killeth.'²

Thy Lord and Master would certainly have guided thee by his mighty power alone in thy heart had there been a desire to follow his divine voice. We have no need to open the Bible to know his will concerning us. No, blessed be and praised by the name of our God—he is come to teach his people himself and will anoint many Deborahs and also Baraks in our day. Glory to God on high, for that he will get to himself a most glorious name on earth, and will touch the lips of such as with a love coal from off his holy altar. Oh, the Lord Almighty is on his way to work a mighty work and a wonder in this our day, whether by male or female, seeing they are all one in Christ Jesus, our holy head and law giver. He has given of his Holy Spirit no less to the one than the other, and as man is the pride of his heart, has endeavoured to lessen that sex and to eclipse the glory of the Lord in them and to reveal himself to them as to the woman of Samaria. According to that remarkable prophecy of Joel: 'In the latter days I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh, on your sons and daughters, on servants and handmaidens, and they shall prophesy.'³

Signed

Joanna Hawkins

[On p. 6 Hawkins says that when she did not receive a reply from JW she decided on the 1st day of the 10th month (i.e., Dec. 1) that she should publish the letter, and included (on pp. 7–12) a letter 'To the Methodist Ministers', naming John Nelson and Thomas Richards as being sent by JW to preach at the Quaker stronghold, Sticklepath, Cornwall.]

To the Methodist ministers, so called, especially those who are under John Wesley's care and direction.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied in you and amongst you, whom to know is life eternal. And how can we know him but by following his divine and holy voice in the very inward of our hearts and minds? Dear friends, bear with me a little, who am personally known by diverse of you. Among you, I believe and charitably hope, there is a good thing stirring. Yea, the Lord Jehovah hath touched your hearts with his divine and holy love. Yea, he has graciously condescended to own your preaching at certain times and seasons with His holy presence,

¹Both JW and CW were initially welcomed in Sticklepath, Devonshire, by a small community of Quakers there (see JW, *Journal*, Sept. 21, 1743, *Works* 19:341; and CW, MS *Journal*, July 13, 1744). But by 1746 the community rejected the Wesley brothers as teaching a type of works-righteousness, see CW, *Journal Letters*, June 24, 1746 (p. 211). Little is known of Joanna Hawkins, one of this Quaker community, beyond this letter.

²Cf. 2 Cor. 3:6.

³Cf. Acts 2:17–18.

breaking many hearts and blessing your meetings. Yea, you have had to call sinners to turn from the evil of their ways, which, blessed by his holy name, has had a good effect on numbers of your hearers.

Well then, what remains on your part dear friends? Let me tell you. You have not sunk down lowly or humbly enough at the divine and holy footstool of Jesus, there to hear the small, pure voice that speaks as never man spoke. His words are both spirit and life. ...⁴

Source: abridgment of original published transcription; John Gould Hayman, *A History of the Methodist Revival of the Last Century*, 2nd edn. (London: Woolmer, 1885), 158–59.⁵

⁴Hayman's extract does not include the remainder of the original published letter.

⁵Frank Baker records a copy of Joanna Hawkins' *A Letter to John Wesley* (1749) in the library of Southern Methodist University, and includes an excerpt in *Works*, 26:660–61. Unfortunately this copy cannot now be found, nor is there record of any other copies in WorldCat or English Short Title Catalogue. Hayman's text provides earlier independent verification of the initial publication, and a larger excerpt. Our text follows Hayman, with a few scattered additions in the first paragraph from Baker (who gives the entire first paragraph without abridgement).

From John Curtis

Bristol
August 14, 1749

[The occasion and content of this letter are indicated in the following letter that John Curtis sent to a fellow Quaker, Mr. Price.¹]

Bristol
8th of the 11th month, called January 1749[/50]

Respected Friend Price,

Thy kindness to me since our acquaintance lays me under some obligation to answer thy request in giving thee copies of what has passed between John Wesley and me respecting his slandering me in Ireland (especially as he has given me no satisfaction, neither by proofs nor acknowledgment), though I can honestly say I don't desire that the knowledge of his injustice towards me should have any tendency to raise a spirit of bitterness in any towards him or his people. Yet [I] am not unwilling that men of honour and honesty (that may be prejudiced on either side) may be fully satisfied of the truth of the affair; and in order to have a right understanding of it I have first given thee an abstract of a letter from James Gough of Mountmellick, which shows the cause of my first writing to John Wesley. And that I was a member of their society these [two certificates given at the end] may inform thee that I gave 1s. entrance, paid one penny per week after, and my name was called over with the rest, which was then a custom amongst them, and was thereby made a member of the society in the Horsefair, Bristol, besides a society kept in my own house at Chew Magna at the same time.²

Desiring thou mayest be favoured with the blessing of preservation to thy intended port, I conclude

Thy assured friend,

Jno Curtis

[Letter to John Curtis from James Gough³]

Mountmellick
2nd 3d month 1749 [i.e., May 2, 1749]

Dear Friend John Curtis,

The particular occasion of my writing now to thee is as follows: viz., on the second instant came John Wesley to this town from Edenderry. I, being in our friend Abraham Atkinson's, hear him preach to a numerous concourse of people in the market place.

He began his sermon with telling them that before he would unfold or deliver the oracles of God to them he must remove a stumbling block out of the way, which was that he had understood that one John Curtis had lately travelled up and down reporting that he had formerly been a Methodist and had had some acquaintance with him (viz., John Wesley); that this John Curtis had insinuated that they (the Methodists) had endeavoured to draw to themselves people of other professions; that he had seen a paper lately published by the John Curtis which appeared to be of the same tendency—or to this import.

¹For JW's account of the incident that provoked this exchange, see JW to CW, May 14, 1749, *Works*, 26:357–58. For a more extended report see *Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, and Labours in the Gospel of James Gough* (Liverpool, 1830), 106–11; extracted in *WHS* 1 (1897): 59–62.

²This sentence inserted in lefthand margin.

³James Gough (1712–80) was a Master successively of Friends' schools at Cork, Dublin, and Mountmellick.

Where upon said Wesley solemnly declared as before the Lord—nay, he called God to witness—that said John Curtis had never been a member of their society to his knowledge, that [Wesley] himself never had any acquaintance with him. Only he remembered that once about eight or nine years ago he had some little discourse with him, but should not know the man now if he was within two yards of him. And that he had never endeavoured to draw people from one profession of religion to another, but only from Satan's power to God, etc.

That evening I got J. S. and H. R. to go with me to his lodging to enquire his reasons for thus publicly traducing thee, while by absence rendered incapable of answering for thyself. He replied he was desired to do it, having understood thou had sowed disaffection in many towards the Methodists, etc.

He advanced sundry charges against thee, as that thou had gone up and down to scatter poison—viz., bigotry, which is poison to the mind—and to rebuild the partition wall which God had broken down—viz., shyness and coldness amongst Christians one towards another on account of difference of opinions. That God had never sent thee, etc. To all which he was so fully answered that he was forced to acknowledge he had spoke too far, and that he saw some things in a clearer light now than he had done before, and promised never to name thee publicly hereafter.

...

As he made such an acknowledgment and promise, one might have expected him to stand to it. But being informed the contrary by four reputable persons who were present (one of which was a clergyman), I wrote him the following letter:

Bristol
14th of the 6th month called August 1749

John Wesley,

Being informed by a letter from ... [Curtis here surely summarizes the Gough letter].

[then quotes JW's response dated Aug. 17, given in *Works*, 26:375]

[Then beginning of Curtis's followup letter, that ends abruptly at bottom of a page]

John Wesley,

This day I received thine, and think [remainder missing]'

[finally, he records the two certificates sent to Gough that are mentioned in the opening letter]

A Certificate from two of the Methodists

Bristol, June the 17th, 1749

These may certify whom it may concern that John Curtis (late of Chew Magna) but now of this city, was a follower of John Wesley with us the people called Methodists in or about the year seventeen hundred and forty, and behaved well while with us so far as we know at that time.

Steward: Thomas Sayse / Thomas Hamilton

Witness: Zeph[aniah] Fry / Jacob Self

'Bristol, 19th of June, 1749

These may certify whom it may concern that we have known John Curtis of this city for several years past, and as far as we know or have heard he has been just and fair in his dealings, and of a sober and regular conversation.

John Ball / Mark Harford / Neh[emiah] Champion / Rich[ar]d Champion / Christopher Devonshire / William Reeve

From a Priest in the Church of England¹

[p. 1]

c. August 15, 1749²

Sir,

Having had your *Plain Account of the Methodists* put into my hands, in a letter to the Reverend Mr. Perronet of Shoreham in Kent,³ I could not let it pass uncensured, though I take it to be as weak a performance as ever I met with, and by which you are sapping many of the truths and principles of Christianity (like other sectarists) under the specious pretence of greater sanctity and holiness, by the novelty of which you may delude many of the heedless and unthinking vulgar. 'Neither is there' (as a Right Reverend Father of our Church said in his Answer to the *Essay for Catholic Communion*, p. 15⁴)

anything so serious or sacred, nor any scheme so well drawn or closely and convincingly pursued, as some men will not venture to wrest and abuse to very different purposes. [p. 2]

Thus it has fared with the Holy Scriptures themselves, which, if rightly attended to, are undoubtedly able to make men wise unto salvation; but which have however been too often, and too grossly perverted to the introduction and support of erroneous and unsound, heterodox and false, heretical and wicked, both principles and practices, by men of corrupt minds whose study has been rather to serve a party than to promote the interest of God and true religion.

The whole of which is well worth your reading, it being a defence of Archbishop Sharpe's sermon which the Right Reverend defender calls excellent and says, 'I easily saw how fitly it was adapted to the satisfaction of the most sincere and serious amongst the Dissenters from the Church of England.'⁵ And now having premised thus much, I shall begin to dissect the principal points that you have laid down, I must not call it plan, because you declare against having any previous design or plan at all.

You being in the first place (p. 4 sec. 2) to say that 'you must premise that, as they had not the least expectation at first of anything like what has since followed, so they had no previous design or plan at all, but everything arose just as the occasion offered.'⁶ Let me ask you here, Who ever went to build without a previous plan or design? Was there not a scheme drawn how, and in what manner, the foundation should be laid? How many rooms on a floor, if a dwelling house, etc.? And so, after its proper plan, for any other building. But you sir, and your brother (for I find you join him only with you) began to preach (what you call) Christianity before you have laid any previous design or plan at all. So that you had made of piece of patch-work, an ill-shaped building, for want of a previous design or plan. You found it necessary [p. 3] that there should be something to cement and join a society, as well as a building, and therefore were forced to do it afterwards when you found, by experience, that it was as necessary that the

¹JW had styled his *Plain Account of the People Called Methodists* as a letter addressed to Vincent Perronet. While this *Answer* does not explicitly title itself a letter, it is included here in part because it is so rare (surviving copies at the Bodleian Library, Oxford; York Minster Library; and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary). It is also a particularly striking example of the response of a 'High-Church' (nearly non-juror) Anglican priest to the Methodist revival movement.

²This pamphlet was advertised as just published in *The Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer* (Aug. 12–15, 1749), p. 2.

³JW, *Plain Account of the People Called Methodists* (Bristol, 1749); *Works*, 9:254–80.

⁴Nathaniel Spinckes, *The Essay Towards a Proposal for Catholic Communion ... Printed at Large and Answered* (London: Richard Sare, 1705).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶JW, *Plain Account*, Preface, §2, *Works*, 9:254.

members of a society should be united and joined together as the several parts of a building, else the one would only be a heap of rubbish and the other a rope of sand. Now having found the necessity of forming yourselves into some shape, you fell by accident upon this independent system, and as soon as (or perhaps before) you had done it, you were charged with making a schism. This was said because you separated yourselves from the Established Church (a church, at its reformation, yielding to non in purity of faith and manners). But such is the misfortune of our Church, that she may cry out in the words of the psalmist (Ps. 41:9 [BCP]), 'You, even my familiar friend, whom I trusted, who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.' For too too many of her sons (though they have not made an open breach like you, yet) like Dr. [Conyers] Middleton, by giving up her doctrines and explaining away her Articles have given occasion for the enemy to triumph.

You never clear yourself (that I can see) of the charge of schism, being sensible of the justness of it, but, with a face of brass, declare that you 'do not think orthodoxy, or right opinion, to be, at best but a very slender part of religion, if it can be acknowledged any part of it at all'⁷—directly contrary to Scripture, for St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans 18:17 has these words: 'Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause division and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them.' For there can be no fellowship or society without an agreement and concurrence in the same opinion. If it be otherwise, it will be as an [p. 4] house divided against itself. And our blessed Lord says, in the 12th [chapter] of St. Matthew, and the 25th verse, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation. And every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.' You sir, and your brother, have acted the reverse of what you write, if there is any truth in your separating yourselves from Mr. [George] Whitefield and declaring his doctrines to be such as you cannot agree in, or hold any communication or fellowship with him upon that very account. If then orthodoxy, or right opinion, were not necessary, where does the reason lie in dividing from him? Orthodoxy, or right opinion, I will aver, upon your practice, contrary to your principles (and in regard to your practice you agree with the Scripture, and the whole Christian world from the beginning to this very day, *you will not look me in the face and tell me otherwise*) to be just and necessary to the very being of all religion, and that no person can be a good Christian without a sound and right opinion. If this be denied, then they may be drunken Christians, cursing and swearing Christians, lying Christians, cheating Christians, and may be 'devil Christians', as you say the Malabarians term them.⁸ For what is it makes men otherwise, but soundness of opinion, by which they are conducted or led to act agreeable to such soundness of opinion, or orthodoxy in belief?

Bishop Leslie, in his preface to his *Snake in the Grass*, has given 'some marks which, if we look diligently, will plainly enough show whence such inspirations come', and I may likewise add 'doctrines' too. 'As first', he tells us,

those which come from God fill us with humility and discover to us our own weakness and unworthiness, and withal a great charity for others, being more apt to have a good opinion of them than of ourselves, as knowing our own infirmities more than those of others, as [p. 5] the apostle speaks (Phil 3:3) 'Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves'. Thus, the great apostle was so far from magnifying himself, notwithstanding his great revelations which were given to him, being caught up to the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, yet would not glory but in his infirmities (1 Cor. 12) and in great humility of soul, saw himself as the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). But on the other hand, these inspirations which come from the devil fill us with spiritual pride, thinking our own attainments to be beyond those of other men. And that we are nearer to God than they. We thank God (with the proud pharisee, Luke 18:11) that we are not as other men are. Hence we despise others, and are apt to censure them even unto hell. To which

⁷Ibid., I.2, *Works*, 9:254–55.

⁸Ibid., I.11, *Works*, 9:258.

says he 'the Quakers and Bourignee' (and I may add, Mr. Wesley) 'have damned all but themselves.'⁹ For what is damning a person but supposing a person to be in such a condition or state that there is no possibility of salvation for him while he continues in that state, and that if he dies while in such state, there is no ground to believe, according to the Christian dispensation, that he can be saved?

And that you do damn all those but of your persuasion is plain, and as a proof of this my assertion, in page 7, sec. 11 ff you put the question, 'Is not this gathering churches out of churches?' You say, in answer to this,

If you mean only gather people out of buildings called churches, it is. But if you mean dividing Christians from Christians, and so destroying Christian fellowship, it is not. For first, these were not Christians before they were thus joined—most of them were bare-faced heathens. Secondly, neither are they Christian from whom you suppose these to be divided. You will not look me in the [p. 6] face and say they are: What? Drunken Christians? Cursing and swearing Christians? Lying Christians? Cheating Christians? If these are Christians at all, they are devil Christians (as the poor Malabarians term them). Thirdly, neither are they divided any more that they were before, even from those wretched devil Christians. Fourthly, if it be said, 'But there are some true Christians in the parish, and you destroy the Christian fellowship between these and them'; I answer that what never existed cannot be destroyed. But the fellowship you speak of never existed, therefore cannot be destroyed.¹⁰

This I think is as much and as full for damning as the bishop proves the Quakers and Madam Bourignon to do. I cannot help asking you these questions: How long is it since we in the island were put out of covenant with God and, having ceased to be Christians, are in this deplorable damned state? And again, How came you and your brother to be the persons pitched upon by providence, and endued with such an extraordinary share of common sense (for to inspiration you do not pretend) as if by the light of that common sense to be able to see farther than ever anyone see before? How came you, I say, and when did this gigantic (and more than gigantic) common sense come upon you? Give me a clear, distinct and reasonable account in your next performance, *et eris mihi magnus Apollo*.¹¹

But to return to the bishop.

And at the same time, says he, advance themselves equal to the holy prophets and apostles, nay to God himself. This is a sure mark whereby to discover the inspirations of the devil, and to distinguish them from those which come from the Holy Spirit of God. The spirit of pride can act humility the worst of any other grace, can put on great show of devotion and possess the [p. 7] imagination with even rapturous flights, and thence fire the heart with a mighty zeal, if it were to give all their goods to feed the poor and their very bodies to be burned. But you will find no charity there! No humility! No kind thoughts, or favourable allowances to others! No mean opinion of themselves! Charity believeth all things that are good or can be well construed of another, beareth all things that others do with a condescension and love insuperable, which overcometh evil with good. These are virtues too divine for the devil to imitate; or when he does, it is with so ill a grace, so contrary to him, that he cannot conceal such an awkwardness, a loathness, an unnatural force upon himself, as discovers itself to any discerning eye.

Another sure mark of his inspirations is when, under sheep's clothing of devotion and piety, any heresy is instilled contrary to the truth of the gospel. Of which I have given some

⁹Charles Leslie (1650–1722), *The Snake in the Grass; or, Satan Transformed into an Angel of Light*, 3rd edn. (London: Charles Brome, 1698), xxxii–xxxiv.

¹⁰JW, *Plain Account*, I.11, *Works*, 9:258.

¹¹Virgil, *Eclogues*, iii.104; 'and you shall be my great Apollo'.

instances in Bourignon, and more (but there are not more, or more gross) in the Quakers.

A third mark I give (and then I have done), which is that St. Paul insists so much upon to cure the great schism in the church at Corinth, occasioned by the pride of some upon whom (in that plentiful effusion of the Spirit at the first beginning of the gospel) several miraculous gifts had been bestowed, as of languages, healing, etc., upon which they grew so vain as to refuse subjection to their superiors in the church, and set up for themselves, drawing many after them into an open and flagrant schism. Against these St. Paul argues, with admirable eloquence and force of reason, in the 12th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, where, from a parallel [p. 8] of the unity of the body and the harmony of the members he shows that the highest spiritual gifts, if they were made use of to cause a schism in the church, lose all their virtue and become hurtful and pernicious to those who had them. And thence makes his inference in the 13th chapter that the greatest gifts that could be imagined, though to speak with the tongue of men and angels, to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and faith even to remove mountains—nay, such a zeal as to give all our goods to the poor and our bodies to be burned for our religion; that all this would signify nothing to us if we keep not in the unity of the body, which is the church; if we have not that concern for the unity of the body (which the apostle justly calls by the name of charity—i.e., love to the body) as to be content with our station as members, though never so eminent as an eye or an hand, without making a schism in the body by withdrawing our due subjection to the head, our spiritual governors, who are the principles of unity in the body, next and immediately under Christ, the only supreme and universal bishop and head of his church, whom every bishop in his own church does immediately represent.

And therefore, as St. Ignatius oftentimes urges it, whoever does not keep outward communion with his bishop, the visible head, does thereby forfeit his inward communion with Christ, the now invisible and supreme head to us. This schism, which some of these spiritually gifted men had made from their respective bishops, and which then began to spread in the church, was the occasion of St. Ignatius (who was contemporary with the apostles) his insisting so largely and so earnestly in his epistles to the several churches upon the due and necessary [p. 9] obedience of all, as well the presbyters and deacons as the laity, to their respective bishops as to Christ himself, whose person they did represent. The same is insisted upon in the epistles of St. Clement to those same Corinthians, upon the same occasion of schism as St. Paul wrote to them; wherein he shows them at large that all proceeded from their pride in their own gifts, and how little reason there was for them to make a schism in the church.

And now, reader, stay and admire! That if miraculous gifts were not a sufficient pretence for any to advance himself above his bishop, or withdraw from under his government, yet in our days we have seen men rebel against them and break the unity of the church upon pretence of being gifted men, though makers of no more sense than their neighbours, only from a fiery zeal and volubility of cant! Whereas, were their gifts even what they pretend, and much greater, yet by the sentence of St. Paul, St. Clement, whose name is in the book of life (Phil. 4:3), St. Ignatius, and all the holy fathers, this were no excuse at all for them to withdraw their obedience from their lawful bishops—much less to set up in opposition to them, and teach the body of the church by schism. It is [a] highly worthy observation that the holy prophets, sent from God to reprove the wickedness of the priests as well as people of the Jews, yet set not up opposite altars to the altars of those wicked priests, nor invaded their office. So that were our dissenters such prophets as they call themselves, yet this would give them no authority to set up opposite altars to their bishops.

Corruptions in the church are better amended by living in communion of the church, and [p. 10] thereby exhorting, admonishing, and showing good example, to reclaim; than by open desertion, to set up any opposite factions, which heightens the animosities, embitters the spirits, renders them deaf to one another's advices, and often proceeds to blood and slaughter. Which lays waste whole kingdoms and gives the enemy the greatest opportunity to sow his tares in the heat and confusion of schism and rebellion. Which we sadly experience in the late bloody revolution of [sixteen] forty-one. Wherein (besides the murder of the king, destruction of many

noble families, the havoc and destruction of three flourishing kingdoms) there arose thirty or forty different and opposite sects and heresies, more abhorrent to the Presbyterians (who begat them, and begun that rebellion) than episcopacy itself, against which they first took up arms. These, like the spawn of the viper, eat into the bowels of their mother and destroyed her, who first gave them breath. So much did the remedy prove worse to her than the *disease*! I wish that they, that we, that all, may take warning. That instead of wild enthusiasm we may come to learn the sobriety of religion. In which let us heighten our zeal and divine enthusiasm, to adhere strictly to the revealed rule of Scripture. To have a flaming charity for the good of the body and the unity of the church. That our enthusiasm may tend to heal, not to divide; to advance the glory of God, and to humble ourselves in our own conceits. That we may be willing cheerfully to submit to our superiors both in church and state, and not be so apt to judge others as to censure ourselves.¹²

And here I cannot help adding, if we have gone astray, let us not be so puffed up but that we may return heartily, bemoaning that we have thus sinned, and desiring [p. 11] to be returned to the communion of Christ's church from whence we have gone astray, and so to become united to our invisible head, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then, though we have different opinions, yet we should have no schism. We should live together as members of the same body. That though one were more honourable or useful than another, yet there would be no strife, no emulation but which should exceed most in mutual good offices and care for the whole. Such a heaven we should see if we had no schism. And we had had no schism but for enthusiasm. And there is no enthusiasm where there is no pride—which being dressed in the garb and guise of humility is literally the devil transformed into an angel of light. And then he is most a devil, because he can most deceive. This is the snake in the grass which I have endeavoured to discover.¹³

He then ends his preface, with praying God to accept his labours, and make them useful to his brethren.

You go on to make us believe that it was only accident by which you 'saw or felt some impending evil, or some good end necessary to be pursued. And that you many times fell unawares on the very thing which secured the good or removed the evil. At other times they consulted on the most probable means, following only common sense and Scripture, though' (so lucky were you in your own conceits) 'they general found, in looking back, something in Christian antiquity likewise, very nearly parallel thereto.'¹⁴ But how happy soever you might think yourselves, and entertain such pleasing conceits, the parallel will by no means hold, notwithstanding the scurrility and calumny you are pleased to throw out against your mother the Church. Do not you perceive you are worse than the soldiers who crucified our blessed Lord? For [p. 12] they chose not to tear his seamless garment, but cast lots whose it should be. But you make nothing to tear his body the church and, like the Pharisees, 'compass sea and land to make a proselyte, etc.'¹⁵

Where sir, I pray, through this whole performance do you show anything that looks toward primitive Christianity in the government of your societies? Where do you at any time assert the necessity of a divine mission? Where do you assert the necessity of the government of the church by bishops, as successors to the apostles, founded on that divine commission of our blessed Saviour [in] John 20:21ff. 'As my Father sent me, so send I you. [...] Whose soever sins you remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins you retain, they are retained.' 'And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world'

¹²Leslie, *Snake in the Grass*, xxxiv–lxiii.

¹³Ibid., lxiii–lxiv.

¹⁴JW, *Plain Account*, Preface, §2, *Works*, 9:254.

¹⁵Matt. 23:15.

(St. Matt. 28:20). See these texts explained in Dr. Brett's sermon upon this text,¹⁶ as likewise in Mr. Wheatly on the Common Prayer,¹⁷ in the office for the visitation of the sick, and Dr. Brett's sermon upon [the] commission to baptize,¹⁸ showing the Dissenters' baptism to be null and invalid. See likewise Lawrence on lay baptism,¹⁹ and many more—which but one person ever dissented from for sixteen hundred years, and that one person was the heretic Arius, notwithstanding many schisms happened within that time. Yet but that one person ever pretended that there was any could be such without a bishop. 'No bishop, no church' was the standing language of those times. Now wonder then you make such short work of it, by saying that 'orthodoxy, or right opinion, is at best but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any at all'. You go on to say that, 'neither does religion consist in negatives'.²⁰ Whoever asserted that [p. 13] it did? But we may justly assert it to consist of some positive instructions and commands, and some negatives. It does not consist of one sort only, but of both fitly joined together. Therefore what is said of man and wife may be applied to these—viz., 'What God has joined together, let no man put asunder';²¹ as well when it is said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, ...' as when it is said, 'Thou shalt not steal ...' [You continue] 'in bare harmlessness of any kind'. But who ever said it did? 'nor merely in externals'; who ever asserted this? You are here beating the wind. But, though you deny it, it truly consists in doing good, and using the means of grace; in works of piety, so called, and in charity. For these thus joined together will take in all Christian duties. You assert 'That it is nothing short of, or different from, the mind that was in Christ, the image of God stamped upon the heart, inward righteousness attended with the peace of God, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'²² Pray sir, remember who says 'a tree is to be known by its fruit'.²³ I must tell you, if you really had the mind that was in Christ, that image of God stamped upon the heart, you would be entirely devoted to obedience. You would not stir up divisions, nor make the people go astray and rend the seamless coat of our blessed Master, but yield a willing obedience to his ordinances and follow his precepts.

Your next point I have already said as much to as it deserves, or more—the quotation from Bishop Leslie being a full answer to it, as well as my queries, inserted in the midst. I shall only add that I do not tax you with schism because you take people from the buildings called churches, but by taking them from their bishop, the [p. 14] principle of unity to them, and their pastor or curate authorized by him—that building not made with the hands of men, but that built upon the apostles and prophets, the blessed Jesus being the chief corner stone, and upon that commission of his, 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.'²⁴

I shall now bring your points once more to the test, and if they will not hold your whole fabric must fall on course. You say (page 2),

¹⁶Thomas Brett, *A Sermon on the Remission of Sins* (London: J. Matthews, 1711).

¹⁷Charles Wheatly, *The Church of England Man's Companion; or, A Rational Illustration of the Harmony, Excellency, and Usefulness of the Book of Common Prayer* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1710).

¹⁸Thomas Brett, *The Extent of Christ's Commission to Baptize* (London: J. Matthews, 1712).

¹⁹Roger Lawrence, *Dissenters, and other Unauthorized Baptisms Null and Void, by the Articles, Canons, and Rubrics of the Church of England: in answer to a pamphlet called 'The Judgment of the Church of England in the Case of Lay Baptism and of Dissenter's Baptism'* (London: Henry Clements, 1712).

²⁰JW, *Plain Account*, I.2, *Works*, 9:254–55.

²¹Matt. 19:6 and parallels.

²²JW, *Plain Account*, I.2, *Works*, 9:255.

²³Matt. 12:33 and parallels.

²⁴John 20:21.

1. And first, about ten years ago my brother and I were desired to preach in many parts of London. We had no view therein but, so far as we were able (and we knew God could work by whomsoever it pleased him), to convince those who would hear what true Christianity was and to persuade them to embrace it.

2. The points we chiefly insisted upon were four. First, that orthodoxy, or right opinions, is at best but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all; that neither does religion consist in negatives, in bare harmlessness of any kind; nor merely in externals, in doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety (so called) or of charity: that it is nothing short of or different from the mind that was in Christ; the image of God stamped upon the heart; inward righteousness, attended with the peace of God and joy in the Holy Ghost. Secondly, that the only way under heaven to this religion is to repent and believe the gospel; or (as the apostle words it) repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, that by this faith, he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. And, lastly, that being [p. 15] justified by faith, we taste of the heaven to which we are going, we are holy and happy, we tread down sin and fear, and sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.²⁵

I have answered all [up] to your third point before. I shall now therefore examine that you say, 'Thirdly, that by this faith' in Jesus Christ, 'he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. And, lastly,' for these having one tendency, must be taken together, 'that being justified by faith, we taste of the heaven to which we are going, we are holy and happy, we tread down sin and fear, and sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.'²⁶ By thus laying the whole of your doctrine together it is plain you would insinuate, if you have couched your meaning so as that you would not be thought to assert (though I think it to be almost tantamount to an assertion, notwithstanding all your entrenchments) that we are to be saved by faith without works, and justified too in the same manner. And here, sir, you wrest the Scriptures from their meaning, by weaving two texts together without their contexts, a very unfair way of quotation, and by which you may make the Scriptures (like the alphabet) say anything. You take part of the fifth verse of the fourth chapter to the Romans and add it to the twenty-fourth verse of the foregoing chapter, as if it was only one text.

Now to show how deceitfully you would impose upon the minds of the ignorant, I shall take upon me to show the plain design of Paul in these texts; in or to which, I shall begin with him in the first chapter. Wherein having first declared his divine mission to them he goes on and says that 'The gospel is the power of God to salvation, to every [p. 16] one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek',²⁷ alluding to what our Saviour saith in the fourth chapter of St. John's Gospel, in the twenty-first and following verses, in answer to what he had said in the twentieth, wherein he says, 'Our fathers worshipped in the mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' 'Jesus saith unto her, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews, ..."' Then he goes on to show what extravagancies the philosophers ran into, who were wise in their own conceits, and ought even upon the principles which they laid down to have known better, had not God permitted the devil to have led them into all manner of wickedness by the idolatry of their forefathers, who represented their gods as guilty of all those abominations which he here recounts, and may likewise have an eye prophetically that such should be among those that embrace the gospel. He then alludes to the precept of our Saviour in the seventh chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel,

²⁵JW, *Plain Account*, I.1–2, *Works*, 9:254–55.

²⁶Ibid, I.2, *Works*, 9:255.

²⁷Rom. 1:16.

verse 1, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged, ...'. And then in the sixth verse of the second chapter he tells them that, 'God will render to every man according to his deeds'.

So that, according to St. Paul and the whole tenor of the gospel, we are to work—or do—as well as believe, and we are not to think that St. Paul ever designed that faith alone was to save us, though he so much extols faith. And in the tenth verse of the second chapter he declares, 'Glory, and honour, and peace to everyone that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile'. And in the thirteenth verse you have this reason, 'For not the hearers [p. 17] of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.' And the whole tenor of this second chapter is to show the necessity of works. And in the third chapter he sets himself to show that all mankind are sinners, as well Jews as Gentiles, and therefore shows the necessity of a mediator to be a propitiation or atonement for the sins of the whole world. And in the fourth chapter he goes on with the same argument, and shows the necessity of our faith after we have been made acquainted that there is such a mediator between God and man. Compare, good sir, this chapter with the second chapter of St. James's epistle. St Paul argues through this and his other epistles likewise to show that the law could not save us, and that there was only a shadow of good things to come, which the generality of the Jews did not see into. And the promise given to them for their obedience was chiefly temporal. So that it may be supposed that few, if any, but the prophets, or those inspired, had a clear and distinct perception of them. And that the law could not save, for this reason, after the coming of the blessed Jesus, the Messiah and Shiloh foretold by Jacob, to come 'when the sceptre should depart from Judah, to whom the gathering of the nations should be'.²⁸

Now sir, I hope I have settled the point with respect to faith, agreeable to the Scriptures. I must now settle it right in respect to justification. But before I begin upon that head, I must apprise you that there was a pretty little piece wrote in defence of the doctrine of the Church of England in this point, though it was wrote too much above the capacity of those of your auditors to understand. Yet you, I suppose, may and ought [p. 18] to have taken notice of it, either by approving or condemning it. And I suppose I may have as much notice taken by you as that worthy anonymous. For you write on, like other sectarists, without ever taking any notice of the answers that have been given to your objections as they occurred to the public, and have taken notice of only two objections, without having or being able to give a solid answer to either—viz., the pages fifth and seventh, 'Be not righteous over much: [...] why should thou destroy thyself?'²⁹ And shamefully misapply that saying of Festus to St. Paul (Acts 26:24), 'Paul, thou art beside thyself. Much learning doth make thee mad.' Which you have thus turned to serve your purpose, and make your ignorant followers believe you as great as St. Paul: 'Let not much religion make thee mad.'

The other is, 'Is not this making a schism? Is not this gathering churches out of churches?'³⁰ *For as to your joining these people together*, I absolutely deny that they are so well joined as when you found them. For, as I observed before, you have taken them from the principle of unity, the bishop, and therefore instead of joining, have disjoined them from the church of Christ. And you neither have or can clear yourself of the schism charged upon you. For your further confutation, see Dr. Bennet against the dissenters,³¹ Bishop Hicke's posthumous tracts,³² etc. As to the doctrine of justification, it is true it is matter of faith only. Yet even then it does in no wise excuse or exclude works. To settle this point right, I shall give you a true historical account, agreeable to Scripture, and then show you that the Articles of our Church are to be understood agreeable to the same. And further, we are bound by it to perform all the

²⁸Cf. Gen. 49:10.

²⁹JW, *Plain Account*, I.4, alluding to Eccles. 7:16, *Works*, 9:255–56.

³⁰JW, *Plain Account*, I.7, *Works*, 9:256.

³¹Thomas Bennet, *A Discourse of Schism* (Cambridge: University Press, 1702).

³²Nathaniel Spinckes (ed.), *A Volume of Posthumous Discourses of the late Reverend and Learned Dr. George Hicke* (London: Bowyer, 1726).

conditions [p. 19] required of us as Christians, by which conditions we are bound 'to work out our salvation with fear and trembling',³³ and that our works then become a debt or duty, and that we (if we do not perform these conditions) cannot be accounted Christians, not doing those things God has commanded us.

To begin then: God, having created man, placed him in paradise, in a state of dignity and pleasure. And when he had lost his happiness, by transgressing the command of his Maker, God was so merciful to him that he did not abandon and despise him. His providence was still continued. 'And in judgment he remembered mercy.'³⁴ And when he cursed the serpent, and through and by him the old serpent the devil, he saith, in the third chapter of Genesis, verse fifteen, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' And further, to show them the heinousness of their sin in disobeying the positive command of the Almighty, he appointed them to sacrifice to him something, to set before them that their life was forfeited and that their prayers should not be accepted but when they came and addressed the offended deity in this manner. And further, to show the purity of their intention, they should offer the best of the sort. And agreeable to this we find the two brothers sacrificing in the next chapter, verse 3, 'And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and unto his offering. But unto Cain, and unto his offering, he did not respect.' Now from hence it is very plain that it [p. 20] was because Cain did not come with that due preparation that Abel did that he was not accepted. (For as to its being a living creature or not was not the cause, the fruits of the earth having been by our Saviour dignified with the name of his body, see Mr. Johnson's *Unbloody Sacrifice*,³⁵ the second part of which is not above the reach of a moderate capacity. And it was not without a great show of reason that the primitive fathers thought that Melchizedek typified our Saviour in the institution of the Eucharist, when he brought forth bread and wine and blessed Abraham 'for he was declared to be a priest of the most high God.'³⁶ And if he did not make an offering, or sacrifice, of bread and wine, we find no sacrifice which he did offer. And a priest without a sacrifice was a thing never known, and so never thought of, till it was found out within a century or two ago, when we have seen people rise head and shoulders taller than all those that lived in the ages wherein they wrote and could understand the Scriptures themselves better than the inspired writes or those who immediately followed them and were conversant with them, even though the Scripture itself should give them the testimony, as it did St. Clement, 'That their names were written in the book of life';³⁷ for they make no more of him than any of the rest, because he has left a prophesy in express terms against them, which stares them in the face.)

We cannot suppose but that God taught them to offer sacrifices. For without believing this we must make finite beings able to comprehend infinity, and know of themselves how to appease an offended deity—which I should think blasphemy; from which, good Lord, in mercy, deliver me. Therefore, as I said before, the offering something in our stead to render God [p. 21] favourable and propitious, that their prayers might become acceptable. 'For when the fulness of time was come, God sent his only begotten son to satisfy his justice, to strengthen our nature, and to renew his image within us. For these glorious ends his eternal Word came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Ghost, born of the blessed virgin, and conversed with mankind, and directed his life and miracles to our salvation' (see Bishop Brett

³³Phil. 2:12.

³⁴Cf. Hab. 3:2.

³⁵John Johnson, *The Unbloody Sacrifice, and Altar, Unveiled and Supported*, 2 vols. (London: Knaplock, 1714–18).

³⁶Cf. Gen. 14:18.

³⁷Cf. Phil. 4:3.

on the liturgies³⁸). By the one oblation of our blessed Saviour our original infirmity or sin, which we received as being the children of Adam, was wiped off and we were justified by faith only, in the death of Christ, to appear before the throne of grace, without any previous sacrifice to atone and expiate our natural guilt. Which is well expressed by Mr. Johnson in his *Unbloody Sacrifice*, Part the first, page 13: 'And now' (he says)

we are come to these words *which seem to contain an unanswerable objection against the sacrifice of the Eucharist*, viz. Heb. 10:18, 'Where remission of these' (sins and infirmities) 'is, there is no more sacrifice for sin.' But I apprehend my judicious reader can by this time see no manner of objection or difficulty in them; or, if there be any, it may be removed by answering these three questions: viz., First, what is meant by sins? Secondly, what by remission? Thirdly, what by offering for sin?³⁹

I must here premis that I be not like you, sir, and not take notice of the answers that have been made, or designed to have been made, to this truly learned man. But though many pretended to write against him in his life, they all fell under his invincible pen, as it was drawn on the side of truth. And though after his death the great Waterland became his adversary,⁴⁰ yet though nobody wrote stronger and better [p. 22] than he when truth was on his side. Yet, when he wrote to cloud and obscure the truth, it sunk under the weight, even though he pretended to have considered the very minutia of Mr. Johnson's doctrine, as may be seen in Bishop Brett's *Remarks upon the Doctor's Review, Charges, etc.*⁴¹ and Mr. Beck's, vicar of Kingsteignton in Devonshire,⁴² and a little piece upon the doctor, in imitation of what he wrote, to show how Mr. Johnson might be led into his hypothesis; as likewise in An Address to the Clergy of the Diocese of London in Defence of St. Austin's Definition of a Sacrament.⁴³ But yet, whether the doctrine of the sacrifice as he had asserted it stood or not, what I am quoting will stand the test, being fully agreeable to the doctrine of our Church, and fully to the point now before us.

First, what is meant by sins? And the answer is: that actual known transgressions of the moral, or positive, law whereby we are obnoxious to guilt in the world and punishment in the next, cannot be meant by the word 'sin' in this context, nor even in these very words. For the sins here mentioned are such as are not remembered or imputed to Christians; whereas it is certain that all immoral actions are imputed to Christians, as well as others. Nay, the sins here spoken of are such as were actually remitted at the offering of the grand sacrifice; whereas the known actual sins of Christians are not forgiven until they are repented of. Nor does the addition of the word 'iniquities' alter the case, for it has been shown that the Hebrew word commonly rendered by the Seventy signifies no more than the other Hebrew word which is generally rendered, as here,

³⁸Thomas Brett, *A Collection of the Principal Liturgies used by the Christian Church in the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist* (London: R. King, 1720), 140–41.

³⁹This beginning and the long citation that follows come actually from the 1714 first volume of Johnson, *Unbloody Sacrifice*, Chapter 2, Section 1, pp. 127ff.

⁴⁰Daniel Waterland, *The Christian Sacrifice Explained, in a charge delivered in part to the Middlesex clergy at St. Clement-Danes, April the 20th, 1738; to which is added an appendix [on Johnson]* (London: Innys and Manby, 1738).

⁴¹Thomas Brett, *Some Remarks on Dr. Waterland's Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist* (London: Bettenham, 1738).

⁴²Christopher Beclie [or Beckley] was appointed vicar of Kingsteignton in 1737, but no published work by him can be found.

⁴³No work by this title has been located.

ἀμαρτία. [p. 23] And that both these words do frequently signify no more than that impurity which is either inherent in the nature of all sublunary beings or otherwise contracted, whereby they are unfit for the service and worship of God.

Secondly, what is meant by remission of sins? And it is evident that remission of sins is either the same with being consecrated or purged (ver. 14) or the immediate and necessary effect of it. For the apostle produces these words of the prophet Jeremiah to prove that 'by our offering he hath consecrated them that are purged or cleansed', for he presently adds 'whereof the Holy Ghost is witness' and then cites the words of the prophet. So that it is evident that the remission here spoken of was actually passed by and upon our Saviour offering himself. And therefore it cannot import absolution from the guilt of known actual sin, because this cannot be passed until the sin has been committed and repented of. The remission of which the apostle speaks was obtained and granted once for all, and never to be repented; whereas the remission of guilt and punishment for particular Christians is to be obtained and granted occasionally, from time to time, by a proper application of the death of Christ.

Thirdly, what is meant by an offering for sin? And it is evident from what has been before discoursed that it must be such an offering (I mean as to its end and design) as was offered by Moses for the dedication, or ratification, of the covenant between God and the Israelites; or upon erecting and consecrating the tabernacle and the Jewish economy. It must be a sacrifice intended for the qualifying men to attend and assist [p. 24] in the worship of God, as the ashes of the red heifer did. It must be a sacrifice or offering designed for the enabling men to continue the public worship and service of God, notwithstanding such defilements and corruptions as are necessarily incident to human nature, as the sacrifices offered on the Day of Expiation were—only more perfect than all of them joined together. For it did that all at once which all their lustrative rites could not do. It gave all Christian people a right for ever after to join together to worship God. It formed them into a perpetual body, or society of priests and people, for performing a divine and spiritual service. So that they need no new sacrifice to reconsecrate them. So that, in a word, remitting sin, in the 18th verse, and purging and consecrating in the 14th verse, and taking away sin, in the 4th verse, and consecrating, as pertaining to conscience (chap. 9, ver. 9), are all phrases signifying, in effect, the same thing. And since it is evident that consecrating here, and in the Levitical law; dedicating to the service of God by initiative sacrifices and rites, and that taking away sin has the same signification and imports the purging men and things from these defilements which render them unfit for the service of Almighty God; therefore 'remission of sin' here is to be taken in the same sense, and men that are sensible of this privilege are said to be purged 'as to their conscience' because they are not under such checks as the Jews must be when they presumed to approach the sanctuary under such defilements as by the tenor of their law made them, until they had reconsecrated themselves, incapable of appearing before the divine majesty in the tabernacle or temple. As the effects of Christ's [p. 25] death are various, so are the manner and seasons of dispensing or conferring these effects on those for whom they were intended. The pardon of actions and habits morally sinful in believers is, and ever will be, administered to penitents as occasion requires. And the same may be said of that 'grace in help in time of need'⁴⁴ which Christ purchased for his people. There are other effects of his death which were not only purchased by the one offering of himself but were likewise all at once, and forever, actually conferred upon his church—as liberty from the yoke of the Jewish law, and a free access to God to make our wants and our joys known unto him. It is true the charter of pardon upon repentance, and of all necessary grace, were sealed at and by his death. But these blessings could not be actually applied then to all that were hereafter to have occasion for them, because they were conditional and could not be bestowed till these conditions were performed. Nay, they cannot be applied to ever single Christian all at once. Especially remission

⁴⁴Cf. Heb. 4:16.

of that actual known guilt cannot be thus applied before that guilt is contracted, and proper means are used for the removing of it. But freedom from the Jewish law was absolute and without any restraint, because the very force and authority of it was taken away by Christ's death. And so was the liberty which Christ procured for his whole church, and ever member of it in their proper stations, to make their address to God. And these privileges are now, and have in all former ages, been applied to Christians once for all—viz., at their baptism. And so by this time my reader will conclude with me that the sense of this 18th verse is that, 'where there is *such* remission of [p. 26] sins and iniquities'; that is, of such defilements as before Christ's coming made men incapable of presenting themselves in the place of public worship; there is no more occasion of such an 'offering for sin' as the apostle had been speaking of, or *there is no longer* (that is the true import of οὐκέτι) such 'offering for sin' as was prescribed on the Day of Expiation for reconciling priests, people, and the tabernacle itself for the service of the ensuing year. For it is evident that the apostle in this place considers the sacrifice of Christ only as such an offering for sin as was initiative, lustrative, or consecrative; and not as such a sacrifice for sin as wiped off all guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, when applied in a proper manner. St. Paul does frequently in other places speak of the sacrifice offered by Christ in person as a price and ransom for the guilt and punishment of all sins committed by believers. But here he treats of it in another view, and we are to remember he is writing to the Hebrews, to whom these words and phrases, in the several significations abovementioned, were known and familiar.⁴⁵

Thus far this very learned gentleman.

And now having shown that as we are all sensible of our being born with the defilement or stain of guilt of our first parents, commonly known by the name of Original Sin; that by that we are rendered incapable in an acceptable manner to appear before the throne of purity to offer up our prayers without some previous initiative, lustrative, or consecrative sacrifice; so by our blessed Saviour's once offering himself, 'the just for the unjust',⁴⁶ he has forever consecrated us that we may justify ourselves in our approaches to the throne of the Divine Majesty, and which we received by adult persons [p. 27] even before baptism, and to infants is conveyed in, with, and by their baptism. And agreeable to what I have asserted, with the Article [XI] of our Church upon Justification, hold that 'We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily on Justification.' Then having a lively faith in God's promise, through the atonement made by the death of our blessed Redeemer, the adult is washed in the laver of regeneration and receives pardon and forgiveness through that his faith of all his sin, original and actual, those contracted and conveyed with his birth from our first parents, and those likewise of his own commission, and enters immediately into a state of salvation, and finishes it gloriously and is justified before the throne of grace, if there be afterward no let or hindrance on his part; that is, if he performs all those things or duties God requires of a true believer, by obeying his ordinances and following his precepts.

Therefore our Church says in the Article [XII] of Good Works: 'Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith and fallow after justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; inasmuch that by them a lively faith may be evidently known, as a tree discerned by its fruit.'

Bishop Leslie says, in *The Snake in the Grass*,

⁴⁵Johnson, *Unbloody Sacrifice*, 127–30.

⁴⁶1 Pet. 3:18.

The faith of Christians is built upon that man Jesus Christ, as the 'seed' promised to 'bruise the serpent's head'.⁴⁷ And that the bruising [28] of it was performed by the shedding of Christ's blood outwardly upon the cross, as a propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Though the application of this to our souls, must be inwardly by faith in our hearts; not only a bare historical faith that Christ did so suffer, die, and rose again, etc., which the devils do believe, and tremble, to see their power so overcome. But by a lively faith and full absolute dependence and trust in that satisfaction made by Christ's death for our sins, as our surety who has paid our debt for us, and purchased an eternal inheritance for us, upon our performance of the conditions which he has set to us. And not only so, but as our high priest, now sitting, in his true human nature (whereby he is our mediator) and in the same body (though glorified and changed in qualities, but not in substance) at the right hand of his Father, to make continual and daily intercession for us; and to power down his Spirit upon us, to give us this saving faith, for it is the gift of God. And this influence and inspiration of his blessed Spirit is the only true saving light within us; but not the seed and Christ himself (as the Quakers blasphemously dream); only a ray, or communication of his light and life to us.⁴⁸

Though we are justified to appear before God by the death of Christ as a lustrative, initiative, and consecrative sacrifice, once for all (as I observed from Mr. Johnson), yet until we have a saving faith such as the Bishop here describes no actions, how good soever they may be, yet for want of the application of Christ's death to us, are tinged with our natural pollution and cannot therefore be acceptable to God. Therefore, (as our Church says in her XIIIth Article), 'Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration [p. 29] of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, for as much as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the school authors say) deserve the grace of congruity. Yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.' What therefore was said before of faith, we see holds good of justification. For we are not justified in the sight of God without an obedience to his commands, whether positive or negative. St. Paul argues through all his epistles to show that the law could not save us, and that we could not be justified by that, because by the law there was only a shadow of good things to come, which the generality of the Jews did not see into, and the promises given them for a reward of their obedience were chiefly temporal. So that it may be supposed that few, if any, but the inspired writers and prophets (to whom a particular revelation was given) had a clear distinct perception of them. And that the law for this reason could not save after the coming of the blessed Jesus, the true Messiah, the Shiloh foretold by Jacob to come when the sceptre should depart from Judah, to whom should 'the gathering of the nations' be.⁴⁹ For our blessed Lord was the centre in which all the shadows terminated, and therefore we conclude 'that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law' ([Rom.] chap. 3, ver. 28), and that we are accounted righteous in the sight of God only by our faith in the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings. Because works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasing to God. If it be asked why they are not pleasing to God, the answer is plain: for as much as [p. 30] they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ. And for that reason they do not make men fit to receive grace. Yea, rather for or because they are not done by, or are the fruits of, faith, they are not done as God has willed and commanded; consequently they have the nature of sin.

Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. Albeit those good works which are the fruits of faith, and follow after such a justifying faith, or justification, cannot put away our sins or endure the severity of God's judgments because, let us do the best we can, we must at last allow we have done no more than we ought, and must own ourselves

⁴⁷Cf. Gen. 3:15.

⁴⁸Leslie, *Snake in the Grass*, ccxxxvii–ccxxxix.

⁴⁹Cf. Isa. 11:12.

unprofitable servants, there being nothing else by the sacrifice Christ offered in his own person can put away sin or endure the severity of God's judgments—or rather, as I take it, God's justice. Yet nevertheless, or notwithstanding what has been said, they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ. That is, by virtue or upon the account of his merits, which shall be imputed ours, if we perform those conditions he requires of us; therefore springing out of such a faith as is shown by our obedience, by that means a lively faith is evidently known as a tree by its fruit.

I shall make an end in the words of our holy Church: 'From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of God's word and commandments, good Lord deliver us.'⁵⁰

O merciful God, who hatest nothing that thou has made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, [p. 31] infidels, schismatics, and heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be found among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end, Amen.⁵¹

Source: published transcription; *An Answer to a late Pamphlet, entitled, 'A Plain Account of the People called Methodists'.* Addressed to the Rev. Mr. Wesley. By a Clergyman of the Church of England (London, E. Withers, 1749).

⁵⁰BCP, Litany, Morning Prayers.

⁵¹BCP, Collect, Good Friday.

From the Rev. Richard Lloyd¹

[Rathcormack]
August 29, 1749

Reverend Sir,

Your favour of the 15th instant I received the 22nd.² I am more satisfied than ever that you aim at nothing but what has an immediate tendency to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind.

I cannot help thinking that your design, considered in this light (allowing even of some mistakes), must be deemed very praiseworthy. As to myself, in particular, I must own it gives me infinite satisfaction to find that you have spoken to so good an effect in our town and neighbourhood. My church is more frequented than ever it was, and I have the pleasure of seeing a greater decency and more of zeal and attention than I could have dared to promise myself—which has also this effect upon me, that I find myself better disposed than ever to distribute to those who attend my ministry such food as may yield them comfort here and happiness hereafter. I heartily wish this may continue and that the people may not cool. If so, we may hope to see wickedness generally decline, and virtue and godliness take place. I see this work of yours, through God's blessing, thus successfully carried on without any ill will or jealousy, and could wish that all the clergy were, in that respect, of the same mind with me.

Your society here keeps up well and is, I believe, considerably increased since you left it. I frequently attend the preaching, and though I am much reflected on for it, this does not in any wise discourage me. While I am conscious to myself that I do no harm, I am careless of what men can say of me.

Michael Poor, lately a Roman, who is now of your society, read his recantation on Sunday last. ... Pray let us know when you or your brother intend for this kingdom and town. For be sure none wish more sincerely to see and converse with you than I, who am sincerely, reverend and dear sir,

Your very affectionate brother and servant,

[Richard Lloyd]

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 29, 1749 (*Works*, 20:296–97).³

¹Richard Lloyd (1699–1775) entered Trinity College, Dublin in 1714; was curate at St. Peter's, Cork in 1722; and from 1742 was rector of Rathcormack, where he opened his doors to JW in 1749–50. See W. M. Brady, *Clerical and Parochial Records of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross* (London: Longman, et al., 1864), 2:371–72.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Republished in *Works*, 26:376.

From Elizabeth Mann

London
September 14, 1749

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I trust you do not forget to pray for me, for indeed I have need. I feel myself now, as at all times, a poor helpless creature, unable to do any thing without the mighty power of God, unless it be to sin against him. And the more I feel of my own weakness, the more I desire to feel of it. I think I would fain be nothing, that Christ might be all in all. It is so blessed and pleasant a thing to receive all from him, who is so ready to bestow upon me that I would not accept of any strength or help but what cometh from him alone. And indeed, I have need of no other. His grace is sufficient for me.

O what a mystery is the life of faith! How weak is the soul that hangs on Jesus, and yet how strong? Of itself it is not able to stand against the least enemy, but must necessarily fall a prey to the weakest, even of its inbred foes. But through him it is able not only to wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, and with spiritual wickedness in high places, and is made more than conqueror through his love, who is come the Captain of our salvation. I often meditate on the happiness of those souls who have wholly ceased from their own works and feel every moment that it is Christ that worketh all their works in them; and are always sensible that it is not themselves that speak but the Spirit of their Father which speaketh in them, and whose every thought proceeds from that fountain of all holiness and perfection. O what a heaven is there opened in that soul! And what a burning and shining light is it to all around! Within all is holy and undefiled, and there is nothing to annoy or disturb that peace, which continually floweth as a river. And I think to all without them, their words must come with life and power. O what a rest is this! How worthy of the almighty Author to bestow on all that fear and wait upon him!

And yet, it is no wonder that human nature should stagger at the greatness of the promise through unbelief. Especially, as it is so much the interest of the great enemy of mankind we should. Indeed he does not much concern himself when men give only a cool assent to the truth of the promise. But when a soul is stirred up to follow hard after it, then the devil stirs up all the unbelief of our nature and is continually suggesting 'How can these things be?' But when a soul is enabled to surmount these oppositions, and can steadily behold the promise, though it be afar off, how inexcusable is it if it be not every moment panting and longing for the possession of it? But alas, where falls this censure? It overwhelms myself. Now my soul earnestly desires and pants after that glorious liberty, but how often is it dull and languid in the pursuit thereof. Nay, perhaps for some moments I lose sight of the high prize of my calling. O when shall this be so no more? When shall my soul cry without ceasing, 'Come Lord Jesus, and set up thy kingdom fully in my heart and reign thou thyself the Lord of every motion there'?

Dear sir, help me by your prayers, not only to follow this rest, but to attain it. And that the Lord may bless you in all your ways, and prosper the work of your hands upon you, and fill your soul with all his fullness, is the prayer, and unfeigned desire of

Your unworthy daughter,

Elizabeth Mann

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 150–52.¹

¹Titled in *AM*: 'Thirst for full Salvation'.

From Dr. Johannes de Koker

Dabam Rotterodami
October 10, 1749

Charissime Frater,

Gratia, pax, et multifariae Spiritus Sancti consolationes tibi tuaeque societati sint, et multiplicentur a Deo nostro per Servatorem nostrum. Amen.

Tuas gratissimas Ratcormucki datas accepi,¹ et ex illis summo cum gaudio grandem in variis Angliae et Hiberniae partibus ianuam vobis apertam esse intellexi, dum multi adversarii evangelicae doctrinae sese opponerent.

Literas tuas ad D. Perronet datas (A Plain Account, etc.) non quidem legi, sed devoravi. Omniaque adeo mihi arriserunt, ut vix me cohibere possim, quin Londinum devolem, veniam et videam societatis tuae ordinationes. Sed catenis variis quasi vinctus, nolens volens hic adstrictus sum. Quamprimum tamen literas illas vertam et typis mandabo, una cum tractatulo illo, *The Character of a Methodist*. ... Forte, si non multos, aliquos excitabit clericos aut laicos, ad vestigia evangelica integrius premenda. ... Admodum mihi placet, te nec sectae alicui, nec dogmatibus specificis sectarum adherere, nec patronum eorum agere, sed cuique libertatem relinquere de iis credendi quid velit, modo vere in Deum Filiumque eius dilectum credat, Deum ex toto corde amet, a peccatis absteineat, et vitam vocatione evangelica dignam ducat. Mi Iane, dilectissime, frater, rogo, precor et obtestor per viscera misericordiarum Dei et Filii sui, ut ipisissimam hanc vitam insistas, ac premere pergas, nec polemicis te immisceas. Certa solummodo bonum illud fidei purae integrae, evangelicae certamen, nec ullos hostes praeter carnem corruptam, eiusque desideria mundana debelles. Cane peius et angui fugias dogmata multiplicare, et de non necessariis disputare, quae bina Satanae stratagemata fuere quibus ecclesiam ab integritate et simplicitate evangelica sensim aberrare fecit.

Doleo vehementer, te tot tamque gravibus et multifariis negotiis esse obrutum. Quam libenter pro tenuitate mea te, tuosque levare, gravissimaque illa onera ferre vellem, novit Omniscius. Is, precor ardentem, fulciat, sustentet, et animum vobis addat, ut Satanae eiusque asseclarum regnum magis magisque indies destruat, et Dei eiusque Filii regnum erigatur, dimanet et penetret omnes animos, illorum imprimis quorum mentem mundi dominus occaecavit.

Hisce votis te demando Deo, verboque eius gratiae, qui te sociosque tuos aedificent et haereditatem possidendam dent in omnibus sanctis. Vale, mi Iane, frater amicissime, et me amare perge.

Tui ex animo amantissimus

Iohannes de Koker

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Nov. 10, 1749 (*Works*, 20: 312–14).²

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²

Rotterdam
October 10, 1749

Dearest Brother,

Grace, peace, and the various consolations of the Holy Spirit be on you and your society! And may these blessings be multiplied by our God through our Saviour!

I have received your very gratifying letter, dated from Rathcormack; and from it I learn, with the greatest joy, that a wide door has been opened to you in different parts of England and Ireland, while many adversaries placed themselves in opposition to the doctrine of the gospel.

I have not merely read, but I have devoured, your letter addressed to Mr. Perronet, entitled *A Plain Account* Everything in it afforded me so much delight that I could scarcely refrain from flying away to London, for the purpose of beholding the constitution and order of your society. But, as if bound by various chains, whether willingly or unwillingly, I am confined to this place. Yet I will, as speedily as

possible, translate and publish that letter, as well as the brief tract called *The Character of a Methodist*. Perhaps if this little pamphlet does not excite *many* persons, it will at least excite some among both the clergy and laity, to walk with greater integrity in the way of the gospel.

I am also wonderfully pleased that you connect yourself with no sect; neither adhering to the special dogmas of sects, nor acting as their patron; but that you leave everyone at liberty to believe whatever he chooses about them, provided he have a true faith in God and his beloved Son, love God with all his heart, abstain from sin, and lead a life worthy of the gospel vocation. My most dearly beloved brother John, I request, pray, and beseech you, by the bowels of mercies of God and his Son, that you continue in the very same courage of life, and proceed onward in it; and that you abstain from intermeddling with polemics. Only fight that good fight of pure, sincere, and evangelical faith; and subdue no other enemies than the corrupt flesh and its worldly desires. Avoid, more than you would a rabid dog or a venomous serpent, the multiplying of dogmas, and disputations about things unnecessary. These have been the two stratagems of Satan, by which he has caused the church, insensibly and by degrees, to err from evangelical simplicity and purity.

I lament much that you are overwhelmed by so many and such weighty and multifarious affairs. He who knows all things knows how gladly, according to my small capacity, I would relieve you and those who labour with you, and would bear those very heavy burdens. I ardently beseech him to support and sustain you, and to infuse vigour into your minds, that the kingdom of Satan and of his emissaries may everyday be destroyed yet more and more, and that the kingdom of God and of his Son may be erected in all hearts, and that it may penetrate and spread through them, especially the hearts of those whose minds the god of this world hath blinded.

With these good wishes I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, that he may build you up, and give you the possession of the inheritance among all them who are sanctified. Farewell, my most friendly brother John, and cease not to love me, who am

Yours heartily and most affectionately,

Johannes de Koker

‘Amicus Veritatis’¹ to the Printer of the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*

Bristol
November 2, 1749

The progress of Methodism still advancing, and the numbers devoted to this whimsical enthusiastical society still increasing, I think it is my duty as a friend of truth and industry in this indefatigable city of trade to expose to public inspection what I think the grand cause of *this evil*—as I humbly imagine it injures the lower class of people, by filling their heads with imaginary nonsense that can be no ways pleasing to a rational wise being. Whereas, were these poor *visionists* to spend the time they now do in dancing after the pipes of their *enthusiastical instructors*, in their proper respective vocations, it would indisputably be better employed both to public utility and private advantage.

Enthusiasm, in short, is the fountain from whence this evil flows, which from our native ignorance and not endeavouring by our rational faculties to try whether any question be right or wrong (as you know it is reason only by which we can distinguish between truth and error) that this spirit of Methodism gains ground by such numerous votaries.

These gloomy wretches, from their natural fears and great credulity, greedily swallow as orthodox whatever nonsense their teachers promulgate. Then with the frequent dismal appearances of nature, from *barren rocks* and *deserts*, *shabby fruitless heaths*, *tremendous mountains*, *deep solemn valleys*, *poverty*, and *distress* (which naturally raise in us dark and gloomy imaginations) they take this advantage of their fears, and by their arts and *solemn looks*, they conjure up *spirits*, *hobgoblins*, *fairies*, *witches*, *angry beings*, and *terrible devils*, and all the tribes of *dreadful imaginary furies*. In order to confirm the authority of these *religious dreamers*, they pretend *heavenly revelations*, *inspirations*, and *divine missions*, which has always been the cant of the predecessors of this kind in all ages. Thus by their skill and management they at length make an absolute conquest of the properties and souls of their believers.

This, I say, has done infinite mischief to mankind. It has taught them to believe in any senseless doctrines, and also to practice idle childish tricks, under pretence of their being religious duties. The neglect of which, they think, would certainly incur the displeasure of the Divine Being.

This, I say, has done more mischief to the world than all their natural passions were capable of doing. For, can a wise benevolent being (as we must suppose the God we worship to be) be pleased with absurd opinions or ridiculous impertinent ceremonies. No! It cannot be. Nothing can be acceptable and pleasing to him but what tends to some good salutary end or purpose.

The practice of moral virtue is *the old golden rule*, *of doing as you would be done by*. This Christ, the *great author* of our holy religion, recommends to his disciples, and is doubtless the most pleasing rule to almighty God. By *this* we are made happy in this world, and cannot fail of the fruition of happiness in the next. Indeed passions and appetites God gave us for our comfort and the natural support of our beings. The moderate and lawful use of them we have a natural right to enjoy. But the immoderate, licentious use of them is the abuse, and thereby becomes immoral, therefore are wisely forbidden and restrained by our laws.

Had preachers always propagated *this doctrine*, and not have pestered their hearers with their incongruous sentiments in religious speculation, the world had been honester and never been plagued with *enthusiasm* and *superstition*, which they impiously pronounce ‘the will of God’.

These put shackles upon human minds, and first gave opportunities to tyrants to triumph over and enslave their ignorant miserable subjects.

I could lengthen out my subject considerably, but the more I think of the miseries which have sprung from implicit credulity and enthusiasm, the more disagreeable the subject appear to me. In short, I am tired of it, as I have little hopes of making the world wiser from this short disquisition, which I hope

¹I.e., ‘Friend of Truth’.

will not offend, as it is well intended.

I have borne my testimony against error, and am, sir,
Your friend and servant,

Amicus Veritatis

I subjoin the sentiments of that noble and wise Lord Brooke, author of the old play of *Mustapha*, who was a celebrated writer in the reign of Charles I, where speaking of superstition, he says,

Vast *superstition*, glorious style of weakness,
Sprung from the *deep disquiet* of man's passions,
To dissolution and despair of nature,
Thy texts bring princes' titles into question, [...]
Manacleth *sweet truth* with their distinctions:
Let virtue bleed, teach cruelty for God-like precepts;
Fashioning one God; yet him of many fashions.²

Source: published transcription; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* 7 (Nov. 4, 1749), p. 4.

²Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554–1628), *Mustapha*, II.1–8.

'Nick-o-demus Standfast' to the Printer of the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*

Horse-Fair, St. James's [Bristol]
November 9, 1749

As you assured the public that your paper shall never be distinguished for partiality, I desire you'll receive the following from,

Your humble servant,

Nick-o-demus Standfast

To Amicus Veritatis,
Author of a letter in your last against Methodists, etc.

Sir,

I belong to a society of *good Christians*, all Church of England folks, most of whom have read your testy letter about the Methodists in this city. Curiosity has oftentimes led me, for some years past, down to Mr. Wesley's Room, where I never heard any discourse but what was consistent with the rules prescribed by our Saviour and his disciples, and enforced upon the congregation with a becoming devoutness in its delivery. The people therefore of my acquaintance would be glad to know what you mean by your hard reflections against those harmless folks, the Methodists, such as 'enthusiasts', 'hobgoblins', 'spirits', 'fairies', 'furies', terrible 'devils', and the Lord knows what—hideous reflections which seem to arise from a gloomy conscious horror in your own imagination.

It is therefore expected that you make good your above charge, and point out the principles of Methodism, and refute them. Otherwise we shall conclude that letter to be the frightful ideas only of a bewildered brain (like Richard the Third) just startled out of a restless sleep, and admonish you for the future to lay aside scribbling, and remember: *Ne sutor ultra Crepidam*.¹

Source: published transcription; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* 8 (Nov. 11, 1749), p. 3.

¹'Shoemaker, not beyond the shoe'; i.e., do not speak outside of your area of competence.

'Amicus Veritatis' to the Printer of the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*

Bristol
November 13, 1749

Sir,

I am compelled against my inclination to appear a second time in your paper, to justify my impeachment of 'enthusiasm', which I have exhibited in my former letter against the Methodists.

This, I observe, one of the gentlemen of *that society* (under the name of 'Nick-o-demus Standfast') desires me to prove, and in fact treats my little production with contempt—advising me to forbear 'scribbling', concluding with a Latin proverb: '*Ne sutor ultra Crepidam*'.

Decency and good manners best become all men who put their works in *public prints*. Therefore I humbly submit to public consideration whether Mr. Standfast has treated me thus in his little epistle.

However, to wave that and 'not go beyond my last' (according to my friend Nickodemus's advice), I will with my best abilities endeavour to prove that the leaders and majority of that society are *absolutely enthusiasts*, according to the general received meaning and import of that word.

An 'enthusiast', then, is supposed to be a person of a zeal and turn of mind who implicitly entertains, with unbridled impetuosity, a set of religious principles which cannot be controlled or checked by reason or common prudence, strictly adhering to his own opinion, and arrogantly thinking all who differ from him in an absolute state of perdition. That the present Methodists are such, I humbly imagine is indisputable. And I never heard it once questioned by any unprejudiced man of reason who was acquainted with their principles and practices of religion.

To prove my assertion I humbly submit the determination of this question to common sense, whether a small society of people can be the *only right*, who think that the wise benevolent Deity did indispensably require and expect from them in their worship of him: [1] as their meetings at midnight, at five o'clock every morning (even in the most rigorous inclement winter season), twice or thrice more in every day of the year, which I call 'rigorous austerities'; [2] then their childish 'love feasts' upon *bread and water*; [3] *confessing their sins to one another*; [4] dividing themselves into 'classes', or 'tribes'; [5] with diverse other *little whimsical tricks and rules*, which none but a member can enumerate.

If such a *society* then does not properly come under the character of 'enthusiasts', the word (in my opinion) has no meaning, and then there never were such people existing. They may indeed *deny* the appellation of 'enthusiasts', or that they are any ways actuated by such a spirit in the rules of these religious duties, but no consequence can at all follow from such a denial. For no set of people are proper judges of their own cause, but must submit themselves to the rational and unprejudiced part of mankind.

To illustrate which by a very short *simile*, let us suppose any one from curiosity made a *visit* to Bedlam.¹ Should he there ask one of those unhappy creatures in his cell whether he was so confined for being mad, and deprived of his natural reason, I dare believe he would answer in the *negative*. Ask one of these deluded people I am now pointing to his inducement to rise in the midst of darkness to attend the worship he thinks his duty. His answer would be, 'I am no *enthusiast*, but I dedicate this time to the true service of God.' I cannot possibly think (as 'his service is perfect freedom'²) such an austere service can be in the least acceptable or pleasing to the kind benevolent deity.

I must frankly acknowledge that it is my opinion the present leaders of *society* may have no views of worldly advantage by attacking the fears of their votaries with apprehensions of frightful ideas. But even such methods are no more than what were generally made use of in the earliest ages of Christianity as are abundantly verified in the doctrines and practices of the ancient fathers of the primitive church. This the *learned* and *honest* Dr. Conyers Middleton has sufficiently proved in his last ingenious production, entitled, *The Free Inquiry*

¹A hospital for the insane.

²BCP, Morning Prayer, Collect for Peace.

As to the present gentlemen who conduct this 'society', I don't impeach them of any lucrative views upon the private properties of their disciples. The collections made amongst them I sincerely believe are applied justly to the intended purposes of defraying the necessary expenses of their society. This a very honest (though mistaken) member assured me, which I believe. But should they continue to increase for half a century in the same proportion of numbers as they have actually done for these ten or twelve years past, they must become numerous indeed, and their power, in all human probability, hardly to be counter balanced by the *established Church* of this nation. Then the crafty and subtle amongst them, who have drawn them over to these *enthusiastical principles*, will have a fair opportunity of making a *property* of the *souls* and *fortunes* of this deluded set of people. It was by these methods that the power and possessions of the Romish Church became so monstrous and diabolically dreadful to their laity, and from the ignorance and credulity of their creatures, their *ecclesiastical properties* became so immense.

I believe Mr. Wesley may have no sinister views from his scheme of Methodism, he may be no *hypocrite* and sincerely believes what he preaches. Yet this does not clear him, or his followers, of *enthusiasm*, nor can any one answer for the honest intentions of his successors in this kind of doctrine.

I therefore hope I have cleared up what I set forth in my former letter touching the *progress of Methodism* to the satisfaction and understanding of every unprejudiced reader. All I then or now *aim* at is to show the natural bad consequences, arising from *such principles*, not at all expecting to gain over any of those already enlisted under this *banner*, but to prevent (if possible) the further increase of their numbers. For I sincerely believe, and ever shall, that an all-wise and benevolent God can never take delight in such austere kind of worship as Methodists value themselves upon.

I solemnly declare that I have no other intention by *this* or my former *letter* but to free the minds of the innocent multitude of those *fetters* they now are encumbered with. I want to make them think nobly and generously of God, the wise and great author of the universe, and to recommend to all mankind virtuous and sober lives, the only true *test* of a good and religious conscience, and by which alone we must expect either to stand or fall in the fate of bliss or misery, *here* or *hereafter*.

As to my own part, no motive induced me to appear in public but the foregoing. If it has a good effect, my purpose is answered. Reason is my guide. That is my compass, and therein is my North Star, which I hope always to keep in view, both in my *religious* as well as *political speculations*.

I am, sir,

Your friend and constant reader,

Amicus Veritatis

[Postscript by Printer]: As I shall always take pleasure in the insertion of any lucubrations from the ingenious, when they appear disrobed of rude language or personal invectives, and have the least tendency to enlighten the understanding or inform the judgment of mankind in general. I have on this principle obliged the above author, and shall be equally ready (for the entertainment of my readers) to receive anything by way of vindication from the persons whom Amicus Veritatis points to.³

Source: published transcription; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer* 9 (Nov. 18, 1749), p. 4.

³JW had left Bristol on Nov. 6, but this invitation was accepted by 'A Friend to the Protestant Religion' in the issue of Nov. 25. This writer contended that genuine good had been accomplished by Whitefield and the Wesley brothers, but added that he would leave the public to judge whether in fact they were enthusiasts.

From Judith (Cowper) Madan¹

[London]

December 18, 1749

Sir,

I am desired by a particular friend in the country to entreat your answer to the following queries. Mr. (I am at present not to tell his name) has been lately reading your *Appeals*² and, though extremely pleased with them in general, conceives no clear idea of part of your doctrine, in which he finds a mystery he cannot comprehend and is apt to think the print does you injustice, or that you have placed your meaning in a light which may probably do hurt to weak minds. These are his words, and I will set down what follows exactly as he sends it [to] me:

Sect. 9.³ Faith the work of omnipotence, no man can attain it. (That is clear and certain, [but])
Query: Why given to so few?

Without faith no man can be saved.
Faith is not given to the previously holy.
Ergo, the previously holy cannot be saved.

From this he says he must infer that none but wicked men can have this faith. So that we must be wicked to be saved. He adds this is a most perplexing mystery, which he begs explanation of.

Also farther, that a man may arrive at sinless perfection.
Our Saviour tells us the servant may be as his master.⁴
Query: Whether this means in bodily sufferings or in sinless perfection? For another text says that the best are but unprofitable servants.⁵ How then can a man have sinless perfection?

These are the things in which my friend desires to be instructed. Doubt of any kind he adds is bad, but in matters of religion insupportable to those who are athirst for the knowledge of God.

I am persuaded, sir, you will forgive the liberty I have taken to send anything that may intrude on the smallest portion of your time. I entreat your answer, direct to myself and left with Mr. Green or any other person at the chapel⁶ for me, whenever it best suits your leisure to give it; as I would not venture a letter from you, however I shall esteem it, to come to my house—where all do not think as I do. I should also be much obliged for three chapel hymn books⁷ and one of your *Appeals*, which I mentioned to you and which you were so good to say you would get for me.

¹Judith (Cowper) Madan (1702–81)—the daughter of Spencer Cowper, Justice of Common Pleas, and wife of Col. Martin Madan, M.P., of Hertingfordbury—was a poet and participant in London high society. She knew the Wesley brothers in part through her son Martin Madan. As her reticence for JW mailing a letter to her home suggests, many of her family were drawn more to the Calvinist wing of the revival.

²The *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* and *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*; see *Works*, 11:37–326.

³*Earnest Appeal*, §9, *Works*, 11:47–48.

⁴See Matt. 10:25.

⁵See Luke 17:10.

⁶Likely the West Street chapel.

⁷Likely *HSP* (1739), *HSP* (1740), and *HSP* (1742).

I cannot, sir, take my leave of you without begging your prayers. Indeed, my life, which is a scene of vanity and hurry, stands in need of all Christian assistances. I am surrounded with many cares. Yet I thank God, above all I feel earnest care for my soul, which will and does claim my attention in the midst of all the clamours and impertinence of a world. I think I now know throughly, because I begin throughly to disguise it.

I can never enough acknowledge my obligations to you, who will, I trust in God, realize to me the common complement, that I shall be *eternally obliged to you*, who am, good sir, with the utmost esteem and respect,

Your faithful, humble servant,

J. Madan

no address information.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mrs Madan / Dec 18. 1749 / a[nswere]d 29'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D5/69/2.

From the Rev. John Milner¹

Chipping
January 11, 1750

My Most Dear and Reverend Brother, whom I love in the truth,

Great was my astonishment at my first reading of those wonderful things that God by your instrumentality has wrought. And scarcely was my surprise less when I received the kind notice of your *Christian Library*—a work that will be a blessing to all for future ages, as well as the present, and promote the glory of God and the good of souls to the end of time. Most cheerfully do I subscribe to it.

My friend is blessed with a large and beautiful race of children, still increasing. His eldest son he is very desirous of having under your care, if possible, for some time. His face will be more than a letter of recommendation. Some time ago he was under convictions, but by youthful vanities they have been stifled. I do not spare both to exhort and pray for him. His father is fully persuaded that your presence, your exhortations and prayers, will be a blessing to him. We indeed ourselves look for no little spiritual edification and comfort from one whom God has so highly favoured and blessed above others. Nothing but my confinement to the care of a parish (not at present well-disposed to hear the glad tidings of the gospel) would have hindered me long since doing myself the pleasure of seeing you, and hearing the word of peace and reconciliation from your lips. Most of my friends of the clergy have forsaken me. Not one of them cares to look me in the face. Almost all manner of evil is spoken of me. But I bless God, none of these things terrify or discourage me. Rather I begin to hope, for being evil spoken of for the truth I shall have more success than I have hitherto had when I had the good word of all.

I was at Clapham in Yorkshire when my friend did himself the honour of writing to you. And I acknowledge myself greatly obliged by your last kind favour.² The vicar there, Mr. Graves,³ still continues my friend. He is one whom I brought acquainted with your writings. He is convinced of the truth, and preaches it with power, not only in the pulpit, but from house to house. But he has had much opposition from the Moravians on one side and the profane scoffers on the other (no small party, I fear, in most parishes). Through his uncommon diligence there are a great many in his parish awakened, and gladly hear the gospel from him.

I have had twice the pleasure of seeing Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham and must say there is a great deal of amiable sweetness in his whole behaviour—and have often and earnestly wished that he was disentangled from the Moravians, and cordially *one* with you in promoting the interests of the gospel.

The last time I saw him he was employed in reconciling two of the brethren who had run great hazards and suffered much hardship in the service of the gospel. He allows you incomparably the preference for prudence, but says you have not done the Count [Zinzendorf] justice. That he endeavoured to prevail with you not to publish the *Difference*,⁴ and thought he had prevailed till he heard it was published. That he would gladly have been reconciled, and got Mr. Whitefield to go from his house to Newcastle to bring about a reconciliation, but that you were not inclined to it, 'the time being not yet

¹Rev. John Milner (1710–77), a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge in 1732, was vicar of Chipping, Lancashire. He was sympathetic to the Methodist movement, inviting JW to preach in his church in the face of significant opposition.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³John Graves (d. 1785) was appointed vicar of Clapham in Yorkshire in 1744. He resigned in 1755 to take appointment through the auspices of SPG as rector of King's Church in Providence, Rhode Island, where he served until 1775 when he was dismissed for refusing to omit the prayer for the King from the Sunday service.

⁴JW, *A Short View of the Difference between the Moravian Brethren ... and the Reverend Mr. John and Charles Wesley* (1745).

come'.⁵ At first I looked upon the difference as that betwixt Paul and Barnabas,⁶ which was a furtherance to the gospel of Christ. But since I knew more of the doctrine of the *still Brethren*, I have not had the same favourable opinion of them. Yet I cannot help thinking Mr. Ingham happy. May some good providence bring you speedily together, for surely such souls must glow with love at meeting, and all unkindness fly at first sight!

I endeavoured, when at Clapham, to engage my friend to write to you, to beg your advice how to proceed with the Moravians, some of whom have behaved with great disrespect and endeavoured to weaken his hands. Notwithstanding which he is greatly followed. He has six or seven places of assembling for religious worship in his parish in private houses, at some of which the Moravians are present, but not always as friends, but spies rather.

If you think proper to give him a word of encouragement and advice—for he has a high veneration for your judgment—and send him the proposals for the *Christian Library*, I hope he will engage in promoting so good a design. For my part, I will not fail to press him to it, and some others of my acquaintance.

My dear brother, I beg to be remembered in your addresses to the throne of grace, that I may not only be faithful in the work of our blessed Lord, but may see some fruit of my labours; that I may not fail, nor be discouraged, but rather encouraged with the difficulties I meet with in the glorious warfare.

If my poor petitions may come up with acceptance through the Beloved—still may you be carried as on angels' wings, may the tottering kingdom of Satan fall before you wherever you come. May you go on in the strength of the Lord God, conquering and to conquer, till his kingdom ruleth over all.

I shall long to hear of the time fixed for our seeing your face. O may all your undertakings for the glorious gospel succeed to the utmost wish. May you prosper and be in health as your soul also prospers. And may the Giver of all grace still preserve you the same lowly follower of the Lamb [that] those that have seen speak to be [true of] you, that you may with the great apostle of the Gentiles say, 'Not I, but the grace of God.'⁷ I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate brother and humble servant,

J. Milner

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 512–14.⁸

⁵Cf. John 7:6.

⁶See Acts 15:36–41.

⁷See 1 Cor. 15:10.

⁸Slightly abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:397–98.

‘Theophilus’ on Methodism¹

Cork

January 21, 1750

A Letter to Parson Butler,² etc.,

With regard to those distinguished by the name of Methodist, or that senseless one, of Swaddlers, let me enquire if you act from principles of reason or religion? It is generally supposed you are well paid for what you do by the Corporation and clergy, etc.; but, in the meantime, how do you dispense with your conscience? Shall I declare my impartial thoughts concerning them, as perhaps you may be desirous I should? I will then, in the presence of God, who searches the heart.

I do think if there be a set of sincere men upon earth, they are of the number. I am now in the decline of life and have travelled perhaps as far and been acquainted with as many of all persuasions as most, but must candidly confess I never knew any who lived more exemplary lives than those termed Swaddlers. And does not our Lord say, ‘by their fruits you shall know them’?³ If so, and that their teachers are employed by God (as I think the effect of their teaching proves beyond contradiction), in what a miserable state must you, the Corporation, clergy, etc., be? Kicking against the pricks, fighting against God, crucifying Jesus in his members, contending with heaven, O let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth, but woe to the man that strives with his Maker; for, when he whets his glittering sword and his hand takes hold of vengeance, how mute and astonished will you then look! O remember the day that is hastening when he will say unto you, ‘for as much as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me’.⁴

The clergy may rage and foam, etc., but you can prove nothing immoral against them, unless their earnestly exhorting sinners to repent and believe the gospel, their desiring nothing this world can give, only a little bread to eat, and raiment to put on. Neither for this reason dare they send for or talk with them, lest their ignorance should be exposed. For my part, I don’t think they know either what a Bible Christian is, or whether there be one such in the city. Riches, ease, and honour are the only darling objects they set their hearts upon. But the souls for whom Christ died they leave to the tender mercies of hell. How awful, how affecting a truth is this! And yet nothing is more evidently plain to those who believe the Scripture to be of God. But in this dreadful case, what I would have you (Butler) to do is to get it from under the clergy’s hands that they will indemnify and bear you harmless at the great day of judgment. And then you may safely give the Swaddlers no more quarter than the Jews did Jesus Christ, than the world did his apostles. Verily, I think it would be doing them a piece of service to murder them out of the way at once, for I really believe they would go to heaven and almost everybody hates them. The generality of men declare, at least by their lives, that there is no God. And are you not of that number? Do

¹The published letter was not addressed to JW; but he will reply to its republication in Cork in May in his letter to William Holmes, Mayor of Cork, May 27, 1750, *Works*, 26:427–28. See the description of the outbreak of persecution of Methodists in Cork in the earlier letter of Oliver Ozello, July 1, 1749, above.

It is important to note that the purpose of the original publication in Dublin was not to defend Methodists, but to cast them as slanderers of the leaders in Cork, as evident in the preface on p. [2]: ‘The design of publishing this pamphlet is to show the *uncharitable*, and consequently the *unchristian spirit* of Methodism—in which this city, which was always remarkable for its steady *loyalty* and *firm attachment* to our *happy constitution* in *Church and State* is represented not only as a *popish* and *disaffected mob*, but likewise as a set of *abandoned wretches* for whom Tophet (hell) yawns.’

²I.e., Nicholas Butler, the ballad singer (dressed as a parson) who was mocking and disrupting Methodist services in Cork.

³Matt. 7:16.

⁴Matt. 25:40.

you believe there is any God that judges in the earth? If you do, what do you think must become of you? You know! You have a witness in your own breast, and the Bible (you had in your left hand while you had a bundle of ballads in your right, at the same time blaspheming in the sight and hearing of many of the Corporation and several of the clergy, etc.—to their immortal honour be it spoken—upon a table near the Change at noonday) will show you what you are doing, and whither you are going.

Many times you have both by your words and actions much shocked me. And I have therefore thought it my duty to testify against you (but your employments chiefly) in this manner, however it be received. This day you declared that though the Swaddlers had their houses burned over their heads, there was no law for them; and that if they themselves were burned, it would be the same. I believe so, and I would advise you therefore without delay to get an order (but I believe you may do it safe enough without) from your honourable paymasters, to bring all the Swaddlers to the Change and have a general bonfire made of them. Your said paymasters will doubtless cheerfully contribute faggots for the purpose. Hereby you will put an end to all your trouble, and their misery at once. Besides you may have heard of many examples of the kind to encourage you to so glorious, so meritorious an action, furnished by the red-letter saints of your community in the reign of Queen Mary, of blazing memory.

And if there be no God, as the most part of the city of Cork seem to believe, if we may judge of the tree by its fruits, you will consequently do well enough, and need be under no fearful apprehensions. But surely there is a God. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament shows forth his handiwork. O prepare to meet him. It is in him you live, move, and have your being. Though now you stand in arms and wage war against him, yet I can't but be in pain to think what you will do when his right aiming thunderbolts go abroad. Will your abettors, your reverend friends, then collect a few pounds to buy you off? Alas! They will then be in the same hopeless situation as yourself.

Are not you and they now trampling the laws of God, and our gracious sovereign King George (whom God long preserve) under your feet? To violate the laws of God is in effect to deny his authority, and indeed the very being of a God. So to violate the laws of our King—or which is the same, to connive at and tacitly approve of their unwarrantable violation—is in effect to question his authority and to deny that he is our rightful sovereign. And did not you say in the hearing of many that though his Majesty should grant a patent or issue a proclamation in their behalf that the magistrates of Cork would not obey it? This can be proved. And I believe you had good grounds for it too, for I know of none in the city who knows their minds better than yourself. O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the sons of Rome triumph. To the honour of the men in power of the city of Cork, did you not declare, and that before sufficient witnesses, that you were encouraged to commit murder, and that if you did you would be brought off clear. And was not the Mayor⁵ likewise told the other day that if he would but sit neuter, the streets of Cork should soon run with the blood of the Swaddlers?

But has he not already done more towards so meritorious a work than was even requested? How is the faithful city become an harlot? Righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers. And does not the Most High regard it? Yea, surely he will visit for these things. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil. The cry of the sin of this city is great. The most of its inhabitants lie down in sin and Tophet yawns for them.

Think not that I would countenance the Methodists more than what the laws of nature and the Christian religion require. But when I see and hear how they are treated by the ministers in their pulpits, and in every private conversation, I cannot but be amazed at their want of candour and Christianity. I am sure Dr. T-d-l last Sunday did not leave them in the likeness of the devil. I think one of the Methodist preachers was present and had he not been stocked with most exemplary patience, he would have gone out of church; for the whole sermon was only a compound of lies, invectives, and misrepresentations.

Now when I see how they are treated by the ministers and ecclesiastics of every kind, in conjunction with apple-women and shoe boys, and you at their head, all united in one common cry

⁵William Holmes was currently Mayor of Cork.

against them, as if they were mad dogs and that the sooner their brains were knocked out the better. My heart, I must confess, bleeds at such palpable ill usage, such manifest breaches of the laws of civil society. Humanity moves me, and I cannot forbear asking, have these people no souls? Did not God make them and us? Why should they be used in this manner? With regard to religion, I always thought that if any were out of the way, those who fed Christ's lambs ought in meekness to instruct them. And with regard to the civil law, if any were culpable, the magistrates only were authorized to take cognizance thereof, and in the fear of God, to do justice to the offender and offended, as they must answer for it at the last day. But alas, how is justice perverted and who is it that regards truth? Judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off. But must not every act shortly be tried at a higher court? Is not the Day of the Lord at hand? But ah, who shall be able to stand? Then for the rocks and mountains, then for the dens and caves!

How the city stands affected to the present G-t, the populace are fully convinced; for you, who are a papist, are suffered—nay hired—to walk the streets with a drawn sword, threatening bloodshed and murder, to pull down houses and lay violent hands on the King's peaceable subjects in theirs, almost putting an end to the lives of some. I say, for you to be supported to do this by * * * * is inimitable. What will become of us? Nay did not the late mayor of the city⁶ bid the sufferers: go to mass, and you shall have peace.

I know of one who was not permitted to read her recantation, but advised to remain in communion with the Church of Rome, only because she was convinced of the errors of popery by swaddling John.⁷ And I doubt not but they would have convinced hundreds before this, had not the clergy, etc., suppressed them, for reasons best known to themselves. But they must allow the vulgar to think.

All the playhouses and meeting houses that can be spared are already turned into Mass houses; and it is thought we shall have several new ones this summer. Nay, there will be mass said in Christ Church shortly. But the poor Methodists, though a peaceable people, and as loyal subjects to his present majesty King George as any within the three kingdoms, and have always distinguished themselves as such, and since they came to our city have, to my knowledge, brought over many from the popish religion, and several even within these ten days—yet those I say, poor, harmless people, are not allowed to meet together to worship God, under the penalty of being whipped, transported, imprisoned, murdered. Is not all this amazing? I ask, in the name of God, what religion are you of, you magistrates and ministers, etc.? Is there not one in the whole city who either fears God or regards man? Not one, who either fears God or honours the king? Not one man in the least tainted with either humanity, Christianity, or loyalty? God be merciful to us! Must the blind forever lead the blind? O Lord, how long? Is it not time for thee to lay to thine hand, for they have destroyed thy laws? Where is the man who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, or his neighbour (his enemies not excepted) as his own soul? How is this city overrun with wickedness, oppression, injustice, etc.?

But let me ask, where are the ministers of Christ, the valiant men for truth upon the earth? Between the porch and the altar weeping? No, perhaps at the ball or assembly. What are they doing there? Informing themselves how the souls committed to their charge prosper? No, by no means. The ministers of Christ can never be presidents and directors of a midnight assembly. I beseech you, my fellow citizens, open your eyes, read the Bible, judge for yourselves. I say, search the Scriptures, awake out of your spiritual slumber. I do assure you there is not one in the whole city of Cork who honours the clergy, that are worthy of honour, more than I. But what then? I can read the Scriptures. I cannot call black white, or bitter sweet. I live, and hope to die, in communion with the Church of Ireland. Indeed, by reason of years I know my stay here cannot be long. I must shortly put off this earthly tabernacle, and what will conduce to bring me sooner to the grave is the ignorance of God that reigns in the hearts of almost all the

⁶The previous mayor of Cork was Daniel Crone, who was serving when Butler's persecution of Methodists began; cf. JW, *Journal*, July 20, 1749, *Works*, 20:285.

⁷I.e., the Methodist (or Swaddler) John Wesley.

inhabitants of the city, the wickedness that abounds in every corner of it.

Ah Lord! Is there not one righteous man left? Hast thou taken them all from the evil to come? I look round (but in vain) for the valiant soldiers of Christ to stand in the gap; but the spirit of slumber has closed their eyes. They love gifts, they follow after rewards. They love the world, the love of the Father is not in them. They give us now and then a moral discourse, but I ask you my fellow citizens, when did you hear a word of gospel from them? Do either you or they know what is gospel? Ask those grave, venerable men what it is to be born of God? And how is everyone that is born of God? I am mistaken if they know any more of inward religion than I know of how many particles of dust the whole earth is composed.

To conclude, let me desire you, my fellow citizens, to open your eyes and with attention to read the Word of God. See there what Christianity is, and what ought to be the lives of its professors. Not everyone that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven. No, he that commits sin is of the devil. The light of the wicked shall be put out. The wicked are reserved for the day of wrath. Their triumph is short. With the wicked God is angry every day. He shall rain upon them fire and brimstone, and this shall be their portion to drink. They shall be turned into hell together.

Mr. Butler (out of love to your soul do I now speak), consider what is coming upon you. The days of darkness are many. Supposing you could gain the whole world by what you do, with the loss of your soul, what will it signify when you are rolling in the lake of fire and brimstone? In speaking so plain, count me not your enemy. It will be no excuse at the last day to say you were hired to do what you did, by such and such great men. Lay down then your arms. For if the Methodists are Christians, your saying you were employed by the ministers, mayor, sheriffs, etc., of the city of Cork will not avail. I would leave to your considerations Matt. 18:16, where Christ affirms that whoever offends one of them that believes, it were better for him that a millstone was hanged about his neck, and that he was drowned in the depth of the sea.

And I wish our gentlemen in power would (if they believe there is any God at all), consider the following Scriptures: 1 Sam. 23:3, 'He that rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.' Rom. 13:3, 'For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil.' Prov. 17:5, 'He that justifies the wicked and he that condemns the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord.' Isa. 5:23, 'Which justify the wicked for rewards and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him, or bring in guilty the innocent.'

I ask who that has eyes or ears can suppose you believe the Scriptures to be of God, nay that there is any God at all? But if you profess to know God, will you allow the Methodists justice, when he calls to heavens from above and to the earth that he may judge his people? Then they, you, and I, and the whole world, shall have justice. All the wicked on his left hand he will deliver over to the tormentors forever; when to the righteous he will say, 'Come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.'⁸ And that this may be the happy lot of every inhabitant of this city, is the earnest prayer of one, who is at peace with God and the whole world, and desires that his enemies as well as friends, may become happy here and hereafter.

Theophilus

N. B. This pamphlet was published in Dublin and brought down to be distributed among the society, but Mr. Wesley (finding his reception here not such as he expected) called in as many as he possibly could; but one or two falling in the hands of some gentlemen of this town, they insisted on its being made public.
Cork, May 26, 1750

Source: republished transcription: *A Letter to Parson B[ut]l[e]r and his Friends of Cork* (Dublin: s.n., 1750; and Cork: reprinted by G. Harrison, [1750]).

⁸Matt. 25:34.

‘Amicus Veritatis’ to the Printer of the *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*

Bristol
January 30, 1750

To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley

Sir,

I am to acknowledge your gentleman-like letter in this paper of the 20th instant,¹ in answer to a couple of mine upon Methodism, published also in this paper in November last. I did not expect you had leisure, or that you thought me worthy your notice. But since you have condescended to answer me so genteelly, I must thank you publicly for the favour.

Believe me, sir, I meant well by thus exhibiting my sentiments upon Methodism, and I dare believe you also meant well by answering me, but as our sentiments are so opposite we cannot be both right. As there is but one certain rule of distinguishing right from wrong, truth from error, which is *reason*, then those principles which are the most reasonable are the most true.

Experience demonstrates sir that by reason only *rectitude* in all public and private transactions of human affairs depends, and is determined. Why then must we not employ that divine gift in religious matters also, which are infinitely more important? Why must we lay implicit faith upon the authority of books, *and hood-wink our reason in religion*? Books, I say, wrote by men of *like passions* to ourselves, but without a quarter of your learning and natural endowments. What, because *ignorance and credulity* have handed down systems (*the works of warm brains of antiquity*) from generation to generation, must our prejudice for them be so rivetted that we dare not exert our rational faculties to try whether they be fallacious or not? I am not at liberty to unfold myself by pointing out their particular errors, so you must excuse my silence upon that head. Was it expedient, I could expose to public censure many inconsistent notions and rules which *men of your turn of mind reckon important*. If I could once think you could divest your mind of native prejudices to your *book human authorities*, and submit yourself to argue upon the authority and footing of natural reason only, it would give me pleasure to enter the list with a man of your good sense. But I fear that will never be the case, so I have little hopes of victory from that quarter.

It was the opinion of a gentleman of the most unprejudiced judgment and the deepest perspicuity of the present age (the late Mr. Trenchard²) that most men had some tincture of *enthusiasm from nature*—he meant that there were few men but what had some natural *bias*—which they could not subdue by the strength of their reason. Whether you and I are exceptions from this observation of his the world will judge for us.

Sir, I have an opinion of your abilities; then what a pity it is you cannot divest your mind of your present sentiments, that you would throw off that *rubbish of religious trifles* and dedicate your actions to *public utility*. Then how profitable a servant of God and friend to the community would you become! Was your admirable genius engaged in law, physic, or commerce, what a figure would you make in either! But as it is in religious speculation only, the commonwealth receives little advantage from it, unless you make people more virtuous and industrious.

I think you deserve my panegyrics, but you'll say I have not yet answered your remarks upon my two letters. You was pleased to say I thought Christianity imaginary nonsense. No, sir, true moral Christianity, stripped of trash, I never thought so; but that part which requires austerity of life, with impertinent forms and ceremonies, and is not reconcilable to common sense, or of which we cannot form the least natural ideas, *that* I conceive may justly bear that appellation.

I charged you with ‘enthusiasm’. You endeavoured to clear yourself of it. How you have done it I submit to the impartial. I should give myself too much trouble to remark upon the several articles of your

¹JW did not see the earlier letters of ‘Amicus Veritatis’ until Jan. 11, 1750, and wrote a reply the next day; see *Works*, 26:399–402.

²John Trenchard (1662–1723); likely referring to *Cato's Letters* (London, 1723–24).

answer. You grant I am right in some, but you assert your midnight meetings contribute to the bodily as well as spiritual health of your disciples. I am persuaded no good physician will allow that rising in the midst of darkness (before five in the morning) and exposing one's body to the noxious vapours of the cold air in the inclement winter seasons, then standing in one posture, without motion, in your room for an hour or two, can in any degree contribute to human health. As to the spiritual health, I leave the determination of its truth to 'spiritual persons', of which number I am not, in your sense. As to your love-feasts, and *confessing sins to each other*, I think them too trifling and childish to deserve a serious answer. So if you will have maypoles, dance round them till you are tired if you like it; there's no harm in it, and I am sure no *good*.

Sir, you declare yourself absolutely unprejudiced in your opinion, that you tried the rectitude of your present sentiments by the most exact scrutiny of your rational faculties before you peremptorily embraced them. Believe me, good sir, I have done the same, and have also carefully examined the most accurate authors of both sides of the question with candour—which, I thank God, made me determine in adhering to my present sentiments. But possibly you might not consider that the great Creator of the universe is a God of infinite *wisdom and goodness*, that no human actions can please this *Wise Being* but what tend to some *moral good*. If you did not reason thus, you reasoned upon false principles; so it was impossible you could draw just conclusions from your premises, no more than a man could build a good house from a *bad plan*.

Sir, you seem to bear hard upon my friend Dr. Conyers Middleton for his late production entitled *A Free Inquiry ...*³ You assert, 'He is either not an *honest man*, or that he does not *understand* Greek.' It is a home thrust upon his reputation, and it behoves him to defend it if he can, or he'll sink in my esteem.

I well know that all your artillery of C[hristian] authority has been pointed at his book. The reason is obvious—he widely dissents from you in his sentiments, by exposing the weakness of an old, *ruinous fortification*, which by his searching too deep into its foundation will be in danger of *being sapped*, or taken without storm. I am informed, sir, that you have answered Dr. Middleton.⁴ I have not perused it, but I have a pamphlet lately wrote by Mr. Dodwell,⁵ wherein he has shown himself a true academical logician, and a man of great skill in such controversies. But I humbly conceive he has avoided answering some material parts of Dr. Middleton's *Free inquiry*, and what he has answered appears to me the effect of mere art.

I am of opinion that Dr. Middleton's character (both moral and learned) is too well established in the moral and learned part of the unprejudiced world to suffer from the *impeachment of your representation*, or to be *sullied by the blot* of the pens of all the Wesleys, Dodwells, Chapmans,⁶ or Caves⁷ upon earth. Dr. Middleton (like a true friend to Christianity) has endeavoured to clear it from ancient rubbish and cobwebs, that it may appear undisguised in its natural honest simplicity, and thus to render it more amiable to its beholders. But his enemies represent him as an enemy to Christianity, for exposing

³Conyers Middleton, *A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers, which are Supposed to have Existed in the Christian Church, from the Earliest Ages, through Several Successive Centuries. By which it is shown that we have no sufficient reason to believe, upon the authority of the Primitive Fathers, that any such powers were continued to the church after the days of the Apostles* (London: Manby & Cox, 1749).

⁴JW, *Letter to the Rev. Dr. Conyers Middleton* (1749).

⁵William Dodwell, *A Free Answer to Dr. Middleton's Free Inquiry ...* (London: S. Birt, 1749).

⁶John Chapman, *the Expediency and Credibility of Miraculous Powers among the Primitive Christians* (London: S. Birt, 1750).

⁷Middleton's book had taken as a key dialogue partner William Cave (1673–1713), *Primitive Christianity; or, The Religion of Ancient Christians in the First Ages of the Gospel* (London: Printed by J. M. for Richard Chiswell, 1673).

frauds, follies, and impostures. Lord, what shall I say, that men of sense and learning should take such pains and torture their brains to defend such *delusions*.

For my own part I claim little knowledge in any language but my native. Greek I learned in my juvenility at school, but by the long disuse of it I have forgot it. Was I a master of it I should think I greatly prostituted my knowledge of it by employing it in raking into the *dust of those visionary fabulous authors of antiquity* of whom you are so very fond, and upon whose amiable⁸ authority you so greatly depend.

Christianity, I grant, is founded upon the most exalted *system of morals*. But you tack ceremonies and senseless doctrines to it which have no affinity with morality (as the practice and belief of them can have no real good in them, so of consequence can be no ways meritorious, or pleasing to the God of *wisdom*).

Sir, I hope you will pardon me for the liberties I have taken with your *old friends in imagination* just before pointed to. It flows (upon my honest word) from what I think zeal for truth, as well as all your elaborate pieces have done. If I am mistaken, I am no way blameable, for we both mean well, though we differ in the means.

Sir, I believe I have almost tired your patience with the length of my epistle. I should not have been so prolix, had not I thought Dr. Middleton's character deserved some friendly notice.

As you was so good to conclude your late favour with a sort of pious ejaculation for both of our happiness, permit me to conclude with a short prayer:

That the Almighty Author and Fountain of all wisdom and truth will so dispose your mind, and mollify your good natural understanding, as to demonstrate to you by his divine influence that prejudice of education, and the speculation arising therefrom, are in no degree meritorious or acceptable to him (as a wise being); that by good works we render ourselves profitable servants, and for such we shall be received into those mansions of eternal bliss he has appointed for those who act in a sincere uniform obedience to his divine moral commands. This, I hope, will be the fate of Mr. Wesley, his disciples, and all mankind.

The moment I had concluded this prayer the following apropos four lines, upon the strong impressions education leaves upon human minds, occurred to my memory. They were wrote by the famous poet, Dryden, who was esteemed an admirable judge of human foibles. I cannot avoid obliging you with them:

By education most men are misled,
For thus they think because they thus were bred.
The priest does finish what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man.⁹

Pardon me, sir, and suffer me to subscribe, with respect and esteem for your moral character, reverend sir,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

Amicus Veritatis

Source: published transcription; *Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, No. 20 (Feb. 13, 1750), p. 3.¹⁰

⁸Orig., 'aimable'.

⁹Cf. John Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther*, Pt. III, ll. 389–93.

¹⁰Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:403–05.

From Samuel Brewster¹

Stoke Green, near Windsor
February 15, 1749/50

Reverend Sir,

Until I happily met with your *Appeal*² no one in the kingdom entertained stronger prejudices against you than myself, looking upon your principles and practices (by the report of all) to be the effects of popularity, and to have a tendency to the sapping the constitution of your mother the Church of England; which, I must say, though not of her communion, I should be sorry should be brought to pass by her own priest, or by her own people, who eat of her bread and drink at her cisterns. Such wretches are very Judases, though they preach like apostles, as it brings an odium upon our common Christianity when we see the clerical orders playing fast and loose with virtue and piety, disturbing the boundaries of decency and order for the sake of the loaves and fishes—that is, the mere transitory things of this life, which to enjoy, even *to fourscore years, is then but labour and sorrow—and we are gone*.

This is so evidently your own thoughts that I think we may here join issue. For I have had the pleasure to read your *Earnest Appeal*, which is both an humble performance and a seasonable publication, that demonstrates you to be in some proportion like the God whom you serve, a lover of souls and willing all men to be saved. Yet, reverend sir, you must give me leave to observe you carry the foible of *humanum est errare*³ with you. And when you should cry aloud and spare not, you put your lips to a pressure of silence, and with worldly judgment lay an arrest upon your pen. A preacher should be like an upright evidence at the bar, witnessing both to small and great the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Had St. John the Baptist acted with like caution with yourself he might have carried his head on his shoulders to the day of a natural death, and have escaped the long hand of power and of insinuation in the persons of Herod and Herodias. But to my point.

In defence of your own reputation, in answer to the charge that your godliness was to you an abundant gain, you very justly call it a well-devised objection,⁴ as it was a setting of you down to prove a negative that scarce admits of a demonstrative proof at all. But which, as you have so worthily and triumphantly refuted your malignant accusers, is a demonstrative proof to me that none can reproach your want of wit, memory, and a thorough knowledge of your duty, while you can draw such pictures of the defects and insufficiencies of all sects and societies of men amongst us—nay, even of⁵ individuals—with such glowing colours as to make a man blush, and repine at the evil of his ways. Yet when you warmly remonstrate against the several perjuries wilfully by many committed in these nations you, apparently to me, waive your censure of that negative oath professedly formed ‘to damn or starve all the clergy’.⁶ Is

¹JW addresses as Samuel Brewster, Esq. in reply, suggesting he was a lawyer. This may have been the barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, who had matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1686, aged 16, who was an active member of SPCK and friendly with nonjurors (though not overtly one himself), although this would make him about eighty in 1750. More probably he was the oldest in the next generation of this legal family. See JW's reply, Feb. 22, 1750, *Works*, 26:410–11.

²*An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, *Works*, 11:37–94.

³‘To err is human’. Brewster may have known that JW affirmed the principle ‘*Humanum est errare et nascire*’ in Sermon 39, *Catholic Spirit*, §I.4 (*Works* 2:84), published in Jan. 1750 as part of volume III of *Sermons on Several Occasions*. It is less likely he knew of the one earlier setting where JW invoked the phrase: *A Short Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland* (1749), §15, *Works*, 9:285.

⁴*Earnest Appeal*, §§87–88, *Works*, 11:83.

⁵Orig., ‘to’; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

⁶The purpose purportedly asserted by Philip Wharton, Comptroller of the Household of King William III, for requiring after the ‘Glorious Revolution’ an oath of all clergy abjuring allegiance to

your silence upon this conspicuous wickedness a preaching the whole will of God? I trow not.

I much admire your *Sermons* and *Divine Poems*;⁷ therefore if you could send Vol. 1, 2, 3, 4, of the first,⁸ Vol. 1, 2, of the second, in sheets, I have engaged our exemplary sister Margaret Groom to pay for them, and she will be careful to let me have them. One thing more and you shall be released. It is this viz., you see, though not of her communion, I have spoke with regard to the Church of England. As I cannot but love her, as she has furnished the world with many excellent divines, endowed with great charity for others, and the best Church under the Reformation, etc., etc. But glorious as she is, still, like the sun, she has her spots.

If that Christian love and candour that is visible in your writings reign but as fervently in your breast, I need to fear no rigorous censure for this tedious performance, with all its defects, natural and constitutional, in, reverend sir,

Your very humble servant,

[S.⁹] Brewster

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 250–52.¹⁰

James II.

⁷It is unclear whether Brewster means *Hymns and Sacred Poems* or *Moral and Sacred Poems*; in either case there were actually three volumes available of each.

⁸There is a mistake here, as only three volumes of *Sermons on Several Occasions* had been published by 1750.

⁹In publishing this letter many years later in *AM* either Wesley or his printer misread the ‘S.’ of Brewster’s signature as a ‘J’.

¹⁰Titled in *AM*: ‘From Mr. [S]. Brewster, a friendly Nonjuror’, and ‘Glory to God on high; peace, goodwill towards men!’. At the end JW added a note: ‘And could Mr. Brewster think I had no better work than to write against the Oath of Abjuration? Truly it never once came into my mind!’ Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:409–10.

From John Bennet¹

Bolton
March 6, 1750

Sir,

Your letters dated Jan. 23rd and Feb. 9th² I found at Chinley in my return from Yorkshire, in answer to which this is to acquaint you that as I did not copy the letter I sent into Ireland I cannot nor shall not speak at all until I receive a true copy from under John Haughton's own hand, which I expect in a short time. But whether what I asserted was true or false, I assure you my wife was no ways privy to. She was so far prejudiced in your favour that I verily believe, had I not been (by Providence) made thoroughly acquainted with your weakness and temptations, she would never have mentioned your name, *pro nor con*.

I wish you and your brother had been as wary from the beginning both in writing and talking as I have been; there had not been an occasion for so many mouths to have been opened against the truth. 'If you only, after having robbed me.'³ Pray, sir, wherein have I in the least defrauded you? I am surprised to find your eyes still closed, that you cannot see.

A copy of your letter wrote (in Adam Oldham's letter) to Christopher Hopper,⁴ is handed about. Some of the words are, 'If you do not *help* John Bennet, he will *hurt* you.' Oh what craft is here! It was hardly possible for you to miss your mark.

I suppose I may venture to tell you that you have hit the mark. Certainly you must foresee that Adam Oldham would read Christopher Hopper's letter, and I cannot (at present) but think you had a design to blacken my character amongst that people. Hereby you have raised a jealousy in the people that I am a dangerous man, not to be regarded. This will render me useless. I am asked at Manchester, 'What is there betwixt Mr. Wesley and you?' 'Surely something is amiss.'

I have hitherto been silent, and not once opened my mouth. But if you prosecute your design I think I shall be necessitated to relate naked facts. My prayer to God is that I may never be provoked to discover the nakedness of Israel to those whose heart and ears are open to everything that may make their road broader to destruction. The devil only will reap the advantage of an open controversy.

The Yorkshire societies want regulating and putting into order. I began to inspect the classes when I was there, but found the task too great unless I could have stayed a month or more. When I came into Cheshire, expecting to meet with Christopher Hopper and J. Brown,⁵ I found they were gone away in haste, and the people were neglected. I think here is great want of labourers in this part of the vineyard. I should be glad if you can send some of the brethren to assist me. My circuit enlarges daily, so that I shall have near two hundred miles to ride each fortnight. What think you of building a house at Manchester?

¹This is the first surviving letter from John Bennet to JW following Bennet's marriage to Grace (Norman) Murray in Oct. 1749. For a helpful overview of the flow of events leading up to this marriage, see Bufford W. Coe, *John Wesley and Marriage* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press), 29–35.

²See *Works*, 26:402–03 and 406–08.

³See *ibid.*, 403.

⁴Adam Oldham was one of the first Trustees of the Birchin Lane preaching-house in Manchester, though he fell afoul of the society in the 1750s. Christopher Hopper (1722–1802), who had just begun to itinerate for JW, would become one of his most trusted lay preachers. JW has apparently sent one of his common 'double letters'. The only record of JW's letter to Hopper is Bennet's transcription (see *Works*, 26:406). The portion of the letter to Oldham is not known to survive.

⁵This is likely John Brown of Newlands, Northumberland, who gradually transitioned from a supportive lay Methodist to listing as 'assisting in one place' in the 1747 *Minutes* (*Works*, 10:205), to an itinerant role through at least 1755 (see *ibid.*, 10:273).

The society is small, and at present very far from being established in the truth. There is certainly many more persons of late come to hear an exhortation than heretofore, and I doubt not but brother Hopper has been an instrument of great good to some. However, the people are much distracted, running on the Sabbath hither and thither as sheep without a shepherd. It is easy to foresee what the event will be.

Through the late commotions I have learned much, being determined to call no man 'Rabbi'. My desire and design is still to go on in the ways and work of God, who will certainly bring us through much tribulation to his much desired glory. My prayer to God is that both you and I may forget the things behind, and humbly go on to life eternal.

Adieu!

Source: Bennet's manuscript copy; MARC, Bennet, Letter-book.⁶

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 26:412–13.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
March 8, 1750

This morning, a quarter after five, we had another shock of an earthquake, far more violent than that of February 8. I was just repeating my text when it shook the Foundery so violently that we all expected it to fall upon our heads. A great cry followed from the women and the children. I immediately cried out, 'Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; for the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.'¹ He filled my heart with faith and my mouth with words, shaking their souls as well as their bodies.

The earth moved westward, then east, then westward again, through all London and Westminster. It was a strong and jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise, like that of distant thunder. Many houses were much shaken, and some chimneys thrown down, but without any further hurt.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Mar. 8, 1750 (*Works*, 20:323–24).

¹Ps. 46:2, 7.

From William Briggs¹

London
April 5, 1750

Very Dear Sir,

I should have acknowledged the receipt of yours of the 19th ult. before now,² had I received any assurance of your being safely landed on the Irish shore. The length of time since you left Bristol gives me great reason to believe and hope you are arrived, and therefore I take this opportunity of writing all that I apprehend may be agreeable to you or useful to myself.

But what shall I say? What am I that you should so freely write to me? O sir! I am indeed *now* hardly worth your notice, much less your more intimate acquaintance. *Once* I abidingly enjoyed a *spirit* and *life* which *now* is only as a transient guest! *Once* I was wrapped up in *true religion*; *now* I am open to the assaults of all the enemies of Christ Jesus—the world, the flesh, and the devil! Though I was *once* as I have hinted, yet my *ignorance* then made me unfit for your acquaintance. Though *now* by years and experience I have gained more *knowledge*, yet my want of primitive *faith* and *love* makes my acquaintance less desirable, because (as I fear) more unprofitable.

Satan, indeed, takes great pains to divide Christians, and when divided to keep them from uniting again. The Christian spirit cannot but unite; but when anything rules in the heart that is not of God, then there is a *disunion* in the once united hearts of Christian brethren. I often wonder why I have not a complete *union in spirit* with all that appear travelling in the narrow path. Some are wise, some are zealous, some are in great esteem, and yet I have only an *external union* with them. I cannot (though I earnestly wish it) feel that complete harmony as I do with some who are travelling, less observed, in the same important road. I love them, and I hope the best, and wait the *end*!

O sir! Perhaps in these things I am ignorant of Satan's devices. I fain would be *one spirit* with you, but I cannot! There's something within you that forbids the *union*. What is it? Or, is it the voice of Satan in me? God is my witness how I long to feel a happy union! I love, I honour, I reverence you for your great worth, wisdom, and high office (all the gifts of God!). Yet I have not that *fellowship* with you as I once had with Thomas Scipio.³ (This I mention as the truth of my heart, not by way of contemptuous comparison.) Why was this? He was truly simple, and deeply followed the leadings or operations of the Holy Ghost, so that, being brought in a measure to *experience* the renewal of his heart in the image of Christ Jesus, all his life and words were *simply* Christian. He seemed to have no aim but to attain a *pure heart* and abiding communion with God. (I speak of Thomas Scipio in the *past time* because it was then I was more intimate with him than now; though now I believe he's the same.) Here was nothing to forbid a *complete spiritual union*. I have often wished to be in *his* place.

But you, sir, though so far his superior in understanding and knowledge, I have never had a *complete union* with! I have loved your company, loved your conversation, admired your wisdom, have been greatly blessed under your discourses and exhortations, and yet (especially of late) we have been *two spirits*! You know what may have been a means of increasing the disunion *lately*. But in my calmest judgment I impute the cause partly to you, partly to myself, and partly to the devil.

¹William Briggs had been active at the Foundery since 1743, and was made a 'steward' of the Foundery School in 1746, attending the Conference of 1748 in that capacity. In 1749 he married Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. Vincent Perronet of Shoreham, with CW presiding.

²This letter of Mar. 19 is not known to survive, but JW had clearly displayed a sense of estrangement between the two of them, reflecting tensions between JW and CW as well as their close associates growing out of CW's role preventing JW's marriage to Grace (Norman) Murray in Oct. 1749.

³Thomas Scipio appears consistently as a member of a band for single men in the Foundery Band Lists for 1742–45.

1. I think you have the *knowledge* of all *experience*; but not the *experience* of all you *know*. You *know* (speaking with limitation) the heights and depths, the beginning and end of *true religion*. You *know* the fallen state of man, his inability to rise again, the freeness of redeeming love, and the mighty workings of the Holy Ghost. You *know* the *heaven* and *happiness* of man is to *feel* a change of nature, to enjoy deep communion with God, and to walk in love to all around. All these things you *know*, partly by the information of others, and partly from experience. But I think your *experience* is *buried* in your extensive *knowledge*. I think you *feel not abidingly* a deep sense of your own spiritual *weakness*, the *nearness* of Christ to save, or a *sweet communion* with God by the Holy Ghost. You have the *appearance* of all Christian graces; but they do not, I think, spring from a *deep experience* or change of *nature*. A *good nature* and great abilities will mimic *grace*; but *grace* is more than *outward*, it brings the soul to a *deep union* with God and its *fellow-Christians*. One *outward* proof, from which I think I think aright, is the want of *sympathy* in your discourses and conversation. Those who attend to an *inward work* more than to an *outward* pass through many weighty and grievous conflicts from the stubbornness of their own nature or the subtlety of the devil, so that often they go on *lamenting* and *weeping*, and yet trusting in God. When do you *feelingly* and with *tears* address yourself unto *such*?—Thus I have expressed what I think the cause in you.

2. That the cause, and perhaps the only cause, of my *disunion* with you may be in *myself* I cannot but allow. O sir! My ignorance, my weakness, my aptness to mistake is great! My judgment is often biased by circumstances too immaterial to form a determination by. And therefore often (yea, mostly) rather than be in danger of judging amiss I remain silently doubtful. I speak my mind, and leave the rest to God!

3. Satan's devices are many, subtle, and strange! How can we know them all, or escape being deceived by them? He puts light for darkness, and often makes a devil appear like an angel, so vice versa. Thus⁴ I think, they that *experience* most of the work of God in themselves are safest. The best *schemes* and *notions* he laughs at, but the *wisdom* of God revealed in the heart is above all his temptations. For want of growing in this *inward experience* I am so liable to be deceived, misguided, and betrayed!

Thus, dear sir, I have from the bottom of my heart answered the first paragraph of your letter. Though I cannot find that *deep union* with you as I have with some, yet I hope you will not think my heart is quite separate from you. Oh no! I desire to live and to die in fellowship with you. As I before hinted, so I say again, I love, honour, and reverence you very highly in the Lord. I know you are the servant of God. I cannot express the *union* I have with you in the work you are carrying on, and what I lament may be for my good. For had I *union* with you in the *spirit* and all *outward gifts*, I might be so puffed up as to run headlong to *destruction*. God is *wise* and I *submit*!

The affair of Spitalfields chapel is quite settled,⁵ and your brother preaches in it two or three times a week (with mornings), and administer[s] the sacrament Sunday mornings at five o'clock. Last Sunday we had about five hundred communicants. There is a great blessing attending the word preached in that place. Crowds of strangers resort to it daily. To God be all the glory!

I showed my father[-in-law Vincent] Perronet the latter part of your letter, which in reading he could not refrain from tears, and afterwards expressed a most passionate affection for you, with the deepest sorrow that you should have any room to think so hard of him. 'One is supposed to be quite fallen from grace, quite in the wrong. The other quite in the right! I wish it were so.' My father is impatient for an opportunity to answer for himself. *My* thoughts are far from what you apprehend. I never once imagined you quite fallen from grace, though I have sometimes been inclined to think you had received *loss*. Much less did I ever think Mr. Charles [Wesley] quite in the right. I have ever thought he was an

⁴Orig., 'This'.

⁵The Wesley brothers had taken a lease on a second Huguenot chapel that had been vacated by its French congregation, this one on Grey Eagle Street in Spitalfields. This gave another setting (besides West Street chapel) where they considered it proper to officiate over sacraments as well as preaching.

instrument in the hands of God in preventing an *evil*;⁶ though there was much *evil* in the *instrument*. In his account I observed where he eyed the glory of God he spoke and acted with *great wisdom*; but where *pride* and *passion* excited, his speech and behaviour was *raving*; and perhaps through the whole there was more of *nature* than *grace*—this makes his loss and sufferings to be great!

O that God would blot these things out of your remembrance! If they are still remembered with pain, they are spoke of in a contentious spirit, and what will be the end of it? It is almost forgotten by all of us who only mourn for the welfare of Zion.

This great city has been for some days past under terrible apprehensions of another *earthquake*. Yesterday thousands fled out of town, it having been confidently asserted by a dragoon that 'he had a revelation that great part of London and Westminster (especially) would be destroyed by an earthquake the 4th inst. between twelve and one at night.' The whole city was under direful apprehensions. Places of worship were crowded with frightened sinners, especially our two chapels, and the Tabernacle, where Mr. [George] Whitefield preached. Several of the classes came to their leaders and desired, weeping, that they would spend the night with them in prayer—which was done, and God gave them a blessing. Mr. [William] Cudworth, and about sixty with him, spent the night in supplication to God. Indeed all around was awful! Being not at all convinced of the prophet's mission, and having no call from any of my brethren, I went to rest at my usual time, believing I was safe in the hands of Christ, and likewise that by doing so I would be the more ready to rise to the preaching in the morning—which we *both* did. Praised be our kind *Protector*!

Poor Mr. Manning⁷ has desired me to give him a copy of your poem,⁸ which I cannot do without your permission—nor shall I to *anyone*. I think it would be well that whoever obtain copies should be under such prudential restrictions.

My dear wife⁹ returns you her sincere thanks for your kind remembrance of her, and very earnestly desires your prayers, being under great doubts and terrors at the approach of threatened calamities. O may God prosper and bless you with his divine presence in all your labours. Excuse or reprove all that is amiss in your weak, but affectionate charge, and obedient servant,

W. Briggs

P. S. Though crowds left the town on Wednesday night, yet crowds were left behind, multitudes of whom, for fear of being suddenly o'erwhelmed, left their houses and repaired to the fields or open places in the city. Tower Hill, Moorfields, but above all Hyde Park, were filled best part of the night with men, women, and children lamenting. Some with stronger imaginations than others (mostly women) ran crying in the streets, An earthquake! An earthquake! Such a distress perhaps is not recorded to have happened before in this careless city. Mr. Whitefield preached at midnight in Hyde Park. Surely God *will* visit this city! It will be a time of mercy to some. O may I be found watching!

no address, but signs of folding for delivery by hand.

Endorsement: by JW, 'W. Briggs, April 5, 1750 / a[nswere]d May 22'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/18.¹⁰

⁶I.e., the possibility of JW marrying Grace (Norman) Murray.

⁷The Rev. Charles Manning (1715?–99), vicar of Hayes, Middlesex (1738–56), was a friend of the Wesley brothers, attending the Conferences of 1747 and 1748.

⁸Briggs is referring to a poem (in the British Library) in JW's hand detailing events surrounding Grace Murray's marriage to John Bennett rather than to himself. The full manuscript is published in J. A. Leger, *John Wesley's Last Love* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1910), with the poem on pp. 98–105.

⁹Elizabeth (Perronet) Briggs (1728–1807).

¹⁰Slightly abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:414–17.

From the Rev. Gilbert Boyce¹

[Coningsby, Lincolnshire]

c. May 11, 1750

Reverend and Dear Sir,

[1]. You tell me, first: 'From the time you wrote to me first, I found my heart quite free and open towards you, and so I do still. Therefore I am glad to hear of you and from you at any time.' Just so it was, sir, and is with me toward you. When I first wrote to you no man could possibly have a greater love for another (so I think) than I had for you, although I had never seen you. I thought I could most gladly have spent my whole life in your company, because I took you to be a most ardent and sincere lover of Jesus Christ. That, sir, is the foundation of my love to you and to all good men, and will arise toward such in proportion to the manifestation of their love to him. For by *how much* any man loves the blessed Jesus, by *so much* do I love that man. And therefore at this day I have a hearty and unfeigned love for you.

[2]. Secondly, you say: 'The difference of opinion which is between us need not create any strangeness or coldness.' 'Tis true, sir, if it be mere difference of *opinion* which is between us, it need not and ought not. 'It does not' (you say) 'on my part. I love you no less, not only though you do not think as I do, but even though I have no expectation of your thinking otherwise till our eyes are opened in eternity.' Neither does it (that is, difference of opinion, rightly defined) on my part lessen my love to you. But here, sir, I must beg leave to observe what you have known longer than I—viz., there is a wide difference between a man's private opinion, strictly taken, and a plain and necessary article of faith; between speculation and practice; between things abstrusely and things plainly delivered to us in the Word of God; between what is necessary and what is not necessary to salvation.

[3]. Now you know, sir, whatsoever exists only in opinion, or is merely speculative; whatsoever is abstrusely delivered, and not plainly decided by the Word of God, either this way or that; whatsoever hath no tendency to stir up strife and contention, to make rents and schisms in the body of Christ; whatsoever leads to no evil practice, nor to the omission of any necessary duty, nor raises any false and dishonourable notions of God; in short, whatsoever is not necessary to salvation, though we differ in our private sentiments about such things, we may and ought to love one another no less than if we all thought exactly alike. But our difference is not only about mere *opinions*, whether right or wrong, but about those things also which the Scripture plainly and fully determines to one side only—and if this were not the case one of us must certainly be to blame for separating from the other. I believe when our eyes are opened in eternity we shall love one another much more than we do, or can do, now; because we shall then² be much more like unto our holy and ever blessed Jesus than we are *now*, or can be in this imperfect state.

[4]. Thirdly, 'God's first design is' (say you) 'to save you and me and every man round about us. That is, to renew us in his image, and then receive us to glory. To this immediate end of renewing each soul in love, and in the whole mind which was in Christ, he has pointed out several means, many of which we cannot use, at least not fully, without joining together. A company of men joining together for this purpose we are accustomed to call a church.' I believe all this is very just and right. To the end we may be saved, God has pointed out the sure, certain, and unalterable means thereof. *God has pointed them out.*

¹Rev. Gilbert Boyce (1712–1800) was pastor of the Coningsby Baptist church from 1738 until his death, and the mainstay of the Lincolnshire General Baptist Association. In 1748 he entered into a friendship with JW, and a vigorous debate over baptism that carried on for two decades. In 1770 Boyce published some of their letters in this debate. This letter is a reply to a letter of JW that does not survive, but can be partially reconstructed by quotations in the reply; cf. *Works*, 26:418–19. Boyce characterizes his printed reply as 'only an abstract of what I sent to him many years ago in manuscript'. For ease of cross-reference, paragraph numbers have been added. See Clive Jarvis, 'Gilbert Boyce: General Baptist Messenger and Opponent of John Wesley', *Baptist Quarterly* 39 (2002): 244–59.

²'Then' added in errata.

We are to look well about us, and take particular care to *use* them, and in the *same manner*, too, which he has pointed out. We must not form schemes of our own, and like the Jews of old, *set aside the commandments of God to keep our own tradition*.

[5]. Dear sir, take great care what you do. Look on every side [of] you. Be sure you take right steps. Do *you* make use of the means *exactly* as God hath pointed them out? Do you vary in nothing? Do you follow Christ as Paul did? Are you worthy of *praise* for 'keeping the ordinances as' they are 'delivered to us in the Holy Scriptures' (1 Cor. 11:2)? Do you take the same equal steps in forming your societies as the apostles took in forming theirs? If not, you are wrong. There is but 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Spirit, one body' (that is, one church), 'one hope, and but one God' (Eph. 4:4–6). Are you sure you are a member of this 'one body' or church? When was you made so? After what manner was you so made? Have you been baptized into this 'one faith' of this 'one Lord'? Are you sure you have received this 'one Spirit', by which you are united to this 'one body' or church, of which *Christ is Lord and Head*? When did you receive this 'one Spirit'? How, or after what manner did you receive it? Did you receive it by 'prayer and laying on of hands' by an authorized person? If you have received the Spirit of God, how comes it to pass, sir, you do not act according to his directions? For can it be justly and rightly concluded that he directs you in a different way and manner from the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? It cannot. If you were wholly directed by the Spirit of God you would, I am sure, do several things you do not, and leave undone several things you do. Remember your own words: 'Can any steward of the mysteries of God be found faithful if he change any part of that sacred *depositum*? No: he can abate nothing, he can soften nothing, etc.'³ Dear sir, it is incontestably evident that even you yourself continue in the change of some things contained in that sacred *depositum*, the Holy Scripture. Your own practice contradicts your own words, and by it you make yourself that very person whom you condemn. God hath pointed out the true and right means to bring men into community one with another, and you have pointed out others; some of *his* you have taken away, and placed some of *your own* instead of them. Whom are we to obey, God or man?

[6]. When I consider and reflect upon what you have said of the ministers and people of the Church of England, having represented them more like the 'synagogue of Satan'⁴ than the pure and spotless spouse of Christ, the 'church of the first-born which are written in heaven' (Heb. 12:23), I stand astonished at your present conduct! Be pleased to review your own words in your *Farther Appeal*,⁵ especially where you are speaking to those whom you call your 'brethren, and priests and prophets of the Lord'. You say, 'Can such as you be said to honour or fear God, any more than those spoken of by Malachi? May not God complain these priests have violated my law and profaned my holy things? Yea, whensoever you presume with those unhallowed hands to touch the mysteries of God, whensoever you utter his name or his word with those unhallowed lips, do you put an effectual difference between them⁶ even in the most solemn office of our religion? At the table of the Lord, do you take care to separate the precious from the vile? Is it not for want of your making this difference, as well as for many other abominations, that with regard to some among us (how many God knoweth) that scripture is now also fulfilled: "His watchmen are blind, they are ignorant, they cannot understand".' And then you go on to speak of other abominations which are found among them,⁷ and further observe (speaking of the want of good order, true Christian discipline) 'all are jumbled together without any care or concern of yours'.

³*Farther Appeal*, Pt. III, III.2 (*Works*, 11:291).

⁴Rev. 3:9.

⁵In a footnote Boyce cited 'p. 48, 49, 51, 113, 127', i.e., *Farther Appeal*, Pt. II, II.32–33, 34, Pt. III, II.[16], 32, and in the text that follows he quotes passages to be found in *Works*, 11:243, l. 35 to p. 244, ll. 12, 25–29; pp. 246–47; p. 301, ll. 16–17; p. 313, ll. 32–37.

⁶'Between them' added in the Errata.

⁷Orig., 'you'; changed to 'them' in Errata.

Meaning your 'brethren the priests and prophets of the Lord'. And so you say, 'Does the Church of England gain either honour, or strength, or blessing by such wretches as these calling themselves her members? By ten thousand drunkards, whoremongers, and commons swearers? Nay ought she not immediately to spew them out? To renounce all fellowship with them?' Yes certainly. Then all good men would love her and greatly esteem her.

[7]. You do separate from them in your societies and private bands, and yet not at the table of the Lord. Can this be justified? How, sir? Is it more necessary to separate from them in your societies than at the table of the Lord, that solemn part of our religion? How do you prove it, sir? Can you write and preach so much against them, and actually separate from them, and yet consistently join with them? Really, sir, this is such a piece of conduct as far surpasseth my knowledge. 'Tis certain we may not do evil that good may come; the highest pretences all put together can never justify such conduct.

[8]. What a dull, dark, black, ugly, deformed picture have you drawn of those whom you call the 'priests and prophets of the Lord', and the ten thousand other members of your church! And were you to paint her more ugly (were that possible) you could never make her appear, by such dull colours you have laid upon her, to be the amiable and beautiful spouse of our most glorious and everlasting King, the dearly, the best beloved Son of God.

[9]. It would be happy for us if there were no difference in the articles of our faith, and much more so if there were none in our religious opinions. However, this is certain: God's Word is the rule by which we are to form and regulate both the one and the other. To that we ought to pay the strictest regard. That alone is the rule for the trial of all doctrines and spirits. The rule by which every man to whom it is given must be tried at the last day.

[10]. I have in the small course of my reading met with the saying of a papist who did not scruple to acknowledge that 'if the Scripture alone must be the rule of faith and practice, we must all, both papists and Protestants, cross the cudgels to the Anabaptists.'⁸ Such an opinion had that author of the wrong-named Anabaptists walking nearer to the Scripture plan than any other denomination of Christians. And if what you say be true, that the 'Scripture is the only rule and the sufficient rule', the *baptized Christians* (so I choose to call them) are the only people who do most strictly adhere to it in gathering and governing their churches. Not that I will pretend to justify the conduct of everyone among them, any more than you will everyone among your societies.

[11]. But you tell me, fourthly, 'There are many things in the Church of England which you like, and some which you dislike.' As to your liking or disliking, *that*, you know sir, proves nothing, either that *this* is right or *that* is wrong. But you tell us somewhere in your writings that you 'prove all your doctrines by Scripture and reason'. Now, sir, if you will prove by Scripture that all those things which you like in the Church of England ought to be observed and practised, you will give me much satisfaction.

[12]. But again, you say, 'I have not found any community who (in my apprehension) come so near the Scripture plan, or so nearly answer the original design of a church, as the people called Methodists.' But pray, dear sir, what doth this prove? Not that the Methodists are the one true church of Christ. Indeed, you do not positively say they are, but speak very modestly, and far from that overbearing confidence with which some of your followers have spoken; for I do not know whether I ever heard any people (who have less to say upon several things) more positive and dogmatical in my life. But *you*, sir, only say 'in my apprehension', which I take to be a lowly expression, much like that of one of the greatest men we ever heard of, namely St. Paul, when he says, 'I think I have the Spirit of God' (1 Cor. 7:40).

[13]. 'The Spirit of God', of and concerning which I have heard some of your people speak with all that strength of assurance as if they were able to give as clear demonstrations of their having received it as the apostles themselves, frequently quoting those Scriptures which can refer to nothing short of

⁸Boyce's footnote: 'Doctor Bale, in his end to controversy.' I.e., Thomas Bayly, *An End to Controversy between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Religions* (Doway, 1654). Boyce had surely come across the quote in a secondary source.

miraculous operations. Not that they pretended to any such measures, but generally disclaimed everything of that nature, insisting chiefly on the sanctifying influences of it, by which the heart and life are changed and purified. As undoubtedly every other real Christian has so received it as well as they, though they do not speak of it in the same language, nor choose to say so much about their having received it as they do—believing that where ‘the fruit of the Spirit’ really are, they will much more loudly declare their great author than all they can speak with their tongues.

[14]. But what I particularly remark upon their bringing such texts to prove their having received the Holy Ghost is how sadly they are mistaken in, and how far from the true knowledge of, many passages of the Holy Scripture, bringing it down to their own *taste* and weak apprehensions. I have heard one say, ‘I am sure I have received the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is *within me now*.’ And another, ‘I have been *baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire*.’ I believe many of them do not know the meaning of the words, but too hastily run away with a mere sound, without staying to take with them the true and proper meaning of them.

[15]. I remember you tell us in one of your journals that among your people at Bristol you ‘found a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own imaginations on the will of God, and that not written but impressed on their hearts. If these impressions’ (say you) ‘be received as the rule of action instead of the written word, I know nothing so wicked or absurd, but we may fall into, and that without remedy.’⁹ I believe you may find in other places at this day such a spirit possessing many of them. I could speak largely of what I have seen and known. And must needs say with you that if their imaginations are to be received as the rule of action instead of the written word, ‘I know nothing indeed so wicked or absurd but they may fall into.’ What therefore you have so justly observed in some of them, I know by real experience to be true of others of them. And when I have confined them to the written word, they have either made no reply or acknowledge the truth, and yet even afterwards have immediately returned to their former notions, as if they were ashamed of their confession, or afraid to stand to it any longer; and then generally had some quibble or other to evade the force of an argument when they knew not what to say. Often times appearing to be ‘wise in their own conceits’.¹⁰

[16]. Upon the whole I may safely and without erring conclude that, let a man pretend to what he will, ’tis certain he can never be led by the *Spirit* of God who is not led by the *Word* of God. For the Word and Spirit are one; they agree in one; they speak the same thing. Whoever therefore opposes and contradicts the Scripture opposes and contradicts the Spirit. The Spirit doth not say and unsay, hath not said one thing by the apostles and another by the Methodists. No, no: he cannot be guilty of self-contradictions. Therefore whoever are led by the Scriptures are led by the Spirit, for the Scriptures are the divine breathings of the Spirit of God. And whatever *secret whispers* anyone may pretend to have as an *overplus*, if those whispers contain anything in them which is contrary to the express and plain-spoken words of the Scriptures, they are not the whispers of God’s Spirit, but of the devil. Every man therefore ought to be very careful how he entertains a whispering spirit.

[17]. By this you see, sir, I am as far from enthusiasm as you are. I wish everyone who is called a Methodist was as far from being an enthusiast as I am. I hope you will not be displeased with this digression, which I was so easily and readily led into by observing the wide difference between your way of speaking and some of your professed followers, who have not, it is evident, yet rightly learned that important lesson, *humility*. I now return just to observe again.

[18]. You say you ‘have not found any community who come so near the Scripture plan, etc., as the people called Methodists’. Perhaps you have not searched so universally as to be acquainted with all societies or communities. Have you a full knowledge of the people I mentioned above, the ‘baptized Christians’? Do you know the principles they profess to be governed by? Are you acquainted with the foundation upon which they as a church are built? If you fully know these things, sir, I desire you to tell me wherein the Methodists exceed them. And though you apprehend they are nearest the Scripture plan,

⁹Boyce’s footnote: ‘Journal from 1739 to 1741, p. 93’—i.e., July 13, 1741, *Works*, 19:205.

¹⁰Cf. Prov. 26:12.

you have not given me one Scripture proof, so that at present it rests only upon your apprehension, which is too weak a foundation for me (whatever it may be for others) to build my faith upon. You have therefore all that work to do I desired of you.

[19]. Dear sir, let me entreat you to speak plainly either one way or other. Prove to me, sir, by the Scriptures, that the Church of England, or the Methodists if you like it better, are rightly gathered and brought into a church state, and rightly governed; or else tell me the Scripture does not prove it. For either it does or it does not. If it does, then you can do it too; if it does not, then do you frankly own it, and acknowledge that you have been mistaken, and so return all the glory to God and your Redeemer.

[20]. And now I conclude this with assuring you, sir, that although I have spoken plainly, yet never angrily. For it is all in love, and nothing else but love to you and those that walk with you. And with the most upright view to honour and exalt our most holy and ever-blessed Lord and Lawgiver, Jesus Christ, whose laws and ordinances I esteem infinitely above the best human schemes in the world.

[21]. You may easily perceive, sir, I am quite free, open, and simple, without art or craft. I am for honesty and plain dealing. Let who will choose the dark, I am for broad daylight. I wish I knew how to choose my words to convince you that I am all that I pretend to be—honest and sincere before God, full of love and tender affection to you and yours.

[22]. The reason of my writing thus is I find it hard to convince some men of my really good intention. If I speak in a soft and gentle manner, I am suspected a dissembler, flatterer, or hypocrite; if plain and close to the point as I can, I am censured as rigid and uncharitable. So that in this bigotted and censorious age one hardly knows how to speak. But let any man think or say what he will of me, I know whose I am and whom I serve. 'By grace I am what I am.'¹¹ And no man's good word makes me better, and no man's bad word makes me worse—for what I am in the sight of God, *that only* I am.

[23]. Pray God bless *you*, and make you to increase in the 'knowledge of his will, and in all true judgment; that you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.' Amen. (Phil. 1:9–11).

Source: published transcription; Boyce, *Serious Reply*, 5–15.¹²

¹¹Cf. 1 Cor. 15:10.

¹²Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:419–24.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon¹

[Donington Park, Castle Donington, Leicestershire]
c. June 18, 1750

I have written to my worthy friend Dr. [Philip] Doddridge, to assist in obtaining a pious, sensible man, one whose whole soul is alive to God and the concerns of eternity, and I have to solicit your assistance, my good friend, in aiding me in this matter. Amongst your very numerous connections you may hear of someone suited to the situation,² which is of great importance as he will have four churches open to him, where the light of divine truth may be widely extended amongst a people hungering and thirsting after the bread of life.

Do aid me in this business with your willing services, your prayers, and your advice. I am but a weak instrument, and need the supporting care of my great Advocate every minute of my existence. Though I am hardly able to hold my pen, yet I am willing, thanks be to God, to be employed in any way that may conduce to the good of others. Pray for me, my good friend, that if it be the will of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, I may be strengthened for the work which is before me, and that which he has appointed for me on earth. I feel the flame still burning within me—the ardent longing to save sinners from the error of their ways. O how does the zeal of others reprove me! O that my poor cold heart could catch a spark from others and be as a flame of fire in the Redeemer's service! Some few instances of success which God, in the riches of his mercy, has lately favoured me with have greatly comforted me during my season of affliction. And I have felt the presence of God in my soul in a very remarkable manner, particularly when I have prayed for the advancement of his kingdom amongst men in the world. This revives me, and if God prolongs my poor, unprofitable life, I trust it will ever be engaged in one continued series of zealous active services for him and the good of precious immortal souls.

Adieu my most worthy friend. Let me hear from you soon, and give me some tidings to rejoice my heart.

Your faithful friend,

S. Huntingdon

Source: published transcription; Seymour, *Huntingdon*, 1:73–74.

¹This letter is known only from Seymour's published transcription. He dates it as June 28, 1746 in his first edition, and revises in the second edition (1840) to June 18, 1746. He describes it in both editions as addressed to CW. Whatever the correct day of the month, Seymour's suggested year is clearly wrong. This letter was on the occasion of Lady Huntingdon assigning Rev. George Baddelley as rector of Markfield, but seeking a good curate to assist him, so that Baddelley could also continue as her domestic chaplain. According to official records, Baddelley (1725–92) took his BA from Oxford, Pembroke in 1747, was ordained priest in 1749, and appointed rector of Markfield in 1750, retaining that living (with others added), till his death. Seymour's suggested recipient of the letter is also almost certainly wrong. Lady Huntingdon was sporadically in contact with JW during this period, trying to build relationships; see JW to CW, Sept. 15, 1748, *Works*, 26:330–31. By contrast her relationship with CW had been severed by the Elizabeth Story accusations in late 1744, and was not restored until June 1751; see CW, MS Journal, June 1, 1751.

²The person who became Baddelley's curate in 1750 was Thomas Richards, who had recently married and left his position as a master at Kingswood School.

From the Rev. Richard Lloyd

Rathcormack
July 30, 1750

Reverend and Dear Sir,

At dinner after our last visitation a complaint was made to our bishop by some of the clergy of this diocese about your preaching in my church. I was not present, but what passed upon it you will fully understand by the copy of three letters which I send you. The first was one I received from our archdeacon; the second, a letter I wrote to the bishop on that occasion; and the third the bishop's answer to me. I did not think it necessary to write to the archdeacon, and I shall always have as little to do as possible with wrong-headed men. I offend none of them, from the greatest to the least. But I shall never be led by their schemes, nor suffer any of them to prescribe rules to me. This was one thing I had in view to signify plainly to the bishop, to whom I wrote just as everything came into my mind, having first called on God to direct me, and that he would not suffer me to be awed by the fear of men.

I pray God to preserve you long in health, and in his service; to give you always that peace which the world cannot disturb, or take away from you; and to direct, succeed, and establish all your undertakings. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother,

Richard Lloyd

No. I. *The Archdeacon's Letter to me.*

Reverend Sir,

I am commanded by my Lord Bishop to deliver to you his order—viz., that you do not suffer any person to preach in your church who is not a licensed preacher of this or the neighbouring diocese.

As I was the nearest clergyman to you, I suppose, he thought it proper to send the order by me; and am, sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

Michael Davies¹

No. II. *My Letter to the Bishop, wrote some few days after, while I waited to gain a clearer information.* [N.B. The facts on which I ground anything in this letter are well attested, and I know well the people of Cloyne.]

Rathcormack
July 4, 1750

My Lord,

I received a letter from Archdeacon Davies, since our last visitation, to the following purpose, namely, that your lordship had ordered that I should not suffer any person to preach in my church who was not a licensed preacher of this or the neighbouring diocese. I was at first in some doubt what the reason of this particular order with regard to me should be, but the archdeacon afterwards said to others that it was on account of my permitting Mr. John Wesley to preach in my church. And I could easily conclude, as your lordship had not mentioned anything of it to me at the visitation, that it arose from a complaint of some of your lordship's clergy. I was

¹Michael Davies (1694–1779), was vicar of Aghinagh and Archdeacon of Cloyne.

again more strongly confirmed in this opinion from what I lately heard, that Mr. Henning, the Register, had taken the freedom to say that if I had stayed to dinner after the visitation (which, indeed, I could not well do, having left my wife in a dangerous way) I should have been severely roasted by the clergy. Had I expected this I would at all hazards have waited for it. I am sorry to find that any of the clergy should be disposed to censure. But this is a temper which too much prevails. I have done nothing but what others in other parishes have done, and do daily. I should not, therefore, be either ashamed or afraid to appear before those clergy who took upon them to arraign me behind my back. I dare say they would not have attempted it before my face; or if they should, I hope I should be able to defend myself. I am known to be of a meek temper, but I should not still too easily suffer myself to be rid by others. I owe no ecclesiastical obedience or regard to any but your lordship, and I shall always utterly despise, as quite unworthy of any notice, all aspiring, assuming, and self-conceited persons.

My chief, or rather only, concern is to acquit myself to your lordship as to the accusation brought and received against me. I confess that Mr. Wesley has preached (though seldomer than has been wished) in my church. And I thought that a Fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, who is admitted to preach before the university there, and has preached in many churches in London, and other parts of England, as also in Dublin, might be permitted to preach here also. But it is now objected that he is a Methodist, so called, and at the head of lay preachers, and that few clergy do now suffer him to preach in their churches. This last very much contributed to introduce field- and lay-preaching too; and much good, in reforming thousands of habitual and profligate sinners, and bringing converts to our church, has attended it; and if it is disliked the direct way to put a stop to it would be to remove the cause which first occasioned it. Mobbing and ridicule will do no good, but may do much harm. The mobs at Cork, and some other places of this kingdom, have produced the following consequences: they have obliged those people to seek the protection of the government, which undoubtedly they will have; several also of good fortunes, to fly the persecution, are now preparing to settle in England; and, from the hand which some of the clergy are supposed to have had in encouraging it, numbers of others resolve to quit our church. At this rate we may in a short time have only the vile and refuse left with us. Religion is now, my lord, at a very low ebb in the world, and we can scarce see the outward form of it remaining. To convince your lordship of this you need only take a survey of the parish of Cloyne, and consider how many real Christians (exclusive of your own family) you have there—I mean, of those who know and have a true Christian faith, and practice agreeable to it. Perhaps not one. But as many as you can suppose in that parish may equally be presumed in others of a like extent and number of people.

This is an awful matter, and requires our serious thoughts. But as corrupt as the world is, it is thought better that the devil should continue to reign than Mr. Wesley should preach, especially in a church. For my part, as I found his discourses edifying, I think I could not answer it to God, with regard to the people committed to my care, if I should oppose him. What hurt any other clergyman could receive by his preaching I cannot apprehend; or why he should be excluded for holding private religious assemblies, which have been much recommended by many worthy men, and have a manifest tendency to promote piety. The charge of enthusiasm I would choose to forbear mentioning, because it is not only ignorantly brought against him but in ridicule also of all operations of the Holy Ghost in the souls of men; and I am surprised to see some zealots of the doctrine of the Trinity so much oppose it.

I shall no longer trouble your lordship with this matter. I am quite disposed to pay your lordship all due canonical obedience. But I would beg always to receive your lordship's orders to me from yourself, because I shall then understand them and be at no doubt. For how can I know whether any person is at any time commissioned to deliver a message from your lordship, or might not mistake in the manner of delivering it, or might not perhaps give some turn designedly to it? I am, by the order Mr. Davies sent me, required to suffer none to preach in this church who are not licensed in this or the neighbouring diocese. And so all others of other dioceses are excluded. And which of the neighbouring dioceses (whether Cork, Waterford, or Limerick, which

all bound this) is implied, is not explained to me. I am, my lord,
Your lordship's most dutiful and obedient servant,

Richard Lloyd

No. III. *The Bishop's Answer to me.*

Cloyne
July 4, 1750

Reverend Sir,

I have that opinion of your prudence that I doubt not you will be cautious whom you admit into your pulpit; and that you will avoid doing or countenancing anything that may offend your brethren of the clergy, or give occasion to mobs and riots. I am, reverend sir,

Your faithful brother and humble servant,

G. Cloyne²

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 252–56 (corrected from the errata).³

²George Berkeley was Bishop of Cloyne from 1734–53.

³Titled in *AM*: 'An odd occurrence in Ireland.' Republished in *Works*, 26:435–37.

From John Nelson

Birstall
August 29, 1750

Dear Father in the Lord,

This with my kindest love, and earnest prayers that God may prosper his work in your hands more abundantly, and make your own soul as a watered garden.

The Lord hath done great things in these parts, both in converting, and in finishing the work of faith with power. We have had three died in triumph lately. The first was a woman at Baildon. She was justified about three years ago. She diligently attended all the ordinances of God as long as she was able. In the beginning of her illness (which was consumption) she had many conflicts and temptations. But for about ten weeks before her decease she was a wonder to all who saw her, being constantly praising God and telling what he had done for her soul, and exhorting all she saw to seek the Lord while he might be found. In this happy state she left this howling wilderness.

2. The next was a woman of Halifax. Several of our friends visited her during the time of affliction, and were likewise present when she died. They all testify that she was as great a witness for God as ever they had known. She had experienced the pardoning mercy of God about two years.

3. The other was Mr. Farrer. He died in the 73rd year of his age. He had been a man of an unblemished character, and was looked upon by all who knew him to be one of the best Christians in that parish. He was intimate with the minister, who frequently lodged at his house, and took no small pains to prejudice him and his family against the Methodists. And he had prevailed so far that Mr. Farrer would not come to the funeral of Mr. Ellison, although he was a near relation and his next door neighbour, because he heard that I was to preach on that occasion. But it pleased God to strike those of his family who were at the funeral with convictions, so that his wife, two sons, and a daughter, prevailed upon him to hear for himself, as they had done.

The first time he came I was preaching upon our Lord's opening the eyes of blind Bartimeus.¹ When I had done he cried out, 'I have been blind for threescore and ten years, and I knew it not; but have always thought that I was right till this day.' From this time he and all his family attended the ministry of the word at all opportunities, and he received a sense of the love of God two years before his decease, while Mr. Merrick² was preaching. Since that time he was remarkably steady, full of good works, and ready to confess his former blindness on all occasions, and likewise to declare the riches of God's love to him and his family in all companies. He died of the gravel. He was confined about three weeks, so that I visited him several times, to the great satisfaction of my own soul. In the most racking pain he still continued to praise the Lord. At one of my visits two of his brothers were there. He declared to them, 'I had lived to old age before I was acquainted with the design of God in sending me into the world, or the reason why our blessed Lord took human nature upon him, and died upon the cross.' And added, 'The Lord called me after the eleventh hour, and has rewarded me as if I had borne the burden and the heat of the day.' With tears of joy he cried out, 'What could the Lord have done more for me and my family than he hath done, for he had not left one of us in Egyptian darkness, but hath made us all witnesses that he is a sin-forgiving God. O my brothers, seek, that you may find him to be such to you.'

He desired me to preach at his funeral, and said, 'It may be a means of stirring up some to seek salvation.' I fulfilled his request, and preached upon these words to a great multitude, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'.³ We certainly had a glorious time. The Lord was powerfully present. O may we all praise God for such witnesses of his mercy and love, and so copy their example that our last end may be like theirs.

¹See Matt. 10:46–52.

²I.e., Thomas Meyrick.

³Rev. 14:13.

We are now building our preaching-house, so that I am employed all the day in hewing stone, and at night in calling upon sinners to repent and believe the gospel.

I am,

Your unworthy son in the gospel,

John Nelson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 302–03.⁴

⁴Abridged version published in *Works*, 26:438

From [John Nelson?]

Birstall
September 7, 1750

Reverend Sir,

John Jane was never well after walking from Epworth to Hainton on an exceeding hot day, which brought blood from him downwards, and threw him into a fever. When I talked with him, he was much comforted, and said he had no doubt of the pardon of his sins. He seemed not to have the least anger against those who wanted¹ charity towards him. Alice Shadforth² says that they every day talked together of their experience, and he always experienced the love of God; that he daily retired to pray in private, and often in the day; and that they also oftentimes a day prayed together. On Friday, August 24, about six in the evening, as he sat in the chair by the fire-side, he fetched a great sigh and never spoke more. His last words were 'I have found the love of God in Christ Jesus'. He continued to the same time on Saturday, during which time he never contracted his brow or moved his eyes, but seemed to smile, like a child, and passed away, without the least motion of complaint, to paradise.

All his clothes, linen, and woollen, stockings, hat, and wig are not thought sufficient to answer the funeral charge, which is one pound seventeen shillings and three-pence. All the money he had was one shilling and four-pence. But he had food enough, seeing food, raiment, and a good conscience were all he wanted below.

I am, reverend sir,
Yours, etc.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 257.³

¹I.e., lacked.

²Apparently Alice Shadforth (c. 1683–1779), of Upperthorpe, see *JW Journal*, July 11, 1779, *Works*, 23:140.

³Titled in *AM*: 'A Short Account of the Death of Mr. John Jane, a Methodist Preacher'. JW had published an abridged form earlier in *Journal*, Sept. 8, 1750 (*Works*, 20:360).

From Thomas Butts

[London]

October 31, 1750

Dear Sir,

You some time since expressed a satisfaction at the state of the society, which in general I hope there may be reason for. Nevertheless, I fear there are some evils in it, necessary to be looked into. One of the greatest, as appears to me and many others, is the disregard of some persons to pay their just debts.

There doubtless are persons of honest principles who cannot pay their debts. But I think unless people are poor indeed, they may in a long season, by small sums at a time, pay something. And supposing they can pay nothing, is it not the duty of every person, after being frequently sent to, to wait upon his creditor, acknowledge his debt, and promise to pay when in his power? But it seems this is too great condescension to be expected from those who are called brethren. Nay, they look upon it as an affront to be sent after on this occasion, and a person shall be painted as a monster for sending to require what is due to him.

I believe it might be of service if you would mention how you think people (as Christians) ought to live who are indebted to others, and who, according to their present manner of living, have no prospect of every paying them. I remember you once spoke with great pleasure of a person who, being much enthralled in debt, from a principle of morality (not Christianity) had brought himself from one degree of self-denial to another, so as to live upon bread and water. I would not take upon me to say that ever Christianity requires this of any one. But can honest persons indulge themselves in strong beer and tea, when small beer and water gruel are much cheaper, and full as wholesome? Or can they justly deck themselves in any other than the very coarsest apparel?

Not long ago I sent to a person for some money he has owed these three or four years. He sent me for answer, 'That as cambrics were now forbidden, he wanted his money to buy muslin for his wife's caps; and, therefore, could not pay me.' I shall leave you to judge, sir, whether there was either honesty or modesty in this answer.

I called upon a widow for a debt that had been owing long. She sent me word she had nothing to do with her husband's debts. I confess I could not help being a little surprised some time after at seeing her dressed in the attire of a lady; in her silk gown and capuchin, her hair flowing down her neck, and her ruffles dangling to her knees. Now sir, I would gladly be informed that, supposing the law has cleared this person, whether she is not bound in equity and conscience (as a Christian, and as a member of our society) to use all manner of frugality and self-denial in order, if possible, to pay the creditors what is owing them?

You have justly discouraged the society from going to law with each other. But unless you at the same time take great care that dishonest members be expelled thence, the society will be a sanctuary for them. And it will be a very great hardship on the creditor that he must not make use of lawful means to recover his right, and at the same time has no probability of getting it any other way.

Dear sir, give me leave to say that it would be for the glory of God, and the good of the society in general, if practical religion was more insisted on, and men made deeply sensible that strict morality is but one branch of it. And that if we are destitute of this outward mark, all our pretensions are vain. We are still in our sins, without hope, and without God in the world. And when things of this kind are plainly made to appear, let such members be expelled the society. Let such stumbling-blocks be removed out of the way, and only received again upon their appearing to be truly sensible of their error and promising amendment. If our number should be hereby lessened, yet we shall not be such hinderances to each other, nor give such occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully. We shall then discover that we are not Christians in word only, but in deed and in truth, and by our good works glorify our heavenly Father. And those who are offenders, and perhaps are now thoughtless concerning these things, may haply be brought to consider and amend their ways, when they find they are no longer connived at, but taken proper notice of, by those who are over them in the Lord.

I pray God bless all your endeavours, and hope you will excuse this freedom, from
Your unworthy servant,

T. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 258–60.¹

¹Titled in *AM*: 'The Duty of all to pay their Debts'.

From Bishop George Lavington¹

[Exeter]

c. November 1, 1750

Sir,

As you make so considerable a figure in the ensuing discourse, you may claim a sort of right to this address, which at length waits upon you (as the former on Mr. [George] Whitefield) unstained with the too common daub of flattering; and yet paying due regard to your merits.

My third part of this comparison was ready for the press above a twelve month ago, but the publication was delayed on account of your fifth journal and your letter to the author of *The Enthusiasm, etc.*, both of which saw the light about the same time. This, with various other interpretations, has prevented my earlier appearance, and likewise occasioned no small additions.

You have acquainted us, 'that your journals are but extracts from your larger diary; it not being your design to relate all particulars'.² The greater is the pity, say I. What a curiosity has the world lost!

It is matter of some concern too that, in general, your journals came not out sooner after the facts which they relate; and particularly your fifth, which was published in the winter 1749 and relates matters from September 3, 1741 to October 27, 1743.³ So that seven or eight years intervene. But for this, no doubt, you have good reasons. But you appeal here to facts, and bring your evidence which might have been brought immediately at the distance of many years, which must be allowed to be a curious and prudent step. For some of the parties concerned may probably have died in the interval—many circumstances (as a sound judgment and good memory don't often meet) may have been forgotten by your disciples. In which cases you are, therefore, under no danger of being contradicted, and may relate as little or as much as you please. Characters of persons and a variety of incidents may have been so altered that after a course of years you may find it proper to change your note, and thereby be guilty of fewer inconsistencies. Prophecies especially may have been uttered in ecstatic or raging fits, of things shortly to be fulfilled. And then it is perfectly right to wait the event, lest want of accomplishment should occasion shame. Prophecy (as well known) is one of the necessary ingredients of enthusiasm. And the predictions, if put off to a remote event, would not serve an impostor's purpose. His followers are too impatient and eager to stay; they must be struck with something near at hand. And yet the precise time, day or year of it, must [not] be too punctually mentioned for fear of disappointment. Your acquaintance, Madam Bourignon,⁴ was so imprudent as to fix 'the millennium, or Day of Judgment, within her own days, and so near that within three years we should see the effect of it'. She has been dead about seventy years, and thereby proved herself a false prophetess. You, sir, have been, for some years, a dealer-out of the same prophetic warnings: 'Behold! The day of the Lord is coming, At this very hour the Lord is rolling away our reproach.'⁵ As your reproach is not beginning to be rolled away, much less appears any full completion; haply you have obtained an inhibition, or have power to adjourn the day of the Lord, from time to time, at your pleasure. By such artifices you may hope to escape the snare into which a brother

¹George Lavington (1684–1762) was elevated to Bishop of Exeter in 1746. He became one of the leading episcopal opponents of Methodism, particularly with his three part *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared*. For background to this letter, see Colin Haydon, 'Bishop George Lavington of Exeter (1684–1762), and *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared*', *Southern History* 37 (2015): 60–85. Since this letter is a preface to his book, it uses inverted italics. But the fluctuation between italicized and unitalicized text is so frequent that it has been ignored in this transcription.

²JW, *Journal*, extract 1, Preface, §1, *Works*, 18:121.

³*Works*, 19:226–351.

⁴Antoinette Bourignon (1616–80).

⁵*Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, §99, *Works*, 11:89.

Methodist-teacher fell, who pronounced peremptorily some few years ago, 'that the Day of Judgment should come that very year'; but, unluckily a failure of prophecy happening, he was put to shame, I mean, if he had any. You will have the story anon.⁶

In the meantime, take the following story from Aventine. 'At that time [about nine hundred years ago] there was a crazy woman, called Theoda, who, under the direction of a priest, for the sake of lucre, and depending on the credulity of the people (ignorant persons being always more superstitious than religious), set up for the gift of prophesying. She pretended heavenly visions, meetings and conversations with the celestial beings, and foretold that the Day of Judgment should come that very year. Men, women, and children, frightened out of their senses, flocked about her; brought her presents, and begged her intercession with heaven; followed, adored, and esteemed her inspired. But being brought before some bishops, she discovered the whole cheat in which she was instructed by the priest. For which she only underwent the discipline of whipping, and was let go to be afterwards a public laughing-stock.'⁷

Your own followers, in your last journal, have a share in your complaints: 'Some beginning to use their liberty as a cloak for licentiousness' (p. 1⁸). I readily believe it, and not only beginning, but running great lengths. 'You discovered among them such wiles of Satan, as never entered into your heart to conceive' (p. 69⁹). And how could you expect better after their being caught in your own wiles? A pretty character too you give of some of your congregations, who have not yet known these depths. 'Preaching at Morva I observed an earnest, stupid attention in the hearers—not one convinced of sin—others showing huge approbation and absolute unconcern. I preached, in the castle of Exeter, to such a people as I have rarely seen, void both of anger, fear, and love' (pp. 107–08¹⁰). Strange people indeed to be void of all three! At another place your sheep a little mend: 'At London I met the wild, staring, loving society' (p. 76¹¹). All unaccountably strange people! But not a quarter so unaccountable as when they come to be variously metamorphosed by your enchanted wand.

What you throw out against the dissenters let themselves answer. But what you have to say against my brethren of the Church should not be passed over. 'When a minister refused you the use of his church, because the bishop had forbidden him, you exclaimed horribly, 'By what authority am I suspended from preaching? By bare-faced arbitrary power' (p. 32¹²). But is there not a cause? Are there not many? Do you think them so in love with your black art as to be fond of having themselves, and doctrines, traduced in their own pulpits of permitting their flock to be stolen, or catch the murrain? You can hardly object to visions. And we are informed, 'That Mohamet had a vision wherein he saw his enemies mount his pulpit and jump about in it like monkeys'.¹³ The clergy have often seen such a sight, barefaced, and with their corporeal eyes.

Another compliant lies against the curate of Epworth, who said, 'Pray tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give him the sacrament. For he is not fit' (p. 84¹⁴). Indeed, sir, I take your part here (for I am determined to act impartially). The curate was to blame. Possibly he might not think you arrive to perfection. But on the other hand, he ought to have remembered your doctrine, that 'no fitness is required at the time of

⁶Lavington gives the story on pp. 18–19 of *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compar'd*, Pt. III.

⁷Lavington's note: *Annal. lib. 4. §23*.

⁸I.e., *Journal*, Sept. 6, 1741, *Works*, 19:246.

⁹Sept. 3, 1742, *Works*, 19:295.

¹⁰Sept. 1, 1743, *Works*, 19:335.

¹¹Nov. 13, 1742, *Works*, 19:301.

¹²Mar. 3, 1742, *Works*, 19:256.

¹³Lavington cites: George Sale, *The Koran* (London: C. Ackers, 1734), 232.

¹⁴I.e., *Journal*, Jan. 3, 1743, *Works*, 19:309.

communicating, but a sense of our utter sinfulness; everyone, who knows he is fit for hell, being fit to come to Christ in this ordinance'.¹⁵

But your worst enemies, the most hateful of men, are the wicked Moravians. There was a time when 'theirs was the only country of the Christians; when you could not see any of them, but your heart burned within you; they were some of the best me; and (is it possible?) better by far than yourself, etc.'. But now, at length, nothing is so wicked, nothing so detestable. After you had found out 'their guile, hypocrisy, profanation of God's ordinances, conformity to this world, tenaciousness of their essentially-erroneous doctrines, etc., then your discipline and theirs are as widely different as the heavens are from the earth. Nor is there any so effectual bar in the world against Moravianism, as pure Methodism'. So that now, 'there is no connexion between you; the names of Moravians and Methodists are become scandalous to each other'. And yet, in spite of the effectual bar, you are perpetually complaining of Methodists apostatizing to the still Brethren; going over in great numbers to their essentially-erroneous doctrines. Which may be called a proof that you are able to set enthusiasm a-going, but want the art of stopping it at pleasure.

Let me ask seriously: Are the Moravian principles and practices so bad as you describe them? Why then do you make yourself so merry with your own who are seduced by them? Why are they packed away to hell with such sarcastical sneers? 'A girl whom I had often observed as being in an eminent degree of a meek and lowly spirit, revolts to them. Ah, my poor still sister! Thou art an apt scholar indeed! I did not expect this quite so soon. I called on poor Joseph Hodges, who, after withstanding so long the wiles of the enemy, has been at last induced, by his fatal regard for Mr. Hall, to renounce both my brother and me in form. But he had perfectly learned the exercise of his arms' (p. 88¹⁶).

I see, sir, you are an errant joker, a perfect droll. You love to have the laugh on your side, when you can get it. You have a jest at their service, even when they are in Satan's clutches.

*Plangentis populi currit derifor Anubis.*¹⁷

But above all, your gall-bladder chiefly overflows upon their bishop, Count Zinzendorf, for whose sake you have drawn a parallel; for which I heartily thank you. 'I read over that surprising book, *The Life of Ignatius Loyola*, surely one of the greatest men that ever was engaged in the support of so bad a cause. I wonder any man should judge him to be an enthusiast. No. But he knew the people with whom he had to do. And setting out, like Count Zinzendorf, with a full persuasion that he might use guile to promote the glory of God, or (which he thought the same thing) the interest of his church, he acted in all things consistent with his principles' (p. 67¹⁸). That you have read the life of Ignatius, and even made it your study, the world will easily believe—unless you have acted wholly by sympathy. Will perhaps be disposed to acquit you of enthusiasm, and for the same reasons. And will certainly see that the cap will fit another head besides that of the Count, and will call to mind the story of the envious man who did not care if he lost both his own eyes, so that he could pick out one of his enemy's. But that is of little moment. The ambition of being thought a great man, and knowing the people with whom you have to do, will be sufficient recompense for a bad cause, using guile, or being called a crack-brained enthusiast, by mistaken persons.

But what is the quarrel with the Count? Only who shall be the greatest. You are rivals and competitors. The Count will not allow you to govern. He is the principal sheep-stealer; he kidnaps your followers. The dispute is typified by the story of the battle between Apollo and the dragon Python, who

¹⁵Lavington cites: 4 Journ. p. 47; i.e., *Journal*, June 28, 1740, *Works*, 19:159.

¹⁶Feb. 1–11, 1743, *Works*, 19:314.

¹⁷Juvenal, *Satires*, vi.533; a satirical description of the Egyptian god Anubis who mocks the weeping of the people as he runs along.

¹⁸I.e., *Journal*, Aug. 16, 1742, *Works*, 19:292.

should have the direction of the oracle. Or that of the three anti-Popes at the same time, banning and cursing one another for the sake of the infallible chair. Hence these inveterate animosities. Hence your reciprocal anathemas 'of preaching another gospel—leading to damnation. The devil, as Mr. Whitefield assures us, standing close by and blowing the coals'. Proceed in your contention, exercise your arms. Try the point, which of you has most 'subtlety, evasion and disguise'; which shall be the most 'close, dark and reserved'; which shall draw most woodcocks into the snare. The world will soon be convinced that you are all a pack of wild fanatics—*aut illud quod dicere nolo*.¹⁹

Go on and build chapels. One may be dedicated to the god Proteus (as was in the days of paganism), famous for being a juggling wonder-monger, and turning him into all shapes.²⁰ Another to the god called Catius, because he made men fly and cunning as cats. You will find some worshippers. The people with whom you have to do, you know, will adore you, for the same reasons that 'the Egyptians did their bull Apis, because renowned for miracles and every hour changing its colour'.²¹

It will not be much trouble to add a few more particulars concerning this same surprising beast (god, I would say), Apis. 'He was to have certain peculiar marks; which, when complete, were nine and twenty in number; and these distinguishable only by the priest and holy prophets; not to be understood or even discerned by ignorant and profane eyes.' (The precise number of methodistical marks you know best, and you have charged me both with ignorance and profaneness concerning them.) 'When his holiness was consecrate he was provided with two apartments, which they called the chambers; in one of which he portends horrible things, in the other joyful. In this latter, upon occasion is admitted, for his diversion, a beautiful heifer, having the same marks with his own. He could do miracles and foretell future events by changing his spots and colours. When led out among the common herds he was attended by some gamesome boys who poured out prophecies in virtue of his influence, and even the herds became enthusiastic and prophetic. He was honoured with hymns and sacrifices; seemed to be an intelligent creature; to love adoration, and receive homage with pleasure. He received his meat from the hands of his worshippers, but would turn his tail to those he did not like.' (It will be my fate to be so served.) 'One thing was remarkable in this deified brute: he must be born of a heifer that had been struck down with lightning.'²² (This you, sir, and Mr. Whitefield tell us was the case of several Methodist females.) And when he died (for die his godship must as well as other horned cattle²³), they were never long in finding out another with marks; dæmons soon supplying them with a successor.²⁴

It would be keeping closer to my title page if I could fetch a comparison from the Pope's bulls. These, you well know, were literally mere bubbles; the seals of papal instruments. 'If they be letters of grace, the bubble is hung on silken treads; if they be letters of justice and executor, the bubble is hung by a hempen cord.'²⁵

You are ready, no doubt, to exclaim once more, 'What is all this to me? Does this prove me to be an enthusiast?' And I begin to fear that my communication with Methodism had bad effects, that my head is thereby something disordered, and my brains upon the ramble. But I must proceed as well as I can.

More out of this last journal (fraught with the usual lading of vanity, great pretensions, exorcisms, and other ostentation of miracles) will be brought to the touch-stone in the ensuing tract. And I hope you will take in good part a few gentle strictures from the hand of a stranger, which will be better than for

¹⁹Juvenal, *Satires*, viii.275; 'or something I don't want to name'.

²⁰Lavington cites: Lucian, vol. 3. Reiz, p. 325.

²¹Lavington cites: Macrobius, lib. 1. cap. 21.

²²Lavington cites: Herodotus, lib. 3. § 28.

²³Lavington cites: Augustine, *City of God*, Bk. 18, ch. 5.

²⁴Lavington cites: Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. 8. cap. 28.; Ælian, *Histor. An.* Lib. 11. cap. 10.; Ammian. M. lib. 15. cap. 14.

²⁵Lavington cites: Chambers, in Bull.

rival stains to be hacking and gathering one another so unmercifully. Be governed by the following example: 'One Henry, a Cluniac Abbot, made a rule that the monks should be shaved by a secular barber because when they shaved themselves it was not shaving, but flaying. Chronic. Cluniac. p. 1670'.²⁶

Your letter to the author of *Enthusiasm* remains.²⁷ But I am something at a loss what to say to such a medley of chicanery, sophistry, prevarication, evasion, pertness, conceitedness, scurrility, sauciness, and effrontery. Paper and time should not be wasted on such stuff. And yet I begin to feel a spice of vanity and entertain no opinion of my pamphlets, seeing (as Mr. Whitefield speaks in his own case) 'they have served a good purpose' by drawing out the true spirit of Mr. John Wesley. In this performance your temper appears naked and undisguised, so as almost to persuade the world that you are no enthusiast; at least that there is no enthusiasm here. I am not so clear in that point. For enthusiasm, however innocent at the first setting out, usually and naturally runs into trick, bitterness, and ferocity; especially where it catches a suitable disposition. The choler, by fermentation, will soon become adust; will turn black and bitter, overflow and burn, and boil, and rage, and stink, like pitch. Such was the enthusiasm of Madam Bourignon (whose expressions you seem fond of copying), who once more steps in to your assistance. She was a woman of a choleric, peevish and morose constitution; which heightened by enthusiasm easily inspired her with those most excellent Christian sentiments, in her light risen in darkness. 'Many say that I cannot bear contradiction. And they are not to contradict me by their writings. For the Holy Spirit ought not to be controlled.'²⁸ 'I was surprised to hear you were offended at my using sharp language against some persons. Believe me, I think this to be one of the greatest graces that God has given me. I bless God who has given me anger to oppose evil. And I will fight against it even with anger and fury, not heeding whether you, or any of you, approve of my procedure or no. If I turn angry, and am so rude in my words, these very things are testimonies of the Spirit of God. A soul possessed with the Spirit of God ought to have its passions more lively than any other person who is possessed with his own spirit, who is not allowed to suffer his passions to reign.'²⁹ I would almost say, what a vixen hath set you a copy?

*Crudelis mater magis, an puer improbus ille?*³⁰

What now is become of 'the harmless Methodist'? The man who keeps his mouth as it were with a bridle! The saint who said, 'Let me speak as a little child! Let my religion be plain, artless, simple! Meekness, temperance, patience and love—be these my highest gifts!' When are we to see the real good fruits of your new birth? Of that 'spotless perfection that is promised to all'? How long are we to wait for your nostrum, the grand operation, of exalting (through the furnace) the basest metals into gold? Hitherto you may join issue with the disappointed Jews: 'We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.' Hitherto your progress is that of a crab, directly backwards. Nor can I discern any perfection—but the perfection of Jesuitism. *Oh! What a fall is there?* How perversely has your primitive saintship, your dove-like simplicity, been hatching the cockatrice eggs and weaving the spider's web? What a change from pure nothingness into striving to be everything? What a dwindling into a great man? There was a time of such mortification and self-denial that you bound yourself by a

²⁶Lavington cites: Stillingst. vol. v. p. 195.

²⁷I.e., JW's reply to the first portions of Lavington's attack: *A Letter to the Author of 'The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared'*, *Works*, 11:361–76.

²⁸Lavington cites: (Bourignon), Part 3. Lett. 1.

²⁹Lavington cites: (Bourignon), Part 4. Lett. 23.

³⁰Virgil, *Eclogues*, viii.49; 'Was the mother more cruel, or that boy more heartless?'

‘repeated resolution, never more to speak a tittle of worldly things’.³¹ But ‘notwithstanding this’ (they are your own words), ‘you have often since engaged therein’.³² There was a time when (like St. Francis, who made himself wives and mistresses of snowballs) you was in love with ‘frost and snow; when you laid down on the floor and slept soundly; when you believed, you should not need to go to bed anymore, as it is called’.³³ At length, even a warm bed won’t serve without a comfortable bedfellow. But, as far as I can observe, this is the way of you all. All are of the family of love. And thus, ‘Satan finds you are shaking his kingdom and making mothers in Israel.’ Nor are there wanting among you much worse and more pregnant proofs of venereal enthusiasm, the strange mixtures of debauchery and sanctity.

You have bragged with the proud Pharisee, ‘My ways are not like other men’s ways’;³⁴ ‘give me where to stand, and I will shake the earth.’³⁵ ‘I, and my brother, are unexceptionable on all accounts.’³⁶ ‘Of experience, that the servant might be as his master, without any corruption, etc.’ But, all shall speak and say unto thee, ‘Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thou hast said, I will ascend into heaven; I will be like the Most High. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee; saying, Is this the man that made the death to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?’³⁷

But hold! ‘I shall run myself out of breath again. I shall once more be charged with setting aside the New Testament or not adverting to it in writing my pamphlet.’ Did I never read those scripture instances of compassing sea and land to make proselytes; of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel; of sounding a trumpet and then praying in the Synagogues, the streets, and the market places; devouring widows’ houses, and for a show making long prayers; of fasters with a sad countenance; outwardly whited sepulchres, but full of dead men’s bones, and all uncleanness? Will I not admit these for parallels? Upon recollection, I believe there are such instances. And I will be so free with my friend as to allow you to make the best of them and bring them to account.

Nay, I doubt, ‘I shall even run into a self-contradiction. For justice calls upon me to give a fresh specimen of your prowess of your martial enthusiasm; by producing the challenge you sent me; which may be good proof of that heroic sanctity, necessary for a papal canonization.’ ‘It is time, sir, you should leave your skulking place. Come out and let us look each other in the face.’³⁸ You may perhaps brand me for a coward. But really, sir, I am no Hercules. You know the story of his fighting with an antagonist, who had the gift of transforming himself into all shapes. When the hero thought he had got him safe, he slips through his fingers in the shape of water, or blazes out in the form of fire. Then he roars, foams, and tears the ground, in the figure of a wild bull. Lastly, he sets a hissing, darts his forked tongue, spits all his venom, and then glides away in the shape of a serpent. So that I may fairly make this a preliminary, ‘Ἀπλῶσον σεαυτὸν, simplify yourself, and be one thing. But there is still more immediate danger. For certainly you would not have your sincerity suspected when, mounting your triumphal chariot, you ‘boast and cry victory, in having laid such numbers flat on the ground, by dint of a few words; by the breath of your mouth rendering them speechless, senseless, or tortured with inexpressible agonies’. He must be a bold man that will venture *to look you in the face*, though attends with his seconds.

³¹Lavington cites: 2 Journ. p. 10; i.e., *Journal*, Feb. 23, 1738, *Works*, 18:227.

³²Lavington cites: Letter, p. 13; i.e., *Letter* [to Lavington], §8, *Works*, 11:364.

³³Lavington cites: Last App. p. 119. He is returning to passages JW debates in *Letter*, §14, *Works*, 11:365–66.

³⁴Lavington cites: 1 Journ. p. 67; he meant p. 76, or *Journal*, Jan. 24, 1738, *Works*, 18:211.

³⁵Lavington cites: 3 Journ. p. 48; i.e., May 20, 1739, *Works*, 19:59.

³⁶Lavington cites; 4 Journ. p. 81; he meant instead *Farther Appeal*, Part III, III.18, *Works*, 11:302–03.

³⁷Isa. 14:10–16.

³⁸Lavington cites: Letter, p. 34; i.e., §27, *Works*, 11:372.

It is true, you are sometimes so good as to 'set your friends at liberty and restore them to pardon and peace'. But such a one as I can hardly hope to merit this favour at your hands. It will be in vain to beg quarter.

But I am now entering into a detail of these horrible and shocking things. They will take up a considerable part of the following pamphlet. And if your own accounts be true, 'of your power to throw your followers into contortions, convulsions, variety of unaccountable disorders of body and mind, into the most hellish tortures; and then to release them again'. If this be the case, and you³⁹ are not brought to hold upon your hand at the bar, you are much obliged to the late Act of Parliament, which repealed the laws against witchcraft. Though, if I mistake not, there is still an exception as to the white witches, the recoverers, who undo what Satan and the black witches have done. With regard to these the statute *is unrepealed*.

The bare relation of such miseries, which you are proud of inflicting, are sufficient to 'make even me' (as you speak) 'fall into seriousness'.⁴⁰ And yet, perhaps, room enough will be found for you to act your *mummeries and farces*, and make a ridiculous figure.

One *deplorable misfortune* hangs upon me, which I know not how to shake off. 'You take your leave of me, and will have nothing to say to me, unless I will set my name to my third part.'⁴¹ Upon this condition, there is a prospect of admission to your good graces, and I may hope for your future correspondence. And (according to your behaviour toward another adversary) 'you will do me honour before the people'. Which puts me in mind of the case of one 'Mascarenius, who had strongly opposed the society of Jesuits. St. Xavier appeared to him one night, but with his back turned upon him. To whom Mascarenius said, "My good saint, why does thou not turn thy face towards me?" Xavier replied, "Be changed into another man, and then I will turn my face to thee."⁴²

If you will excuse me in making you the image of a Jesuit, because I can't help it, I will be more open about my helpers (which gives you some solicitude), fairly telling you who they are. And then, I persuade myself, you will entertain no mean opinion of them.

In the first place stand your good self and associates, who have supplied me with such ample materials. I have little more honour than that of being an echo, rebounding your own words. In the second rank stand my parallels from pagan, heretical, and popish enthusiasts and impostors. Get the better of yourself and these, and I submit.

Should Satan tempt you to break your rule of silence, or choler be so predominant as to force you upon another answer, be so wise as to follow my advice. I think you will, because it hath been your manner, and that you will listen to a friend,

*Qui monet ut facias quod jam facis.*⁴³

As to the most material objections, or unanswerable points, take no manner of notice of them. When the shoe pinches, pretend you don't feel. Though sometimes you may be allowed to twist, wince, wiggle, shift, and prevaricate; or wear a mask, and put on the cloak of sanctity.

But be especially watchful and mark diligently, whether your opponent advances anything that is not in his title page; it being absolutely necessary that the title page should contain every word and syllable of the subsequent book. Or if he should happen to mistake the page in his quotations, or not quote at all. Or you take it in your head to fancy he has offended against grammar, or writes not so good

³⁹Orig., 'your'.

⁴⁰JW, *Letter* [to Lavington], Postscript, *Works*, 11:375.

⁴¹Lavington cites: *Letter*, p. 44; i.e., §33, *Works*, 11:375.

⁴²Lavington cites: *Franc. Annal.* p. 306.

⁴³Ovid, *Tristia*, V.xiv.45; 'who reminds you to do what you are already doing'.

English as yourself. Here stick close upon him. Catch him in one of these enormous crimes, and then you stand clear of all difficulties; your adversary is entirely confuted, and Methodism is white as snow.

Keep up the good custom of bragging of your frequent prayers, of your miracles, the number of your adherents, and your influence over them. Then it is likely some Perronet or other will bestow on you the same compliment with which Father Doza decorated, in his sermon, the founder of the Jesuits: 'In these last days God has spoken unto us by his son Ignatius.' Or, if you choose to govern by fear, you may recite the letter of Aeneas Sylvius to Cardinal Firman: 'Brother John (Capistran) is a man of God; the people of Germany esteem him as a prophet. He could, whenever he pleases, by lifting up a finger, raise a great commotion. The chief pontiff ought to reward and comfort those, who merit well of the Roman Church. And that such is this John, with his brethren, no body that has any sense will deny.'⁴⁴

Were I to examine all the writings and whole behaviour of the Methodists, the disquisition would carry my into an immoderate length. And I could easily too have doubled my parallels. But both your friends and mine will think enough has been said. Upon the whole, however, I reckon it, sir, my bounden duty solemnly to declare that I believe Methodism (however innocent in its conception and birth) to have been gradually and diligently nursed up into a system of solemn imposture. That I see nothing in this dispensation thus managed, but what lies in common with the most frantic and pestilent fanaticism that have so often poisoned the Christian world. Nothing that is not drinking up the very dregs of popery in particular. That (notwithstanding your sly insinuations of having to do with a Middletonian and Antiscripturist) the undoubted revelation contained in the lively oracles of Holy Scripture is my *sole rule of faith and manners*, and my *reverence* for those sacred writings is bound upon my heart. For which very reason I would (as much as in me lies) prevent their honour and authority from being exposed to scorn by the mockery, travesty, and burlesque of Methodism. Therefore, wherever I find a great stress laid upon some imaginary, insignificant, or unintelligible peculiarities; the Word of God turned into a conjuring book; the divine ordinances either lightly esteemed or imputed to the Devil; good works either undervalued or trodden under foot; wild-fire dangerously tossed about instead of that 'light which came down from heaven'; puffy pretensions to extraordinary revelations, inspirations, usurping the name of the Holy One; with personal conferences with God, face to face; enthusiastic ranters comparing themselves with prophets and apostles, if not with Christ himself; the most wild and extravagant behaviour, the frenzies of a disturbed brain, or deluded imagination, the effects of fits, of a weak head, or diseased body, all turned into so many tests and marks of saintship; the spirit of pride and vanity possessing the leaders; a spirit of envy, rancour, broils, and implacable animosities, dashing each other in pieces; a spirit of bitterness and uncharitableness towards the rest of mankind; a progress through immorality, scepticism, infidelity, atheism, through spiritual desertions, despair and madness, made the gate of perfections; an imaginary new birth to be brought to pass by means of real tortures, of some of the most exquisite pangs and sufferings that can affect human nature. I say, where these are found, and many more equally horrible, one may easily discern a wide difference between such a dispensation and genuine religion; as well as the bungling hand that is substituting the former in the place of the other. One may easily discern what strangers such inconsistent rambles must be to the true devotion, as well as comforts, of a sedate, composed piety; to a firm belief of our Maker and Redeemer, and constant reliance upon providence; to a steady course of sincere, habitual, and unaffected religion; to the cherishing of a warm love of God in the heart, and well-tempered zeal for the truths of his inspired word, and this proved by the love of our neighbour; to a general observance and attendance on the means of grace, and a well-grounded hope of glory. Go and compare the *chaff with the wheat*.

Nor are the evil tendencies of Methodism in the least diminished by being covered with the cloak of sanctity and ornamented with the trappings of plausible artifices and fair pretences. They may help to spread delusion, but are a high aggravation of the crime.

The case is the same in the ostentatious declarations of prophesying, casting out devils, the gift of healing, or other miraculous powers among you. They tend evidently to render the true gifts of the Spirit

⁴⁴Lavington cites: Martyrol. Francisc. Oct. 23.

suspicious; to bring a reproach and scandal on the prophecies and miracles which establish the inspiration of the everlasting gospel. But thus it must be. These are usual and necessary engines of hair-brained enthusiasts and crafty impostors for working upon the passions of weak, credulous, or distempered people. While there are any such people in the world, a deceitful worker will scarce fail of some degree of success. And if great mischief be not the consequence, it is owing to that providential being who frustrates the tokens of liars and makes diviners mad.

When you have considered these things thoroughly, in a sober and dispassionate state of mind, you will leave reason to account me, sir,

Your real and faithful friend.

Source: published transcription; George Lavington, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compar'd*, Pt. III (London, Knapton, 1751), pp. iii–xxvii.

From Elizabeth (Smith) Cart¹

London
c. December 1750

When George Whitefield first preached on Kennington Common, curiosity drew me to hear him frequently. I admired his zeal in calling sinners to repentance, but did not see myself to be one of that number, having had a religious education, even in spiritual religion, such as was not to be found in other societies.

As soon as the Foundery was taken, I went thither constantly, morning as well as evening. But I had no desire of being acquainted with any of the society, much less of joining therein, being strongly resolved never to turn my back on the profession I was educated in.

The next year I furnished myself with the books which John and Charles Wesley had printed. I compared them with Robert Barclay's *Apology*² and with the Bible, and of many things I was convinced. But what they said of justification I could not comprehend, and I did not much concern myself about it, being but slightly convinced of sin.

It was my custom to rise some hours before the family and spend that time in reading. One Sunday morning I was just going to open my Bible when a voice (whether inward or outward I cannot tell) seemed to say very loud, 'God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven thee.' I started up, took the candle, and searched all about to see if anyone was near, but there was none. I then sat down, with such peace and joy in my soul as cannot be described. While I was musing what it could mean, I heard it again, saying, 'Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee.' I trembled exceedingly, not with fear but such an emotion as I can't express. Yet I got up the second time and opened the door, to see if it was any human voice. Soon after, it was repeated the third time, still louder, which drove me on my knees to prayer, being overwhelmed with the love of God and, for the time, utterly incapable of doubt or fear.

I now saw the New Testament in a different light than I had ever done before. All the day I was comforted with promises from it, either read or brought to my mind. Yet the thought, 'May not all this be a delusion?' frequently darted into me. But it as often drove me to prayer, upon which all doubt presently vanished away.

I was immediately changed in my dress, conversation, and whole deportment, which brought on me the ridicule of all my acquaintance. But nothing moved me. I wondered what the cross meant, for whatever appeared to be the will of God, I ran cheerfully to do, without a moment's hesitation. I felt no temptation to anger, pride, or any other evil. Though often provoked, I was not ruffled in the least. God seemed to reign in my heart alone. He was all my desire, all my hope. And this light lasted about three months, without any cloud at all.

But after this it pleased God to remove all at once the veil which till then covered my heart, though I do not remember that any disobedience preceded, for I feared sin more than death or hell. Yet in a moment such a scene was opened to me that if I had not felt the hand of God underneath me, I should certainly have gone distracted. The infernal regions were represented to my view day and night. At the same time I saw what I was by nature and what I had deserved from God for all my sins. O how did Satan then strive to tear away my shield! And what a burden of sin did I feel! It is impossible to describe it. If I looked from God a moment I was full of horror. I often feared I should lose my senses but had no thought of death nor fear concerning it. Yet hell appeared to me without a covering, and I seemed surrounded with devils, sleeping and waking. But I still held this fast, 'Thou hast forgiven me, O my God, and I will not let thee go.'

¹Elizabeth (Smith) Cart (c. 1700–1773), was a Quaker widow whom CW baptized in the river at Cowley, Middlesex on May 5, 1748.

²Robert Barclay (1648–90), *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*.

All this time I constantly attended the preaching, and, having a strong desire to know whether friend Wesleys lived the gospel as well as preached it, I got acquainted with one who lived at the Foundery. I frequently sat and worked with her, and made all possible inquiries into the most minute circumstances of their behaviour. This afterwards proved a great blessing to me, for when I heard any idle report (and I heard not a few), I could answer peremptorily, 'I know the contrary.'

Their preaching now took deeper hold of me than ever and searched every corner of my heart. I saw I had nothing to bring to God and was indeed vile in my own eyes. When my friends sometimes told me how good I had been, their words were as sharp swords. I found I had nothing to trust in but the atoning blood. But this trust kept my soul in constant peace.

Thus I went on a considerable time before I admitted any serious reflections concerning the ordinances, which indeed I did not care to think of at all, till one day, reading in the third chapter of St. John's gospel, 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'³ The words struck me to the heart. I began to read over again, with all attention, what was written on both sides of the question. But this gave me no satisfaction, so I tried another way, giving myself up to earnest prayer that God would guide me by his Word and Spirit into all that was required of me.

However, these thoughts died away, and I was quite easy about it till one Sunday, at Devonshire Square meeting,⁴ it was brought to my mind in such a manner that I believe the seat shook under me. I then plainly saw it was my duty, and determined to delay no longer. For that purpose I went to Cowley two or three days after. But all the night before it was to be done I was in deep distress. I spent all the hours in weeping and prayer, and yet, as the morning drew on, my trouble increased, with strong terror, as if I was just going to execution. But I remained fixed in my purpose, and as soon as I was baptized, all the clouds dispersed, and I rejoiced more than ever in God my Saviour.⁵

Source: published extract; JW, *Journal*, Jan. 1, 1751 (*Works*, 20:373–75).

³John 3:5.

⁴Apparently the Quaker meeting house near Devonshire Square.

⁵CW records this baptism on May 5, 1748 in his MS Journal.