

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1756–60)

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From Thomas Walsh

[Ireland]
[early January 1756]

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

In Mr. Booker's letter are many palpable falsehoods.¹ But what exasperated him so he does not tell. It was my opposing his Arian principles—my telling him I had the same arguments to prove the divinity of Christ as to prove the Godhead of the Father.

(1) The Father is called God **אל**; so is the Son, Isa. 9:6. (2) The Father is called **אלהים**; so is the Son, Hosea 1:7. (3) The Father is called **יהוה**; so is the Son, Jer. 23:6. (4) The Father is said to be 'from everlasting'; so the Son is called **אבי עד**, Isa. 9:6. Not the 'everlasting Father', but 'the Father' or 'author of eternity'. (5) The Father is said to create all things; so is the Son, John 1[:1] and Col. 1[:16]. (6) The Father is said to be almighty; so is the Son. (7) The Father is omnipresent; so is the Son, Matt. 20:18. (8) The Father is omniscient; so is the Son, Rev. 2:7. (9) The Father forgives sins; so does the Son, Mark 2[:5]. (10) The Father is judge of all; so is the Son.

But still he disputed whether any man should pray to Christ. I gave these reasons for it. (1) All men are bound to *honour* the Son 'as they honour the Father'.² But we are to honour the Father by praying to him. Therefore we should so honour the Son. (2) God commands, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.'³ This is done, Rev. 5[:11–12]. And it is certain praise and thanksgiving are superior rather than inferior to prayer. (3) St. Paul prayed to him, 2 Cor. 12:8–9. (4) St. Stephen prayed to him, Acts 7:59. (The word 'God' is not in the original.) (5) All believers in the apostolic age prayed to him, 1 Cor. 1:2. For what is to 'call upon his name' but to pray to him?

When he could not answer these reasons, he called them 'cant' and said, 'much learning has made thee mad'. What he calls 'contempt' was confronting him with Scripture and reason in defence of the Godhead of Christ. I acknowledge, I have been an opposer of Arianism ever since I knew what it was, but especially since my late illness, during which I had such glorious evidence of the eternal power and Godhead of my great Redeemer. I bless God, I love Mr. Booker as well as all mankind. But it grieves me to see people led in the high road to hell, instead of heaven; especially at a time which calls upon all to awake and 'prepare to meet' their God.⁴

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Jan. 14, 1756 (*Works*, 21:39–40).

¹Rev. Moore Booker, the Protestant minister of Delvin, had initially welcomed Methodist work in Ireland, defending it to his bishop in *Two Letters Concerning the Methodists* (Dublin: J. Kelburn, 1751). But his own theological tendencies leaned in an enlightenment direction, leading to conflict that JW hinted at already in his *Journal*, Aug. 2, 1752 (*Works*, 20:435). The letter to which Walsh refers has apparently not survived.

²John 5:23.

³Deut. 32:43; Heb. 1:6.

⁴Amos 4:12.

‘F. D.’ to the Editor of *Gentleman's Magazine*

February 1756

Mr. Urban,

The account printed in your magazine of an earthquake at Black Hamilton in Yorkshire, there said to be taken from a newspaper,¹ and in your last account of books said to be first published in a pamphlet supposed to be written by John Wesley the Methodist teacher,² so much raised my wonder and curiosity that I caused an inquiry to be made into the fact, at no small trouble and expense, and found the whole to be a falsehood, without the least degree of truth for its foundation.

Those who have deliberately invented and propagated this lie are most certainly of their father the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. I am extremely unwilling to believe that it was thus invented and propagated by any person who pretends to a sacred character, as such person could have no view but to increase his influence over ignorant and credulous minds. It is however, at all events, a duty incumbent upon you to set those right whom you have ignorantly, and therefore innocently, deceived. The publication of this letter therefore can need no apology, as it is to be hoped that if the invention of this story, or the pamphlet that contains it, has either ignorantly or maliciously been imputed to a wrong person, the party injured, as the injury is indeed great, will by your means justify himself to the public.³

Yours, etc.

F. D.

Source: published transcription; *Gentleman's Magazine* (Feb. 1756), 56.

¹*Gentleman's Magazine* (Nov. 1755), 514; citing the *Public Advertiser*.

²JW had incorporated the account of the earthquake at Black Hamilton in his *Serious Thoughts occasioned by the late Earthquake at Lisbon*, published in Dec. 1755.

³See JW's answer, dated Mar. 8, in *Gentleman's Magazine* (Mar. 1756), 103.

From John Walsh

Kensington-Gore
February 1, 1756

Sir,

Such has been the kindness of providence from the time it happily brought me to you, that my doubts have been gradually decaying ever since, and giving place to that faith which, till then, I thought blindness in others. I was often afraid you would think my letters impertinent, especially the last. Yet such have I found your generosity and friendship, that I shall ever remember it with gratitude and love.

One thing I shall mention to you for its oddness. I was very well acquainted with Lisbon, and sometimes expressed a doubt of divine providence because it was not swallowed up by an earthquake. Thus, notwithstanding the divine question, 'Who art thou, O man, that judgest?' I sometimes puzzled those that were better than myself with this: 'Why then is not such a cruel place destroyed by earthquakes?' Hence you may imagine that its fall¹ affected me greatly, not so much with compassion alone for the sufferers but as it was a means of convincing me of my error, and of making me more earnest in the work of faith but a little before undertaken.

I will just speak of another reflection I made at that time. The ingenious Dr. Cheyne reckons all gloomy wrong-headedness, and spurious free-thinking, so many symptoms of bodily diseases.² And I think says the human organs in some nervous distempers may perhaps be rendered fit for the actuation of demons, and advises religion as an excellent remedy. Nor is this unlikely to be my own case, for a nervous disease of some years' standing rose to its height in 1748, and I was attacked in proportion by irreligious opinions. The medicinal part of his advice, a vegetable diet, at last cured my dreadful bodily distemper. It is natural to think the spiritual part of his advice equally good. And shall I neglect it because I am now in health? God forbid!

Your letter, sir, has given me great satisfaction, great in every part, but especially concerning witchcraft. That wonder I had reconciled by considering others of the invisible world to which my own experience bears witness, such as dreams, presages, and the like.

To conclude, sir, though Christianity be still reckoned, as of old, foolishness by many that are wise, I resolve to prefer it to all worldly wisdom, and I should entreat you for admission into your society, were I not in conscience bound to decline it, some of the rules being too strict for me, especially that of disclosing my mind to others as I have to you. But if it will be no innovation, I beg the favour that a note to attend your private meetings may be continued.

I shall not trouble you with writing again unless something particular happens to, sir,

Your much obliged, humble servant,

John Walsh

P. S. In the short time that I have set my heart to seek the holy Jesus, to me too long unknown, I have met with many encouragements, but none greater than your kind reception of my importunities. One doubt alone remained when I wrote last, but I feared it was unsurmountable. However, it is now nearly vanquished by the casual reading a few days ago, in Mr. Nelson's *Wonders of Nature*,³ a thought on the multiplicity of worlds.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 432–34.

¹The great Lisbon earthquake had occurred three months before, on Nov. 1, 1755.

²Cf. George Cheyne, *The English Malady* (London: Strahan, 1733).

³Gilbert Nelson, *The Wonders of Nature throughout the World displayed* (London: Watts, 1740).

From 'P. V.'
[i.e., Richard Tompson]¹

[London]
February 12, 1756

Reverend Sir,

I had the favour of yours. You tell me that I 'do not yet understand your sentiments' *concerning the article in debate*. Indeed, to be plain with you, I think it impossible to reconcile you with yourself on this head.

In order, therefore, to have a clear perception of what your opinion really is, I have drawn up the following queries; which if you will please to answer with a monosyllable only, I shall esteem it a favour.

Query 1. Can a man who has not a *clear assurance* that his sins are forgiven be in a state of justification? Yea or nay?

Query 2. I ask a person the following question: 'Do you know that your sins are forgiven?' He answers, 'I am not *certainly sure*, though I do not entertain the *least doubt* thereof.' Is this man in a state of justification, in your opinion? Yea or nay?

Query 3. I ask another person as above. He replies, as before, 'I am not *certainly sure*, but I *hope*, or *trust*, that they are.' Is this person, in your opinion, in the state above mentioned? Yea or nay?

Query 4. Can anyone know that his sins are forgiven while he has any doubt thereof? Yea or nay?

I must beg the favour of you to excuse my concealment at present. It is probable that my reasons for so doing may not long subsist.

I am, sir, with respect,
Your humble servant,

P. V.

Source: published transcription; Tompson, *Original Letters*, 41–42.

¹Replying to JW's of Feb. 5, 1756.

From Sarah Ryan¹

Bristol
February 17, 1756

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Yours of February 10th filled me with many thoughts, attended with much prayer. I am thankful you speak your state so plainly. Surely God hath a hand in this thing! Doth he permit your words and actions, small and great, to be marked? O how much of God do I see in this! Surely, if *you* marked every motion of your heart also with much prayer, you would gain much ground in the race that is set before you.

O sir, what I feel for you when I consider there is hardly one that knows how to help you. In this also I see the wisdom of God, that you may not lean on an arm of flesh. But dear sir, do not let your spirits droop! Surely you do not eye the Lord Almighty. Is not this the very way by which God will purify your heart? Let not Satan keep you from much private prayer. If you let your hands hang down in this, will you not be backward in every duty? I contrive my business so that from ten to eleven every morning I retire to pray and read. If you could meet me then at the throne of grace, it would not be in vain for your soul and mine. I find more power to pray for you since your last than I have done for a great while. By whatever manner, way, or means, may God make you holy; and may his presence shine continually on your heart!

The humility I feel does indeed flow from a deep sense of my helplessness. And when I look back upon my former life I am amazed, and say: What hath God done? Why hath he done this for me? And because I cannot tell, I lie and wonder at his blessed feet! While my dear friends are approving of me, or what I say, I seem to lose myself. As to my being charged with pride, I do not wonder at it. I am conscious there is in my manner that which many may term so. I find a constant need of watching against all appearance of evil. I thirst to have matter and manner right. O help me by your prayers!

As to my body, it declines every day. I know nothing will help me but to rest from labour of every kind. But that I dare not do. So I will make haste to live! I am,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 437–38.

¹Mrs. Sarah Ryan (1724–68), whose maiden name is unknown, was spiritually awakened under Whitefield's preaching at the age of seventeen. She married about 1745, but was soon deserted by her husband (name unknown). Around 1748 she married a sailor named [John?] Ryan (whom she seems to suggest was abusive during his times home from the sea). Through the influence of the wife of the sailor's captain, who was a Methodist, Ryan began attending JW's Foundery in London. She participated in a class meeting and established a lasting friendship with Sarah Crosby. In 1754 she experienced a strong spiritual renewal. Over the next year, partly in conversation with JW, she decided not to follow her husband, who had moved to New England. In 1757 JW appointed Ryan housekeeper at the New Room in Bristol. Ryan became at that point one of JW's most spiritually intimate correspondents, provoking the jealousy of his wife Mary. This is her first known surviving letter to JW. See her autobiographical letter dated March 19, 1760 in *AM* 2 (1779): 296–310; *DEB*, 962; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 304.

From Richard Thompson²

[London]

February 25, 1756

Reverend Sir,

I had the pleasure of yours, which gave me great satisfaction, as I think your concessions are abundantly sufficient to put a stop to any farther dispute between us concerning this article.

Writing of *controversy*, were I ever so well qualified for such an employment, I am by no means fond of. The very little good that I have observed to be done thereby obliges me to assent to the truth of Mr. Hobbes's observation that 'arguments seldom work on *men of wit*, when once they have engaged themselves in a contrary opinion'.³

I must ingenuously confess, sir, that I am not able to reconcile your concessions with what both yourself and assistants so constantly assert in your *public preaching*, that 'if a person does not *know* that their sins are forgiven, they have no *true faith*'.

Permit me, therefore, to indulge a benevolent wish that you would bestow a little time on this subject, by giving it a serious, attentive, and impartial reconsideration; which, through the blessing of God, might be a happy means of making your usefulness still more extensive, not only by relieving the minds of many of your hearers from a great deal of *perplexity* and *disquiet*, but also of freeing your sentiments concerning *faith* from that embarrassment which they appear to me at present to labour under.

In your first *Appeal* you affirm that '*faith is the eye of the soul*'.⁴ This, if I mistake not, is making it its *perceptive faculty*; that is, *the understanding itself*. But in your *last letter to me* you define it to consist in 'seeing God'. 'Seeing God', you say, 'being the *essence of faith*'.⁵ Which, I think, is asserting it to be the *actual perception of an object*.

To me it appears as impossible to reconcile these definitions together as it is to make them agree with what I take to be the only true and proper notion of *faith*—namely, that it is an assent of the mind to the *truth of a fact* of whose existence it has no *actual perception*, either from an *immediate view* of the thing itself or by necessary inference from some other thing of whose existence it has an *actual perception*. And I have the satisfaction to observe that the sentiments of our *very learned* and accurate Bishop [John] Pearson exactly correspond with this definition.

With respect to the article of *assurance*, I shall only observe that it is a subject that for some years has pretty much exercised my thoughts. And from the observations that I have made, I have been led to conclude not only that it is a privilege which God does not please to grant to the generality of *true believers*, but that even the greatest number of those who are so happy as to obtain it are not possessed thereof for any long time together; neither does this proceed from *any voluntary defects* in their conduct, but solely from the good pleasure of God himself.

You seem, sir, to be desirous of knowing who it is that has engaged you so long in this dispute. I intend to satisfy you in that particular, but shall first give the reasons why I have hitherto thought proper to conceal my name.

When I first undertook to write to you concerning the doctrine of *original sin*, though I was certain that the main substance of what I was about to affirm concerning that particular might be proved to be true with *the evidence of the strictest demonstration*, yet I was well aware of the *remarkable effects* that *prejudice* sometimes has, even over the most ingenuous minds. 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' [John 1:46] was the objection of one who had a very remarkable testimony to the uprightness of his intentions. And being apprehensive from *a passage in one of your journals* that I stood in but very

²Replying to JW's of Feb. 18, 1756.

³Thomas Hobbes, *The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance*, No. 38.

⁴JW, *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, §7 (*Works*, 11:46).

⁵See JW to Thompson, Feb. 5, 1756.

indifferent esteem with you, I judged that if I should subscribe with my proper name the most that I could hope to obtain for my observations would be a *cold, inattentive reading*—if they procured even that. I therefore chose to conceal myself under the *Latin* initials of a lover of truth.⁶

When I went about to remonstrate to you concerning those particulars which have been debated between us I apprehended that my reasons for concealment became still stronger than before. For if I could not hope for an attentive hearing in a matter wherein I thought myself not to differ from you at all, I could much less promise myself one when the case was quite the reverse. But as I conceive that you are, by this time, fully acquainted with all the force that my observations contain, 'I shall now' (to use the words of an eminent writer) 'leave them to stand or fall; as I am desirous they should, according as they are found to have more or less weight in them.'

Part of the passage in your journal referred to above runs thus: 'I saw poor R. T. who had left our society, etc.'⁷ Which, the moment I had read, I knew myself to be the person intended thereby, not only from the initial letters of my name but also from other attendant circumstances related in that paragraph.

And now, sir, you are informed who the person is by whom you have been engaged in this dispute. I am very sensible of the advantages that I put into your hands by gratifying you in this particular; but, as I have nothing else but truth in view, I am determined to abide the event. There is one thing in your letters which I a little wonder at, namely that you seem (by the use of some *Latin* words in your second and third letters) to have thought that you were carrying on this debate with a scholar. I cannot imagine what could lead you to such a conjecture. I am sure that I have been scrupulously careful not to lead you into such a mistake. In my first letter, when I mentioned *antiquity*, my expression was, 'If I am not very much misinformed'; in my second, 'I cannot learn', etc. This I thought plainly enough intimated my dependence on others (at least on translations) for my information. For had I been able to have consulted the authors in their respective originals, I should have expressed myself after a very different manner. Nay, so very careful was I not to cherish in you such an opinion that I studiously avoided giving in my third letter the *English* of two *Latin* words in your second, which I could very easily have done. For having had a pretty large number of books passed under my inspection, I have learned the meaning of several *Latin* words and sentences, but I utterly abhor anything that looks like a desire to appear to be what I really am not.

I doubt not, sir, but you will easily excuse the trouble given you on this occasion, when you reflect that in my first letter I avoided the mention of anything wherein I apprehended you to be of a different opinion from me. And when I entered on the other particulars it was at your own request. Though I conceive had the case been really otherwise (as this is a controversy wherein the peace of mankind is certainly very much concerned), my conduct might very easily have been justified. For as a late *noble writer* well observes, 'In the cause of *God*, as well as in the case of *treason*, every man is an officer.'⁸

I hope, sir, that I have not (in the course of my papers) been wanting in respect towards you; willingly, I am sure I have not. You do indeed intimate something concerning a warm expression, which I am entirely ignorant of, so hope you will excuse it. May God render your usefulness still more extensive by guiding you into *all truth*, which is the hearty prayer of him who is, with great respect,

Your obliged humble servant,

Richard Tompson

Source: published transcription; Tompson, *Original Letters*, 45–50.

⁶I.e., 'Pro Veritate'.

⁷JW, *Journal*, June 17, 1739 (*Works*, 19:71).

⁸Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, *An Answer to Mr. Whiston's Letter* (London, 1721), 3.

From the Rev. Samuel Davies

[Hanover County, Virginia]
[March 2, 1756]

When the books arrived, I gave public notice after sermon and desired such negroes as could read and such white people as would make good use of them, and were not able to buy, to come to my house. For some time after, the poor slaves, whenever they could get an hour's leisure, hurried away to me and received them with all the genuine indications of passionate gratitude. All the books were very acceptable, but none more so than the psalms and hymns, which enabled them to gratify their peculiar taste for psalmody. Sundry of them lodged all night in my kitchen. And sometimes when I have awaked at two or three in the morning, a torrent of sacred psalmody has poured into my chamber. In this exercise some of them spend the whole night.

The good effects of this charity are already apparent. It convinces the heathen that however careless about religion the generality of the white people are, yet there are some who think it a matter of importance. It has excited some of their masters to emulation, and they are ashamed that strangers on the other side [of] the Atlantic Ocean should be at such pains to teach their domestics, while themselves are negligent about it. Such of the negroes as can read already are evidently improving in knowledge. It has excited others to learn to read, for as I give books to none but such as can read, they consider them as a reward for their industry. And I am told that in almost every house in my congregation, and in many other places, they spend every leisure hour in endeavouring to learn. Many do this from a sincere desire to know the will of God. And if some should do it from the meaner principle of vanity or curiosity, yet I cannot but rejoice that it renders them the more capable of receiving instruction. To all this I may add that the very distributing these books gives me an opportunity of speaking seriously, and with particular application, to many who would not otherwise come in my way.

There are thousands of negroes in this colony who still continue in the grossest ignorance and are as rank pagans now as they were in the wilds of Africa. Not a few of these are within the bounds of my congregation. But all are not of this character. Upon some my ministry of late has been successful. Two Sundays ago I had the pleasure of seeing forty of their black faces at the Lord's Table, several of whom give unusual evidence of their sincerity in religion. Last Sunday I baptised seven or eight who had been catechised for some time. Indeed, many of them appear determined to press into the kingdom, and I am persuaded will find an abundant entrance when many of the children of the kingdom are shut out.

I have distributed some of the books among the poor white people, with a charge to circulate them among such of their neighbours as would seriously read them, that they might be as extensively serviceable as possible. And some of them have since discovered to me what solemn impressions they received in reading them.

I sent a few of each sort to my friend, Mr. Wright, minister of Cumberland,¹ about ninety miles hence, where there are not a few negroes thoughtful about Christianity, and sundry real converts. And he informs me they have met with a very agreeable and promising reception. He takes much pains in instructing them and has set up two or three schools among them, where they attend on Sundays, before and after sermon, for they have no other leisure time.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Mar. 2, 1756 (*Works*, 21:42–43).

¹Rev. John Wright, Presbyterian minister in Cumberland County, Virginia in 1750s.

From An Unidentified Sympathizer

[April 1756]

Reverend Sir,

I once, through the influence of those about me, was ready to join the common cry against you, not knowing what I did. But since, by hearing your discourses, with some of Mr. [Thomas] Walsh's, and by reading your *Sermons* and *Appeals*, I have learned a better lesson. I have learned that true Christianity consists not in a set of opinions or of forms and ceremonies but in holiness of heart and life, in a thorough imitation of our divine Master. And this I take to be the doctrine of the Church of England, nor do I apprehend you differ from her at all in doctrine. And I am grieved to know, you have too much cause to differ from many of her present clergy. Why then should I cavil at you for feeding those sheep that are starved by their own shepherds? For endeavouring to recover them from that stupid lethargy and open wickedness which involve the generality of mankind? This is your happiness. Would to God it could be mine! I have often had a strong desire for it and would now gladly dedicate my life to it, if my poor abilities and mean education, together with the Twenty-third Article of our Church, did not crush the thought.¹ However, as I do not see you vary from the doctrine of the Church, I should not scruple to join with you. My chief motives (beside that strong desire) are: First, I reflect, there is scarce a situation in life, at least in the trading world, without its attendant frauds or vices, which are now scarce separable from it. Secondly, I am at present of no use in society, so that on account of any advantage that now accrues from me to the public I need not scruple giving myself to my darling employment. Thirdly, I am convinced a man may instruct and reform himself by instructing and reforming others. But may I attempt this otherwise than by the *ordinary* method of admitting labourers into the Lord's vineyard? Your thoughts on this subject would be received as a singular favour. For which I shall impatiently wait, who am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate and ready servant.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Apr. 26, 1756 (*Works*, 21:51).

¹This article, titled 'Of Ministering in the Congregation', ruled out public ministry except for those 'lawfully called' and ordained.

From the Rev. John Adams¹

[Falkirk, Scotland]
c. May 10, 1756

On Friday night, about ten, I witnessed Mr. [Thomas] Wardrobe's of Bathgate's entrance into the joy of his Lord. But ah! Who can help mourning the loss to the church of Christ? His amiable character gave him a distinguished weight and influence, which his Lord had given him to value, only for its subserviency to his honour and glory. He was suddenly taken ill on the last Lord's Day, and from the first moment believed it was for death. I went to see him on Thursday evening and heard some of the liveliest expressions of triumphant faith, zeal for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls, mixed with the most amiable humility and modesty. 'Yet a little while', said he, 'and this mortal shall put on immortality. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life, this vile body fashioned like to his glorious body! O for the victory! I shall get the victory. I know in whom I have believed.' Then with a remarkably audible voice, lifting up his hands he cried out, 'Oh for a draught of the well of the water of life, that I may begin the song before I go off to the church triumphant! I go forth in thy name, making mention of thy righteousness, even thine only. I die at the feet of mercy.' Then, stretching out his arms, he put his hand upon his head, and with the most serene and steady, majestic eye I ever saw, looking upward, he said, 'Crowns of grace, crowns of grace, and palms in their hands! O Lord God of truth, into thy hands I commend my spirit!' After an unexpected revival, he said, 'Oh, I fear his tarrying, lest the prospect become more dark. I sometimes fear he may spare me to live, and be less faithful than he has helped me to be hitherto.' He says to me, 'You that are ministers, bear a proper testimony against the professors of this age, who have a form of godliness without the power.' Observing some of his people about his bed, he said, 'May I have some seals among you! O where will the ungodly and sinners of Bathgate appear? Labour all to be in Christ.' Then he stretched out his hand to several, and said, 'Farewell, farewell, farewell! And now, O Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee!' Once or twice he said, 'Let me be laid across the bed to expire, where I have sometimes prayed, and sometimes meditated with pleasure.' He expressed his grateful sense of the assiduous care which Mr. Wardrobe of Cult had taken of him, and on his replying, 'Too much could not be done for so valuable a life', said, 'O speak not so, or you will provoke God. Glory be to God that I have ever had any regard paid me, for Christ's sake!' I am greatly sunk under the event. O help me by your prayers to get the proper submission and improvement.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, May 30, 1756 (*Works*, 21:56–57).

¹Presbyterian Minister in Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland.

From the Rev. John Gillies

[Glasgow]
c. May 10, 1756

The Lord hath been pleased to inflict a heavy stroke upon us, by calling home his faithful servant Mr. [Thomas] Wardrobe.¹ Concerning his death a Christian friend writes thus:

May 7, Four in the morning. I am just come from witnessing the last sighs of one dear to you, to me, and to all that knew him. Mr. Wardrobe died last night. He was seized on Sabbath last, just as he was going to the kirk [i.e., church], with a most violent cholic, which terminated in a mortification of his bowels. The circumstances of his death are worthy to be recorded. With what pleasure he received the message and went off in all the triumph of a conqueror! Crying out, 'My warfare is accomplished.' 'I have fought the good fight.' 'My victory is completed. Crowns of grace shall adorn this head' (taking off his cap), 'and palms be put into these hands. Yet a little while, and I shall sing for ever, "I know that my Redeemer liveth".' When he was within a few moments of his last he gave me his hand and a little after said, 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' Were I to repeat half what he spoke I should write you three hours. It shall suffice at this time to say that as he lived the life, so he died the death of a Christian. We weep not for him; we weep for ourselves. I wish we may know how to improve this awful judgment, so as to be also ready, not knowing when our Lord cometh.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, May 30, 1756 (*Works*, 21:56).

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. In 1750 Wardrobe was inducted as minister of the church in Bathgate, Scotland, where he served until his death.

From the Rev. Martin Madan

Chancery Lane [London]
May 18, 1756

Dear Sir,

I was yesterday very agreeably surprised with your kind favour of the 7th instant from Waterford, and cannot help taking the earliest opportunity to return you my thanks. My father's death has indeed made a considerable alteration in my worldly affairs, by adding to what I had before a plentiful estate. But blessed be God, I can still cry out with more and more earnestness, 'Like as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so thirsteth my soul after thee, O God! My soul is athirst for God; yea, even for the living God.'² I know that it is not by my own strength that I do this. I am weak as helpless infancy. I am sensible that there is yet in me 'an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God'.³ But I trust that 'he' who 'has begun a good work in me, will bring it on to perfection'.⁴

O sir! I desire, notwithstanding all my worldly wealth, to be little and vile in my own eyes, and that Christ may be all in all. The only true riches are those of his grace; all things else when compared to those are dung and dross.

Let earth and all its trifles go,
Give me, O Lord! thy love to know,
Give me thy precious love.⁵

Continue your prayers for me, dear sir, that I may daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This day the voice of war sounded forth in our land.⁶ I hope our cause is just, and that the Lord of hosts is on our side. O when shall not 'nation rise up against nation', nor men 'learn war any more'!⁷ Lord hasten the time!

My dear mother was with me when your kind letter came, and she desired me to send her love and best wishes to you, when I answered it.⁸ She is very well, and longs much, as well as myself and the rest of your friends, to see you once more in England, if the Lord permit.

Adieu, dear sir. May the God of all peace and consolation be with you always! Amen, amen. I remain,

Your truly affectionate servant and son in the gospel,

M. M.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 536–37.

²Ps. 42:1–2.

³Heb. 3:12.

⁴Phil. 1:6.

⁵Cf. Hymn #86, st. 4, in G. Whitefield (ed.), *Hymns for Social Worship* (1753), 68.

⁶This was the day that England officially declared war on France as part of what is called the Seven Years' War.

⁷Cf. Isa. 2:4.

⁸Cf. JW to Judith Madan, Nov. 9, 1750 (*Works*, 26:440).

From Francis Fetherston¹

Trinity College, Dublin
May 21, 1756

Reverend and Best Beloved Sir,

I cannot help communicating to you my grievous want of a zealous and thankful heart towards my Redeemer, for his singular mercies presented to my view; yea, and experienced in my heart. The desire God hath given me to have my spirit roused from indolence and sloth will, I trust, sufficiently apologize, should this prove irksome to you or intrude on your precious time.

The little pamphlet you put into my hands concerning the fear of man has not, through Christ, proved ineffectual.² Hence am I again encouraged to expect further comfort in a few lines from you. I know you prayed for me. May the Lord return it sevenfold into your bosom! Blessed be his holy name for every means whereby he conveyeth his grace to me, whom in loving-kindness and free mercy he is building up against the day I shall be called upon.

Upon my telling some of my friends (when they accused me of madness) that if mad, I felt a joy which none but madmen know, they formed a design of lodging me in Swift's Hospital for lunatics.³ But Christ has not yet honoured me with any real affliction for his sake. You can ask for me a spirit of meekness and humility and God will give it, for he is faithful who has already vouchsafed me communion with his dearest children.

The person you made mention of has closed his ears. But the arms of our Creator's mercy may yet reach him. I have found two other fellow-students who have received the milk of the word, and another whom the Lord hath stirred up to seek it. Have I not reason to rejoice in hope that we four shall be of those who plead naught but the blood of the Lamb?

That the ever-blessed and eternal Spirit may continue to bear you with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm, as a lamp shining in a world of darkness, shall be the sincerest prayer of him whose only ambition is to be led after thee, although *haud aequis passibus*!⁴

Francis Fetherston

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 537–38.

¹Francis Fetherston was admitted to Trinity College, Dublin in 1751 and graduated BA in 1755. JW had been in Dublin for most of Apr. 1756, and it seems clear that Fetherston met him and came to value his spiritual advice. There is no further surviving correspondence between the two, possibly because this was the Francis Fetherston, student of Trinity College, who died in 1757 (according to an index of Irish wills).

²JW's abridgment of August Herman Francke, *Nicodemus; or, a Treatise on the Fear of Man* (1739).

³St. Patrick's Hospital, established by a bequest of Jonathan Swift for treatment of lunatics, had just opened in Dublin.

⁴'With scarcely matching steps'; cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, ii.724. (*AM* orig. corrected in errata from 'hand' to 'haud'.)

From A Clergyman

Cork, Ireland
c. June 1, 1756

I had the following account from the gentlewoman herself, a person of piety and veracity. She is now the wife of Mr. J — B —, silversmith in Cork.

About thirty years ago I was addressed by way of marriage by Mr. Richard Mercier, then a volunteer in the army. The young gentleman was quartered at that time in Charleville, where my father lived, who approved of his addresses and directed me to look upon him as my future husband. When the regiment left the town he promised to return in two months and marry me. From Charleville he went to Dublin, thence to his father's, and from thence to England, where, his father having bought him a cornetcy of horse, he purchased many ornaments for the wedding, and returning to Ireland let us know that he would be at our house in Charleville in a few days. On this the family was busied to prepare for his reception and the ensuing marriage, when one night, my sister Molly and I being asleep in our bed, I was awakened by the sudden opening of the side-curtain and starting up saw Mr. Mercier standing by the bed-side. He was wrapped up in a loose sheet and had a napkin folded like a night-cap on his head. He looked at me very earnestly and lifting up the napkin, which much shaded his face, showed me the left side of his head, all bloody and covered with his brains. The room meantime was quite light. My terror was excessive, which was still increased by his stooping over the bed and embracing me in his arms. My cries alarmed the whole family, who came crowding into the room. Upon their entrance, he gently withdrew his arms and ascended as it were through the ceiling. I continued for some time in strong fits. When I could speak I told them what I had seen. One of them a day or two after, going to the postmaster for letters, found him reading the newspapers, in which was an account that Cornet Mercier, going into Christ Church belfry in Dublin just after the bells had been ringing, and standing under the bells, one of them which was turned bottom upwards, suddenly turning again, struck one side of his head and killed him on the spot. On further inquiry we found he was struck on the left side of his head.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, June 3, 1756 (*Works*, 21:57–58).

From the Rev. James Clark¹

[Hollymount, Ireland]
c. June 28, 1756

Reverend Sir,

I received the favour of your printed discourse upon *Catholic Spirit*² by Mr. William Ruttledge, and should only thank you for the same, and not trouble either you or myself with the address, were it not that I am somewhat suspicious that you had a farther and more particular view than merely making a present in presenting me with that discourse rather than any other of your printed pamphlets or sermons.

I shall very candidly acquaint you with the grounds of my suspicion. Some time ago I took occasion to preach to the flock then (in the absence of the rector) under my care, upon 1 John 4:1. One Mr. [John] Langston, a lay preacher of your society,³ or (as I remember when you preached here you called it) of your little church, and some other members of your society being present, my text naturally led me to lay down some rules for the trial of spirits; and among others I insisted on this, that any person who pretended to an extraordinary and immediate spirit of inspiration or revelation, without proving his pretensions by such credentials as the prophets in the Old or the apostles and other inspired persons in the New Testament proved their pretensions by—that is, by real and undoubted miracles—might justly be deemed either a deluded enthusiast, or an arrant cheat and impostor.

Mr. Langston, I suppose, was offended at this and some other parts of the discourse, imagining (and I confess he was not out in his imagination) that it concerned or was particularly levelled at himself. Whereupon (thinking, I suppose, to engage me in a controversy with him) he wrote me a letter, of which I did not think it worth my while to take any notice; because, however that venerable preacher may, either in his own or the opinion of others, be inspired, yet when he wrote that letter either he was not under the influences of the Spirit or the Spirit forgot to direct him to write common sense, orthography, or English. Now I think it not unlikely that Mr. Langston, since your arrival, may have acquainted you with this affair, and that your sending me your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit* (wherein you endeavour to prove that Christians ought not to inquire into each others' opinions in religion, or their different modes of worship) was a genteel and tacit way of reproving me for making any inquiry into the religious principles of the Methodists, for which I am very far from finding any fault with you, as I think it incumbent on every Christian, if he believes his brother to be in error, to endeavour, as far as he is able or has an opportunity, to convince him of his error, in order to his recanting or forsaking of it.

Having thus candidly and freely acquainted you with the grounds of my suspicion, I shall now proceed, with the same freedom and candour, to acquaint you with the motives that induced me to preach that sermon, and to give you my opinion upon such parts of your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit* as I conceive were designed by you as a reproof of what I therein spoke against some of your principles as a Methodist.

¹James Clark was the rector of Hollymount, 4 miles SSE of Castlebar, Co. Mayo in 1756. On May 10 of that year he preached a sermon on 1 John 4:1, 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.' He used the text to exhort Methodist sympathizers in his parish. A few weeks later, on June 26, Clark welcomed JW to his pulpit, from which JW referred to the Methodist society as 'his little church' (p. 26). Within a couple of days Clark fired off the present letter to JW, who had moved on to Castlebar. JW replied on July 3, Clark answered on July 9, and JW wrote again on Sept. 18. Clark closed their correspondence on Sept. 30, 1756. Four years later he published the sermon, their correspondence, and other material as *Montanus Redivivus, or Montanism revived in the Principles and Discipline of the Methodists* (Dublin, 1760).

²JW published Sermon 39, *Catholic Spirit*, as a separate pamphlet in 1755.

³JW identifies the man as John Langston in his reply; there is no record in the *Minutes* of a travelling preacher by this name.

In several conversations which I have at several times had with some members of your society, I found them always strenuously insisting upon the extraordinary and immediate inspirations of the Holy Ghost, without ever being able to convince them of the difference between the extraordinary and immediate, and the ordinary and mediate influences of that blessed Spirit. And particularly, discoursing at a certain time with one Mr. Bermingham, a member of your society, he did not scruple to affirm that he verily believed the aforesaid Langston was as much inspired as ever the great apostle St. Paul was. And I was credibly informed by some, who went out of curiosity to hear the same Langston preach in this town (and by others, who often heard him at other times, and in other places, express the same) that he affirmed himself to be as righteous and as free from sin as ever Jesus Christ was, and that it was impossible he could commit any sin because the Spirit of God dwelt bodily in him. These, sir, I did and still do conceive to have been blasphemous expressions, for which, if he was guilty, he deserved to be punished with the utmost rigour of the law. For I challenge Antichrist himself, whoever he be, or whensoever he shall appear, to be guilty of more staring and capital blasphemy than equalling himself with the Son of God for righteousness and freedom from sin.

Being therefore informed that these blasphemous words were spoke in the hearing of some of the flock that, in the absence of the rector of the parish were under my care, I thought I could not discharge my duty to the flock, nor answer the trust reposed in me by their rector, without warning them to be cautious how they gave credit to such a lying and deceitful spirit as Mr. Langston must needs have been possessed with, how great and specious soever its outward appearance of piety and devotion might be—for I conceived that a tree which produced such blasphemous fruit could never be of God's planting.

I come now to give you my opinion of your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit*, which I have read more than once with all the impartiality and attention I was master of. And although I have no exception to your earnest recommendation of a catholic spirit of love among Christians, yet give me leave, sir, without offence to affirm that some parts of it seem to me to be very unwarrantable, and absolutely inconsistent with that very catholic spirit of love which you so earnestly, so pathetically, and indeed so piously recommend.

Your text is taken from 2 Kings 10:15, and consists of Jehu's question to Jehonadab, 'Is your heart right, as my heart with thy heart?' And your first remark upon your text is that Jehu makes no inquiry into Jehonadab's opinions, though he held some that were uncommon and peculiar to himself. And it does not appear, you say, that Jehu concerned himself at all about these things, but suffered Jehonadab to abound in his own sense. And neither of them appears to have given the other the least disturbance concerning each other's opinions.

Your second observation drawn from your text is that there is no inquiry made into Jehonadab's mode or manner of worship—though it is highly probable, you say, there was a wide difference between them in the respect; Jehonadab in all probability worshipping at Jerusalem, and Jehu worshipping at Dan and Bethel, etc.

From these observations I do suppose that your design was to infer that neither ought Christians (any more than Jehu did) to make any inquiry into each others' religious opinions, or different modes of worship, but that everyone should be suffered to abound in his own sense, and to worship God in his own way; and that your presenting me with this discourse was with a design to let me know that I had no right to inquire into the religious principles of the Methodists, but should have permitted them to abound in their own sense, without giving them any disturbance about it.

That this was your design in the discourse, and that it was probably on this account alone that you made me a present of that discourse rather than any other of your printed sermons or pamphlets, seems pretty evident from what you farther advance, and by the instances you produce. For upon these words of your text, 'If it be, give me your hand', you discourse thus,

I do not mean (say you) be of my opinion, you need not. ... Keep your own opinion and I will keep mine, and that as steadily as ever. You need not even desire to come over to me, I do not desire to dispute about these things, nor to hear one word about them, Let all opinions alone

on one side and the other.⁴

And as to the difference between the Church [of England] and the Presbyterians about church government, and the Quakers about baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the Anabaptists about infant baptism; of all these differences you make nothing at all. You have no desire, you say, to dispute with any of them, no not for a single moment. And you would have all these small matters—for so you are pleased to call them—laid aside, and never come in sight.

That such propositions as these should be advanced by a clergyman of the Church of England, who bound himself to God and the Church at his ordination under the most solemn vows and obligations to be always ready, with all diligence, to banish and drive away all strange and erroneous doctrines and opinions from his flock, is to me very amazing. And how he can answer or fulfil these obligations without inquiring into or examining the opinions of all that differ from the opinions and mode of worship established in that church wherein he was ordained and entrusted with the cure of souls, is past my capacity to comprehend.

But to return to your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit*. I humbly conceive that your text affords no manner of countenance or foundation for either of the observations which you draw from it. For though it be not expressly mentioned in the text that Jehu enquired into Jehonadab's opinions, yet it may be implied in the question which he proposed to him, 'Is thy heart right ...?', which question may well bear this sense, 'Are you of the same religious principles with me?' But suppose it was neither expressed nor implied (as indeed I am of opinion it was neither the one or the other, for it was the least of Jehu's concern to trouble his head about Jehonadab's religious sentiments or his manner of worship, being a mere politician and latitudinarian with respect to these things). Suppose all this I say, how does it follow that Christians ought not to enquire into each other's religious sentiments? Or who made the principles, the actions, or conduct of Jehu a rule for Christians to walk by? For although God made use of him as an instrument to punish the house of Ahab, and to destroy the worshippers of Baal out of Israel, yet he was in all other respects a very bad man; and he that will undertake to justify all his actions and proceedings will find it a very hard task to reconcile most of them to the strict rules of Christian morality.

The plain meaning, therefore, of Jehu's question to Jehonadab seems to me to be no more than this: Jehu, according to his usual custom, was driving furiously in his chariot towards Samaria in order to destroy all that yet remained of the family of Ahab, and by an hypocritical scheme, not to be justified by the principles of Christian morality, to bring all the worshippers of Baal to one place in order to destroy them.

In his way he meets with Jehonadab the son of Rechab, and being desirous to know his opinion and to have his approbation of what he had hitherto done and was farther resolved to do, he proposes the question to him which you have chose for your text, 'Is thy heart right?' That is, do you, in your opinion and judgment, approve of and consent to what I have hitherto done, and am still resolved and now actually going to do towards destroying the idolatrous house of Ahab, according to the word of Elijah the man of God. And upon Jehonadab's answering in the affirmative, he gives him his hand, takes him up into his chariot, desiring him to come and be an eye-witness of his zeal for the Lord.

But though zeal for the Lord was the outward pretence, yet in reality Jehu's principal view and design was to secure the crown the more effectually to his own family, by an entire eradication of the posterity of Ahab, and by rooting out and destroying all the worshippers of Baal, who (if not out of gratitude, yet upon a principle of self-interest) must have been firmly attached to the royal family of Ahab, their great patron and supporter.

That this was really the case with Jehu seems very plain from his continuing still in the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, notwithstanding all his boasting zeal for the Lord. This being all that can possibly be gathered from Jehu's question to Jehonadab, I know no rule of logic that can from thence infer that Christians ought not to enquire into each other's religious principles, or their different modes

⁴Sermon 39, *Catholic Spirit*, II.1 (*Works*, 2:89).

and forms of worship.

In a word, sir, your propositions and observations receive no more countenance from, and have no more foundation in, your text than in the first chapter of Genesis.

That there are and will be differences in religion, and consequently in modes of worship, to the end of the world is very probable. And that everyone must, or ought to, be persuaded in his own mind, and act and walk according to the light which he has; and that no creature has power to force or constrain another to walk by his rule—all this I acknowledge (as you observe, p. 11) to be very true. But then, sir, though we may not force or constrain, may we not persuade, advise, and exhort our brother to forsake an erroneous or an evil way of thinking or believing? And if he will not be persuaded to do so, may we not (and is it not our indispensable duty to) reject such an one, that is, have no fellowship with him in either? May we not, after private admonition, if he will not be reformed thereby, delate⁵ such an one to the church, according to our Saviour's own directions (Matt. 18:17)? And if he will not hear (that is, be advised by) the church, but will still continue obstinate and incorrigible, are we not warranted by the express words of our Lord to look upon him, after he is duly excommunicated according to the rules of the gospel, as no better than an heathen or a publican—that is, the worst of sinners?

Does not St. Paul desire Titus to reject (that is, to excommunicate) a man that is an heretic, because such an one is perverted and condemned of himself (Titus 3:10). Not that no man is an heretic but he that acts against conscience (as some have strangely imagined), for then neither Titus nor any other could know who was or who was not an heretic. Because no man could tell whether he acted against conscience or no, and all heretics would be hypocrites, which is by no means supposable. For an heretic may be very sincere, and take his heretical opinion for catholic truth. But the meaning of being condemned of himself is that by his obstinate and willful adherence to his false opinion he brings the censure of the church upon himself, and so consequently condemns himself before the actual denunciation of the censures upon him (see Dr. Hammond on the text⁶).

You acknowledge the government of the church by bishops, as an order superior to presbyters, to be scriptural and apostolical (p. 17). But if another thinks the presbyterian or independent form to be better, you advise him to think so still and you will, you say, neither desire nor endeavour to bring him to your own way of thinking. And you expressly allow the Quakers to reject baptism and the Lord's Supper, and you desire to have no dispute with them about such trifles, and that the questions about them may *never* come in sight.

And do you, sir, in good earnest think it a matter indifferent whether the church be under a form of government of divine [origin] (for so the episcopal form must be, if it be, as you acknowledge, both scriptural and apostolical) or under an human form never heard of in the church of God before the days of John Calvin? Are heresies and schisms, which St. Paul reckons among the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:20), sins of so slight and trivial a nature that you will have no dispute with any one about them? And will you not endeavour to rescue your brother from such capital sins, which, if we may believe St. Paul, shut the gates of heaven against men as effectually as murder or adultery? How then is this any way consistent with catholic spirit of love, which in your sermon you do so earnestly recommend?

All errors or deviations from the truth are more or less sinful, in proportion to the importance of the truth that is deviated from, or the vincibleness or invincibleness of the ignorance from whence such error or deviation proceeds. And since of two contradictory opinions, one must of necessity be true and the other false; and that whichever of the two a man holds or maintains, he must hold it as true, for no man can hold or maintain a false opinion *sub modo*,⁷ that is, believing it to be false; he must consequently believe the contradictory opinion to that which he holds to be false. And can he, consistently with that

⁵'Delate' is an archaic verb meaning 'to convey'.

⁶Henry Hammond, *Paraphrases and Annotations upon the New Testament* (London: Royston, 1653).

⁷'Tentatively', or 'subject to modification'.

love which he ought to have for his brother, suffer sin upon him without endeavouring to reform him, according to the best of his power, and the opportunity which God shall afford him?

If, for instance, I believe baptism and the Lord's Supper to be standing ordinances of the gospel, and necessary means (I mean in the ordinary way) of salvation, and consequently of perpetual obligation, and that a Quaker (as he actually does) denies all this, and consequently rejects and disuses these ordinances, must I not believe this to be a very great sin in him, proportionably to the vincibleness or invincibleness of his ignorance? And shall I desire him to lay aside all questions about them? How then can I possibly love him, or wish well to his soul, if I do not endeavour to convince him of his error, and the sinfulness of it, in order to his renouncing and forsaking of it? And how can I do this without arguing against his error, and giving him some disturbance about it?

This palpable indifference of yours as to opposite opinions in religion is, I suppose, the result and effect of that maxim which you and your brother laid down to yourselves when ye first undertook the propagation of Methodism in London. For among the four maxims which, in your *Plain Account of the People called Methodists* (page 4) you say ye laid down to yourselves as a rule which you intended to go by, the very first is that 'orthodoxy, or right opinions, is but a very slender part of religion at best, if it may be allowed to be any part at all of it'.⁸

I am now, sir, convinced of the truth of what I hitherto only suspected—namely, that notwithstanding all its outward show of piety and devotion, there was some hidden mystery, very dangerous to religion, at the bottom of Methodism. For I am really of opinion there hardly can be a more dangerous maxim than that which you and your brother laid down to yourselves as a rule for the propagation of it. For according to this blessed maxim, it is but a very slender (if it be any part at all) of religion to have a right opinion of the divinity and eternity of the Son of God, against Arius; of the unity of his person, against Nestorius; or the distinction of his two natures, the human and divine, against Eutyches. And it must be a matter of very little importance to religion which side of the question one holds, in any or all the above cases, if it be true that orthodoxy or true opinions be at the very best but a slender, if it may be allowed to be any, part at all of religion.

In one word, sir, this maxim, in my opinion, strikes at the root of all religion and of faith. It makes it a matter quite indifferent what opinion a man holds concerning any one article of the creed, which is only a right way of believing facts plainly revealed in Scripture. It makes St. Paul's charge to Timothy, to 'hold fast the form of sound words'⁹ which he had heard from him, of little or no consequence; and makes the advice of St. Jude to 'contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints'¹⁰ very impertinent; and, to conclude all, it opens a wide gap to that latitudinarianism and indifference as to points of speculation which you yourself, in the close of your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit* (how consistently with this maxim let the world judge), very justly and truly call the curse of heaven and the spawn of hell.

I am, sir, etc.

J. C.

Source: published transcription; Clark, *Montanus Redivivus*, 25–36.

⁸This is *Plain Account*, I.2, *Works*, 9:254–55.

⁹2 Tim. 1:13.

¹⁰Jude 1:3.

From John Trembath

Cork
June 28, 1756

Dear Sir,

Whom I love in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and have longed to see lately more than ever. I hope this will find you strengthened in body and rejoicing in the full expectation of all the glory of God. May the Lord strengthen you more and more for the great work whereunto you are called! And at last may you be able to say, with the great apostle, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith'¹¹

Since you left Cork [on June 7] I can truly say that God hath done great things for my soul. Surely I can say, 'Affliction springeth not up out of the earth';¹² nor are they the mere result of blind chance or fortune. No. Sometimes they are permitted, and at other times immediately sent for good. It is a fatherly correction for our past follies. It is the 'visiting of our iniquities with a rod, and our sins with scourges'.¹³ While his design is not to withdraw his mercy or take his loving-kindness from us, it is mercy mixed with judgment. Such indeed did I find it. May the Lord make me truly thankful for the same! I had a fair prospect both of time and eternity. I saw and felt the weight and import of things eternal (O may they never slip out of my mind!), and the emptiness, as well as uncertainty, of everything here below.

I am at present weak in body and not able to preach. But I hope I shall be strengthened daily, not only in body but also in mind. Blessed be God! My soul is as a watered garden. The language of my heart is, 'Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison of thee.'¹⁴ 'Praise the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities.'¹⁵ I hope to follow you as soon as I am able. I am impatient to have my temporal affairs settled here, that I may be more fully employed in the work of the Lord.

John Trembath

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 539–40.

¹¹1 Tim. 4:7.

¹²Job 5:6.

¹³Ps. 89:32.

¹⁴Ps. 73:25.

¹⁵Ps. 103:2.

From the Rev. Thomas Waterhouse¹

June 29, 1756

Accept, dear sir, ten thousand thanks for your kind and friendly admonition, which I am very sure was dictated by a truly Christian regard for the welfare and salvation of my soul. May I never be at rest till I am in possession of 'that full assurance of faith'² which may convince me that I have peace with God, and am numbered with those who in Scripture are called his children!

I have a great work to do, and acknowledge that at certain times I am greatly discouraged. However, I hope that God's grace is sufficient for me, and that 'after I have suffered awhile' it 'may make me perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle me'.³ If I pray and faint not, I shall certainly receive. Let me beg of you, dear sir, to remember me in your prayers since 'the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much'.⁴ And I am not guilty of the least insincerity when I tell you I have strong confidence that you are one of those who are so called in Scripture. I have nothing to recommend me to your esteem but a hearty desire to know the truth. O that I could feel within myself as hearty a desire to be obedient to it! O that the blessed Spirit of truth would lead me into all truth, and dispose me to act according to his dictates. On this instance I humbly rely, conscious that am blind; 'knowing nothing yet as I ought to know',⁵ and finding that my will is yet perverse, and that nothing can rectify it but the mighty working of the Spirit of grace.

I am at present reading your extract of Mr. [William] Law's *Serious Call to a Holy Life*, and have hitherto found nothing but what the coolest reason must approve. I dare say that I shall find throughout what will challenge my fullest approbation.

Go on, dear sir, promoting the cause of God, and setting forward the salvation of all. I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. I hope my less *active* and *zealous* endeavours in the same cause will hereafter be ascribed more to my want of *power* than *will* to promote it. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your sincere well-wisher, affectionate brother, and servant,

Thomas Waterhouse

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 540–41.

¹Thomas Waterhouse (1720–58) was educated at University College, Oxford (1739–42) and serving as rector of Langley, Kent at the time of his death. Whether the link with JW was a chance meeting, a visit, or a letter, we do not know. But it seems clear that JW preserved and later published this letter because he regarded Waterhouse (to use the title which he prefixed to the letter in publishing it in *AM*) as 'a clergyman awaking out of sleep'.

²Heb. 10:22.

³1 Pet. 5:10.

⁴James 5:16.

⁵1 Cor. 8:2.

From the Rev. James Clark¹

Hollymount, Ireland
July 9, 1756

Reverend Sir,

I received your letter, dated at Castlebar the 3rd instant, and am very glad to find you do not approve of Mr. [James] Langston as a preacher, to which office, to be sure, he has no more call from God than he has from man.

But give me leave, sir, without offence, to ask by what authority you take upon yourself to approve or disapprove of preachers, or who gave you any such authority? But above all, let me conjure you to tell me by what (more than pontifical authority) do you take upon yourself to settle lay preachers within certain bounds and districts, in open defiance to the twenty-third Article of that Church from which you say you have not as yet separated, and probably (but not certainly) never shall. Though, in my humble opinion, you can hardly make a greater separation from her than by assuming within the bounds and limits of her jurisdiction a liberty to settle and send forth lay preachers into all parts of England and Ireland, to gather disciples after you, to form them into societies under certain rules of government and discipline of your own framing, not only without the consent and approbation of the chief governors in either church either had or desired (though at your ordination you vowed all due submission and obedience to them) but in direct opposition to them all.

As to lay preachers, I pray you will consider that the seven first deacons, though they were good men and full of the Holy Ghost, were not allowed to execute so mean an office as taking care of the poor and distributing the alms of the faithful among them (which was their first and original office) until they were publicly ordained by the hands of the apostles. And it is very remarkable that though Barnabas and Paul were some time before called to be supernumerary apostles at large, yet when it pleased the Holy Ghost to employ them in a peculiar and particular ministry the same Holy Spirit ordered them to be ordained for that ministry by the imposition of the hands of the governors of the church at Antioch (Acts 13:2–3). And how you came by a power to grant a privilege which was not even allowed to Paul and Barnabas is what, I think, imports you very much to take into your serious consideration.

I am glad you acknowledge Mr. Langston and Mr. Bermingham to be, or at least to have been, real enthusiasts, and could wish you did seriously reflect that if, among the few proselytes which your doctrine and discipline has made in this remote corner of the kingdom, there be two confessed (and it is very probable, if not certain, that there are many more than are confessed) enthusiasts, what vast numbers of enthusiasts (that is, in reality, of religious madmen) your doctrine and discipline has made in all other parts of England and Ireland, and that the guilt of all the blasphemies which these madmen shall, at any time in their frantic fits, be guilty of will be laid to your charge, at least as an accessory, at the great day of account.

I remember to have read some years ago a pamphlet wrote by an anonymous author of your society, wherein he made a collection of all the texts in the New Testament where there is any mention made of the Spirit, or its influences, either ordinary or extraordinary²—of all which he does promiscuously, without any distinction or reservation, affirm that every Christian has a right to expect them, and that whoever has them not is no child of God, but a mere reprobate.

Now when such doctrine as this is inculcated upon poor ignorant creatures, who have the least spark of natural enthusiasm in their tempers or constitutions (and there are but few who have not some little spark of it), I appeal to your own judgment, to what a height this fever of the mind (for in reality natural enthusiasm is nothing else) may be raised and fomented by such outward incentives and

¹Replying to JW's of July 3, 1756.

²This is likely a reference to [John Cennick], *A Treatise of the Holy Ghost, wherein is proved that the Spirit was in the Prophets and Apostles, and is in every true Believer, to the end of the World* (London: J. Lewis, 1742).

applications; and what a horrid affront it must be to the Holy Ghost to have all the wild imaginations of such hot-headed enthusiasts fathered upon him.

As to Mr. Langston's behaviour with respect to me, it was not worth your notice. I rather expected some marks of your resentment against his blasphemy in equalling himself to the Son of God for righteousness, and his pretending to a state of impeccability on account of his being (in his own imagination) bodily possessed with the Holy Ghost—of which, to my great surprise, you take no manner of notice, either by confessing or denying the charge. For either he is guilty of the charge or not. If he be, I humbly conceive that you ought rather to have expressed your disapprobation of the blasphemy than of his behaviour to me, were it a thousand times more irregular than it was. But if he be not guilty, then why is not the charge denied, and he not suffered to lie under the imputation of it—by saying nothing either one way or another about it, and giving too much room to conclude him guilty from your profound silence upon that head?

From the text of your sermon, you say you infer not that Christians should not enquire into each others opinions in religion. Nay, it seems you infer nothing at all from it, and then I must needs greatly admire to what purpose you placed it in the front of your sermon. If you designed to infer nothing at all from it, what business had it there? Or why do you, in the introduction to your following discourse, tell your audience that your text contained matter very well worth the serious imitation and attention of every Christian? (p. 6³) And how this was possible, if nothing at all was to be inferred from it, I own for my part I cannot conceive.

But you used it, you say, to illustrate, not to prove. This is still more unaccountable, for preachers generally do, or at least I am sure ought to, take their matter from their text, and illustrate that matter by other parallel texts of Scripture. But notwithstanding all you do now, or indeed can say to the contrary, it seems to me very evidently plain from the two first observations which you draw from your text that your real design was to prove, not to illustrate. Your observations were: Jehu did not enquire into Jehonadab's principles in religion, or his manner of worship. Now in the name of common ingenuity, what other possible view could you have in making these two observations on your text than thereby to prove that Christians should not enquire into each other's religious principles, or their modes of worship? For was not Jehu's not enquiring into Jehonadab's principles, etc., the matter which you told your audience was so well worth their serious imitation and attention? And therefore was it not most plainly your design to persuade your audience that they ought not to enquire into each other's principles, any more than Jehu enquired into Jehonadab's?

But still, you say your design was not to show what Jehu meant by the question, but what a child of God means, or is understood to mean by it, when he proposes it to his brother.

Let us then suppose this was really your design. What, in your opinion, should a child of God mean by it when he proposes it to his brother? Do you not think he ought not thereby to intend any enquiry into his religious principles, or the mode or manner of his worship? And does it not, from the passages which I quoted from your sermon in my former letter, appear that you think he ought not?

But pray sir, why may not a child of God by this question, 'Is your heart right?'—why, I say, may he not mean, design, and intend to enquire and know whether his brother has the same true principle of religion as he has himself? Is there any thing in such a design inconsistent with the question, or in the question with the design? Nay, to the contrary, what can be more natural for a child of God than by this question, 'Is your heart right?', to mean are you of the same opinion with me in matters of religion, and do you worship God after the same manner that I do?

In one word, when a true follower of Christ proposes such a question to his brother, I humbly conceive that he may very naturally and truly be understood to mean whether he is a true believer? Whether his principles in religion be sound and orthodox? He may, I say, be as well presumed to mean this as any of those particulars which you say he does or ought to mean by it.

³I.e., JW, Sermon 39, *Catholic Spirit*, §6 (*Works*, 2:82).

And this is apparent from the very first thing which you acknowledge to be implied in the question, when proposed by a child of God to his brother: 'Dost thou believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God over all, blessed for evermore?'⁴ Which, you say, no Arian, Semi-Arian, or Socinian can answer in the affirmative. And therefore this question evidently implies a desire in the proposer to know whether he to whom it is proposed believes in Christ as God, as the catholic church and as every true follower of Christ ought to do; or as a creature, as the Arians, Semi-Arians, and Socinians believe him to be; and consequently implies an enquiry into his religious principles or sentiments.

Had you told us in your sermon that you only postponed inquiring into your brother's religious principles till ye were better acquainted, and had confirmed your loves to each other, I could have no room to except against it. But as you affirmed in general terms, without any such reservation expressed, that you desired to have no dispute with anyone about their religious principles, and that particularly with regard to the Quakers denying Baptism and the Lord's Supper, you discourse in the following manner, page 18 of your sermon: 'My sentiment is', say you, 'that I ought not to forbid water wherein persons are baptized, and that I ought to eat bread and drink wine in memory of my dying Master. But if you' (meaning a Quaker) 'are not convinced of this, act according to the light you have. I have no desire to dispute with you one moment about them. Let all these *smaller* matters stand aside, let them *never*' (it is your own express term) 'come in sight.'⁵

Now, sir, considering how very slightly and superficially you here speak of the two venerable and awful mysteries of the Christian religion, the badges of our profession and the means of grace, and how very little you seem to think of the indispensable obligation that lies on all Christians to use them as positive institutions and commands of their divine Lord and Master; considering, I say, all this together with many other the like expressions throughout that whole sermon, I think I had, and still have, very good grounds to conclude that you are very indifferent as to any man's principles in religion, and that you thereby open a wide gap to a pernicious latitudinarianism in speculation and opinion which you yourself (p. 22 of your sermon⁶) very justly and truly call the curse of heaven and the spawn of hell.

And here I cannot but observe how very cautiously and dubiously you speak in your letter, even when you are endeavouring to clear yourself of the imputation of indifference as to all opinions, though all your endeavours are only so many protestations against plain facts. And I may justly say, '*Quid verba audiam cum facta videam.*'⁷ For after all, it is only a peradventure you may and peradventure you may not, even after a thorough acquaintance and confirmation of mutual love, dispute with any one about his religious opinions, though never so contrary or opposite to your own. This, you say, will depend upon a variety of circumstances, particularly upon the probability of success—being resolved, you say, never to dispute at all until you have some hopes of convincing your opponent.

This, sir, very much resembles the resolution of the man who wisely resolved never to go into the water till he had learned to swim. But as it was impossible he could learn to swim until he went into the water, so I am at a loss to know how you can have any hopes of convincing an opponent till you first reason or argue (which is all that is meant by disputing) with him. And though I grant that the hopes of success are a great encouragement, yet I do not think the want of them can cancel the obligation we lay under to use our best endeavours to recover our brother from a dangerous error. We are, I conceive, to do our own duty and to leave the success to God, who will accept our labour of love towards our brother, not according to the success but according to the charity and sincerity of our intentions.

As to the government of the church by bishops, though it be, you say, your judgment that it is both scriptural and apostolical, yet that it is prescribed in Scripture you say you do not believe. Sir, I must

⁴JW, *Catholic Spirit*, I.12 (*Works*, 2:87).

⁵Ibid, II.2 (2:90).

⁶Ibid, III.1 (2:92).

⁷Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, III.xx.48. 'Why am I listening to words, seeing that I have the deeds before my eyes?' (Loeb).

say that this distinction of yours, and the difference you make between being scriptural and apostolical and being prescribed in Scripture, is as nice and subtle as ever was made use of upon a pinch by any popish schoolman. Nay, it is a distinction without any manner of difference. For if the episcopal form was that which the apostles settled in all the churches which they planted, and which they recommended in their writings (and if it was not so, how could it be agreeable to their practice and writings, which you say is what you mean by its being scriptural and apostolical?), I think it plain to evidence and demonstration that this is equivalent to, and the same thing as, being prescribed in Scripture. And I believe every man of common sense and reason will be of the same opinion.

But it seems, though you were once a zealous assessor of the scriptural prescription of episcopacy, yet now you are heartily ashamed of that opinion, ever since you read Dr. Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*,⁸ wherein you think he has unanswerably proved that neither Christ nor his apostles established any particular form of church government, and that the plea for the divine right of episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive church.

Sir, had you thoroughly considered and weighed the grounds of the opinion which, you say, you once zealously asserted, you ought rather to be heartily ashamed of quitting it upon so weak a pretence as reading Dr. Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*. For if my memory does not fail (for I have not the book, and there are many years past since I read it), the doctor does not, nor indeed could he with any colour of truth, affirm that neither Christ nor his apostles established any particular form of church government. For sure they left the church under some form of government, whatever it was. But his main design was to prove that they settled no particular form that was unalterable. He confesses that the episcopal was the form under which the apostles left the churches, and only contends that they left it as a form that might be changed, according to the difference of time and place.

But be that as it will, you ought to have considered that there have been other divines, as learned and judicious as the doctor, who have taken upon them to prove the direct contrary by irrefragable arguments; particularly Mr. Chillingworth, in his treatise of the divine right of episcopacy.⁹ And above all, you should have considered that the doctor wrote his *Irenicum* in his younger days, with a pacific view to compose and put an end to the great heats and animosities, then subsisting in their greatest height, between those of the episcopal persuasion and the Presbyterians. And that, out of his ardent zeal for the peace of the church, he made some concessions which he afterwards recanted, and was as heartily ashamed of as you now seem to be of that opinion which you say you were once a zealous assessor of.

As for the plea for the divine right of episcopacy, if it was not *ex professo*¹⁰ pleaded in the primitive times, there is a very good reason to be assigned for it—because no man in those days disputed or called it in question. Arius, who was the first that did, is reckoned by Epiphanius to be no less than a monster, and he was unanimously condemned by the whole church universal.

In the late revolution, when episcopacy was abolished by act of Parliament in Scotland, there was a very learned divine of the Church of Scotland, who published a book in London entitled *The Principles of the Cyprianic Age, with regard to Episcopal Power and Jurisdiction*;¹¹ and soon after he published a *Vindication*¹² of the discourse, against the answer of Gilbert Rule, principal Regent of the University of Edinburgh, and the stated and authorized champion of the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk. In the *Vindication* there is a whole chapter upon the divine right of episcopacy, in which the author proves that all the fathers

⁸Edward Stillingfleet, *Irenicum; a Weapon-Salve for the Church's Wound* (London: Mortlock, 1660).

⁹William Chillingworth, *The Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy* (Oxford: H. Hall, 1644).

¹⁰'With explicit authority'.

¹¹John Sage, *The Principles of the Cyprianic Age* (London: Walter Kettilby, 1695).

¹²John Sage, *A Vindication of a Discourse entitled The Principles of the Cyprianic Age* (London: Robert Clavel & George Strahan, 1701).

of that age (the third century) did look upon episcopacy as of divine right, and reasoned upon supposition of it. And he proves it by such arguments and express testimonies as would, I am persuaded, puzzle either the doctor (if he were alive) or even you yourself to answer. I recommend the book to your perusal, or of any one who is desirous of thorough satisfaction in the controversy between the Church [of England] and the Presbyterians, about church government.

As to heresy and schism, you cannot, you say, find any one text in the Bible where they are taken in the modern sense; or any scripture wherein heresy is taken for an error in opinion, whether fundamental or not; or where schism signifies separation from the church, with cause or without; and you wish me to reconsider the point and review the several texts where these terms occur.

In reply to this I can only say that I could wish you had informed me in what other possible sense than the modern you yourself understand these terms, or what difference you make between the modern and the ancient sense of them. Or, in a word, whether you believe there is any such thing as a damnable heresy or schism. Or whether you take them to be mere insignificant terms, without any determinate sense or meaning.

I have, at your request, reconsidered this point very seriously, and have examined the most material texts wherein the term, especially that of heresy, occurs. And as to the term 'heresy', I find there is a difference between the strict notation of the word and the ecclesiastical use of it as a technical term. In the strict notion of it, I find it signifies merely, and only, election or choice, being derived from a Greek verb which signifies to choose. Hence the word αἵρεσιν came to signify any opinion, system, or profession which a man chooses to hold, maintain, or profess, without any note or brand of malignity necessarily annexed to it. And in this sense I understand the term as it occurs [in] Acts 24:5 and Acts 26:5. But in the ecclesiastical sense of the term, it signifies an error voluntarily chosen, and obstinately adhered to, and consequently has always a note or brand of malignity affixed to it. And in this sense I understand the term as it occurs [in] 1 Cor. 11:18–19 and 2 Pet. 2:1. According to this ecclesiastical use of the word, αἵρεσις or heresy is designed by Phavorinus to be ἡ περὶ πιστεως οὐκ ἀληθῆς δόξα, that is, a false opinion conceived or entertained concerning the faith, or any part, branch, or article of it.¹³ For as apostasy is the renouncing or casting off the whole and entire faith, so heresy is the renouncing or casting off any part, branch, or article of it. This appears plainly from 2 Pet. 2:1, where the apostle, speaking of false prophets, says that they privily brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. The judicious Grotius, upon the text, supposes that the Carpocratians were the false prophets here aimed at by the apostle. These heretics affirmed that Jesus was only the son of Joseph and Mary, born in the natural way of generation, denying his divinity and eternity, and consequently denying the honour that was due to him. Hence, I think it evidently follows that heresy, according to Scripture, is the denial of, or a false opinion concerning some necessary article of faith. For such, I hope, you allow the believing of Christ's divinity and eternity to be; the denial of which, St. Peter expressly calls a damnable heresy. Whilst a man keeps his false opinion to himself, he is but a mere and simple heretic only. But if he propagates his false opinion, either by preaching or writing, and gathers disciples after him, in opposition to or separation from the church, he then becomes a schismatic or separatist from her communion, as well as a heretic from her faith. In a word, sir, I never heard or read of any other sense or meaning of the words heresy or schism (especially as understood by all the ancient and primitive saints and fathers of God's church), according to the ecclesiastical use of these terms, than that one was an obstinate denial of some necessary article of the faith, and the other a causeless separation from an orthodox and true church when no sinful term or condition of communion is either required or imposed. And [I] should be extremely obliged to you if you were pleased to inform me in what other sense or meaning you do, or indeed possibly can, understand these terms as they occur in those places of Scripture wherein they are most evidently branded with notes and marks of malignity.

¹³Varinus Camers (variant: Varinus Phavorinus; d. 1537), *Lexikon Barinu Phaborinu Kamertos* (Basil, 1538).

In your postscript you tell me that what you mean by orthodoxy's being, at the very best, but a slender part of religion, if it may be allowed to be any part at all of it (which it seems with you is a question), is that in a child of God, holy in heart and life, his right opinions are but the slenderest parts of his religion; but in a child of the devil they are no part at all, nor indeed can be, because a child of the devil has no religion at all.

In order to set this matter in a clear light, let me observe to you that when we speak of religion we are, I humbly presume, by religion supposed to mean the entertaining and conceiving suitable thoughts and apprehensions of the nature of God, his attributes, and his word in our minds; and the exemplifying and expressing these inward thoughts and apprehensions by such outward acknowledgements and actions as are suitable to our natural notions of the deity, and to the revelations and directions which God has been pleased to make and give, either by the clear dictates of reason or of the Holy Scriptures, concerning these outward actions and acknowledgements. Now orthodoxy is nothing else but the conceiving and entertaining of such sentiments and thoughts concerning God, his nature, attributes, and words as are agreeable to our natural notions of the deity, and to the revelations and directions which God has been pleased to make and give us concerning them. And therefore most evidently orthodoxy is as necessary and essential a part of religion as the outward acts and acknowledgements that result from it. Nay, in some sense it is a more necessary and essential part because of the great influence which either orthodoxy or heterodoxy has upon practice, either for the better or the worse. For entertaining wrong notions or opinions concerning the nature, attributes, or word of God does, in many cases and instances, produce such outward acts as are rather a dishonour than an honour to him. Men of unsound and heterodox opinions and principles are generally (I had almost said necessarily) unsound in their practice; whereas sound and orthodox opinions and principles do generally and naturally produce sound and holy actions, as a good tree naturally produces good fruit.

But to argue as you do, that because a child of the devil has no religion at all, that therefore orthodoxy is no part of religion, is the strangest inference I have ever met with. Pray, sir, is holiness of heart and life no part of religion because a child of the devil has no religion at all? You will not, I am sure, affirm it. And yet you may with as much reason and truth affirm it as you do that orthodoxy is no part of religion because a child of the devil has no religion at all. It is, sir, in this case, I conceive, as in the case of faith and good works, both which are equally necessary. And as we cannot say that faith is not necessary, because St. James says that without good works it is dead and has no life or energy in it; so neither can we say that orthodoxy is no part of religion, because to a child of the devil, who has not a suitable practice, it is useless and of no effect.

I acknowledge that though we cannot unite in all opinions, yet we may unite in love. Though at the same time, you must allow that the greater our union in opinion is, the greater and closer our union in love will consequently be. And that therefore the greater should be our endeavours to attain the former, in order to obtain the latter. I also acknowledge that the best of our endeavours should be applied toward beating down all manner of sin, both in ourselves and others. But then, I humbly presume that it is, on the other hand, incumbent on us to use proportionable endeavours towards banishing all strange and erroneous doctrines and opinions, as an excellent means to beat down many sins, and especially because in many cases we cannot do the one without the other. As for instance, how can you convince a papist of the crying sin of idolatry in worshipping the host, unless you first convince him of the falsehood of the doctrine of transubstantiation. For so long as he believes that doctrine, he can never be persuaded that it is any sin, but rather an indispensable duty to worship the host.

To conclude, sir, you must give me leave to be so free to declare that I think it too plainly appears from your discourse upon *Catholic Spirit*, from the rule and maxim which you and your brother laid down to yourselves when ye undertook the propagation of Methodism in London, and from the weak (and you must excuse me if I call it), evasive answer and defence you make in your letter, that you are either indifferent as to any man's principles in religion, and consequently guilty of that latitudinarianism in speculation which you yourself very justly and truly call the curse of heaven and spawn of hell, or else that you conceal your sentiments in order to ingratiate yourself with the dissenters from that Church whereof you do as yet profess yourself a member, thereby to facilitate (for the farther strengthening and

enlarging your party and society) your gaining the more proselytes from among them.

But I rather, in charity, believe the former than the latter. Because, in reality, the former may be an error of your judgment only, but the latter is such a gross piece of hypocrisy and prevarication as I would not readily suspect anyone, much less a reverend brother, could be guilty of.

I am, reverend sir,

Your, etc.

J. C.

Source: published transcription; Clark, *Montanus Redivivus*, 40–54.

From An Unidentified Correspondent

[July 16, 1756]

Sir,

Having observed your Christian condescension in those labours of love so truly calculated for the use of *common people*, I presume to beg your pen in behalf of the *next class* of God's creatures. And I would ask if nature, reason, and revelation do not all plead in favour even of the brute creation? Is it not *unnatural* and inhuman to put them to more pain than is necessary for the service of man? Can *reason* consent to the making sport with the life or misery of any creature? May not the great law of equity, doing as we would be done to, be extended even to them? May we not suppose ourselves in *their* place and thence determine what they may fairly expect from us? Hath not the Supreme Being given injunctions against cruelty toward them and commanded that they should enjoy the rest of his day? Did he not rebuke the prophet for smiting his beast without cause? And mention the 'much cattle' as one motive to the divine compassion in sparing the 'great city'?¹ The Scripture saith, 'A good man is merciful to his beast.'² And can he be a good man that is not so, if goodness consists in imitating him whose 'mercy is over all his works'?³ For 'he openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.'⁴

If tenderness, mercy, and compassion to the brute creatures were impressed on the infant breast and conducted into action according to its little power, would it not be confirmed in the human heart? And might not this early prepossession be for ever established there and, through an happy bias, extend its benevolence to the whole creation?

Does not experience show the sad effects of a contrary education? While children, instead of being taught benevolence to irrationals, are suffered to torment first poor, little insects, and then every helpless creature that comes in their way; can it be expected that, being thus inured to cruelty and oppression even in their tender years, they should relent when they come to age, and be susceptible of compassion, even to rationals? It cannot. For is pity shown to man only because he has reason? If so, those would lose their claim to our compassion who stand in the greatest need of it, namely, children, idiots, and lunatics. But if pity is shown to all that are capable of pain, then may it justly be expected that we should sympathize with everything that has life.

I am persuaded you are not insensible of the pain given to every Christian, every humane heart, by those savage diversions, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, horse-racing, and hunting. Can any of these irrational and unnatural sports appear otherwise than cruel, unless through early prejudice or entire want of consideration and reflection? And if a man is void of these, does he deserve the name of man? Or is he fit for society? And besides, how dreadful are the concomitant and the consequent vices of these savage routs! Yet such cowards are we grown, that scarce any man has courage to draw his pen against them!

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, July 16, 1756 (*Works*, 21:67–69).

¹Cf. Jon. 4:11.

²Prov. 12:10.

³Ps. 145:9.

⁴Ps. 145:16.

From John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar¹

[London]
[July 19, 1756]

**To Mr. George Whitefield, Mr. John Wesley, and all chiefs
of the new sects called True Methodists**

True Christians and good patriots expect that in this *Public Advertiser* you shall answer them, and give reason as you should (1 Pet. 3:15) of what you understand by these words, 'Lie not to one another, putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man which is renewed by the knowledge of (Truth the God) who created him after his own image.'² Why do you mislead and delude a well meaning and unwary people with calling them any longer to a dead church, to the old man blinded by himself in the ignorance of Truth, which is Jesus Christ our God, as you do in all your discourses and writings, especially in the false and injurious new pamphlet entitled *Methodism Displayed*,³ by whose strongest arguments papism can equally be defended? Why do you this when the true and lawful ministers of the only true church of this nation begin to call the people to the new man, to the living church, the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven, of which Truth our God in Jesus Christ, is the living light, the sun not going down, the moon not withdrawing itself (Rev. 21:23, Isa. 60:19–20).

The unconfutable solution of this universally important question, *What is Truth?* is sold, price twopence, at J. Marshall, Bookseller, in St. Clements Church-yard; where may be had, price threepence, the *Letters* to Mr. George Whitefield upon the false Christs, false prophets, workers of iniquity, etc., and upon his Tabernacles.

Source: published transcription; *Public Advertiser* (July 19, 1756), p. 3.

¹Little is known of this eccentric figure (fl. 1752–70), who called himself 'John-Baptist the Arch-Teacher' beyond what is conveyed in his extended set of advertisements and letters against the early Methodists, and particularly their leaders George Whitefield and John Wesley. In the mid 1760s he also attempted to claim a Parliamentary prize for establishing a means of ascertaining longitude in navigation, by appeal to passages in Matthew and Mark.

²Cf. Col. 3:9–10.

³[William Mason,] *Methodism Displayed, and Enthusiasm Detected* (London: Henry Cooke, 1756). This is actually a book critical of Methodism, not a book by JW.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[[Bristol]]
[[August]] 6 [1756]

[[Dear Brother,

[[I hope nothing will prevent your being in Bristol before the 23rd, though Mr. [William] Grimshaw cannot stay.¹ The book affair we may settle when we meet.²

[[I have laid by [Charles] Perronet's letters for you.³ He is sinking swiftly into a bitter spirit about coming to the Conference. You and I must have a private conference with him. I am mistaken if after that he carries any fire.

[[It lies upon you to bring about our frequent meeting, and we may talk over matters thoroughly, you and I first, then among Grimshaw and two or three of our select preachers. If we hold two, the rest can do no hurt. Fit your Conference to answer an exact end.

[[You may read over our last letters too, and compare our thoughts, which I apprehend are just the same.

[[The western preachers have notice. We shall take the best care we can about billeting them.

[[Michael Fenwick says you preach three times a day, which has brought back your disorder.

[[Brother [William] Atkinson says there are not *Notes* enough for the subscribers.⁴ I have sent one in your name to Dr. Middleton,⁵ assuring [Norton⁶] if you would not allow it, I would pay for it myself.

[[Dr. Robertson⁷ desired a second copy, which he likewise supposed you could not refuse him.

[[You⁸ have received the news, Mrs. Lefevre's [death ...⁹].

[[Mr. [Henry] Venn is still here. I will keep him, if possible, till you come.

[[Sally [Wesley] joins in love. Before I left London we began a concert for prayer. Several of the preachers pray for each other every day at noon.

Farewell in Christ.]]

Source: MARC, DDCW 7/113B (CW's shorthand copy of letter; expansion provided by Frank Baker).

¹JW had been in Ireland since April. The brothers had planned a conference of the preachers in Bristol to continue discussion about possible separation from the Church of England. The Conference actually met Aug. 26–28. William Grimshaw attended briefly.

²That is, whether CW would continue to receive £100 a year from the sale of books; see CW to Martha (Wesley) Hall, June 19, 1756.

³See JW's synopsis and response to these letters in JW to Nicholas Norton, Sept. 3, 1756 (*Works*, 27:48–50).

⁴While the title page to the first edition of *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (*NT Notes*) bears the date '1755', the publisher was not able to start delivering unbound quires until May 1756, and the bound volumes were just becoming available in August.

⁵Dr. John Middleton of Bristol, a friend and physician for both Wesley brothers.

⁶The shorthand might be rendered 'Burton', but is more likely Nicholas Norton (on whom see JW's letter of Sept. 3, 1756).

⁷Dr. John Robertson of Pitcomb, who introduced JW to Bengel's works, and greatly assisted him with his *NT Notes* (see *Works*, 26:342 n. 19).

⁸Baker suggests this might also be rendered 'I'.

⁹The remainder of this sentence is uncertain. Mrs. Lefevre died July 6, 1756.

From the Rev. Samuel Walker¹

Truro
August 16, 1756

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am informed, you are about to hold another Conference upon the matter of your lay-preachers; and also desired² to renew my correspondence with you on that head at this time—when I hope something decisive will be done, and the constitution of Methodism put on a footing that shall render it more serviceable to the church of Christ and the Church of England. Indeed, every friend of true religion, and of our establishment, cannot but wish that somewhat may be effectually done in your lifetime, after which I think nothing can be reasonably expected.

If you, sir, who must needs have such authority with the Methodists as no other can possibly have after your death, yet find it hard to keep things in order, you may easily foresee the confusion that shall follow, when upon your departure all you leave behind you shall consider themselves of equal weight and moment. The restraint of your authority gone, some of your preachers will be separating, and other[s] will be disputing³—to the evident ruin of Methodism, to the new disgrace of the Church of England, and (what is worse than both) to the dishonour and hindrance of practical godliness. You will weigh this in your thoughts, and see the absolute necessity of doing something in a way of prevention; while also your state of health and the uncertainty of your life considered, the necessity of doing something at this Conference is manifest.

Do you ask, What is that which ought to be done? I answer, settle things on such a footing as you wish they may be in after your death. Do you fear you are not able? Allow me to say you will not want power if you do not want resolution. If you determine to come closer to the Church of England, as I doubt not you wish to do, you have only to declare your resolution and act in concert thereupon with such of your people as will join you; and I doubt not you will not have many that will leave you. Say some should depart. Why such are departed already in principle, so that we shall surely do better without them. And in fact they will depart, whenever opportunity serves, though for the present you should keep them by compliance.

Do you ask what I wish you to do? Indeed your circumstance at present is perplexed, and you shall need to have courage as well as conduct to act suitably in it. The *general* advice I should offer is to follow your own conscience, without any regard to consequences; which are altogether in God's hand, and by which we ought not to be biassed in the least sort in any point of duty, which were to do evil that good might come. Keep your eye on the Word of God, and forget not your office as minister of the Church of England (of which we ministers ought to regard ourselves the peculiar guardians while we continue in it) and then give way to the dictates of your own mind, without regard to any consideration whatever. Such a simplicity of conduct will give you great ease, whatever be the issue.

You must carefully distinguish between conscience and prudence, lest while the former bids you act, the latter engage you to delay or temporize. More *particularly*, 1) I would wish you to keep full in view the interests of Christ's church in general, and of practical religion; not considering the Church of England or the cause of Methodism but as subordinate thereto. 2) I would wish you to keep in view also the unlawfulness of a separation from the Church of England, considering it on the whole as a sound branch of Christ's church. 3) I would wish you to declare yourself without the least reserve on this point,

¹This continues the important correspondence between JW and Walker; for the introduction to which, see Walker's letter of Sept. 5, 1755 (*Works*, 26:582–86), JW's reply of Sept. 24, 1755 (26:592–96), Walker's rejoinder of Oct. 20, 1755 (26:606–08), and JW's of Nov. 20, 1755 (26:611–13).

²*AM* reads 'that you desire me'.

³In the manuscript letter Walker wrote about five words, which he then crossed out repeatedly, rendering them illegible, and substituted 'will be disputing'.

as one satisfied herein, and fully determined to dispute that matter no more with any who dissent from your opinion. 4) I would wish you immediately to act with vigour in consequence of such declaration; requiring your preachers to declare themselves, suffering such of them to depart as will not join you herein, and making all your societies acquainted with what you have done. 5) I would wish you to do this at the approaching Conference. You may never have another opportunity. Delays will make matters worse. The disaffected will grow upon you, corrupt others, and imagine you are afraid of them. While also, in so unsettled a state of things, nothing can go forward. The enemy has advantage, and the interest of vital religion must suffer. 6) I could wish as many of your preachers as are fit for it might be ordained, and that the others might be fixed to certain societies—and that, in my judgment, as inspectors and readers, rather than preachers.⁴

I know, dear sir, the thing now lying on you must be both difficult and disagreeable. But after all, the main difficulty must lie within yourself. A treacherous corrupt heart will be apt to plead the reputation of Methodism, and your own reputation, together with the reproach you may bring on yourself from those without; which may appear under such colours as the less opportunities you may have of doing good, and the disgrace that may fall on true religion. You will need [to] watch your heart above all. And tis herein I am peculiarly instant on your behalf.

That the infinitely wise God may direct you to such measures as shall contribute most to his glory and your comfort is the unfeigned prayer, of

Your very unworthy fellow-labourer in the gospel,

S.⁵ Walker

P. S. It occurs to me as a thing of importance, and which might perhaps slip you in the haste of this business, that whatever you do be so conducted as to give no offense to dissenters of any denomination, lest unadvisedly old disputes and party heats should be revived.⁶

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at the Horsefair / Bristol / Single Sheet'.

Postmark: 'TRURO'. *Charge:* '4'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr. Walker / Aug. 16. 1756 / ad. Sept. 3 / Advices concerning ye Church'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/134. Compared to Walker's manuscript record copy, Pitts Library (Emory), Samuel Walker Papers (MSS 437); and *AM* 2 (1779): 641–44.

⁴This sentence has an 'x' drawn through it in the manuscript, to indicate omitting it in *AM*. Then JW writes below the line: 'Blotted out by mistake. Put it in.'

⁵The first initial is mistakenly printed as 'T' in *AM*.

⁶The postscript is struck through by JW and duly omitted from *AM*.

From the Rev. Samuel Walker to the Rev. Thomas Adam¹

[Truro, Cornwall]
September 2, 1756

Dear Sir,

You will find by the inclosed copies of letters that Mr. Wesley has been, and perhaps still is, engaged in another conference with his lay preachers. The affair has become of a very serious nature, and beyond what I fear they will be able to manage. To my apprehension it will end in a separation unless the lay preachers be laid aside, which however Charles [Wesley] may be disposed to do, neither his brother nor they will be disposed to. The usefulness of the Methodists will be over whenever they separate, while also such an event will be apt to damp the zeal of the regular clergy who are standing up in the gap. I would have your sentiments on the matter, and how I ought to act if further applied to, as also [how] I have blundered in what I have done already. For my own part I see abundant cause of thankfulness that I have been directed in a regular way, as well as kept from their mistakes in doctrinals. I am perfectly satisfied we are members of a pure Church of Christ. I heartily desire to abide by it. I would exert my little endeavour to promote the ends of it. And surely it is among my chiefest joys that God is raising up here and there faithful men who speak and live the gospel.

Yet it grieves me that the most of them, as far I learn, are tinctured with unscriptural notions, ministering gospel truths with a dash more or less of Methodism, mysticism, and Moravianism. This at least gives a handle to such as are disposed themselves to do nothing, and will be glad to exempt themselves by picking holes. There is reason to suppose our friends in and near Bristol, united for the common cause, are not so clear and distinct in their manner of setting out gospel truths as we would wish them. The correspondence I hold with one of them has given me opportunity (though very unfit for the purpose) of laying before them the substantial gospel as I understand it. On my communicating it to my friends here they wish it might be carefully corrected, and tell me it may be of more general service. Will you give yourself the trouble to consider it and make what corrections or enlargements you see needful, as well as to inform me whether you judge it may be a help to young clergymen—and if so, if it will be most helpful by being handed to any such in manuscript.

Could I get time and help I should gladly make a long journey, and even come the length of Winteringham.² Such a journey would be useful to me every day. Particularly I seem to need it with regard to my health, of which I cannot boast, although I have no more to complain of than a growing debility, and consequent inability to labour as usual. This has engaged me to abridge myself in some lesser particulars. Though the public Sunday duty seems now somewhat too hard for me, I wish to be in submission to the divine will and to wait of providence for direction. But as far as I see, the issue will be either labouring here till I can labour no more or to remove hence if I may not get an assistant.

Your account of Lord Dartmouth³ and his Lady greatly delights me, and gives hope that piety may gain some ground among the great ones. If Dr. Patten⁴ succeeds, I shall have no doubt it will. Let but Scripture speak from the pulpit and immorality will hide the head. You have seen that gentleman's

¹While this letter is not to JW, it provides helpful context for the letters between JW, Thomas Adam, and Samuel Walker.

²Thomas Adam's parish.

³William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth (1731–1801) succeeded his grandfather as Earl in 1750 and had a significant political career. About the time he married in 1755 he was also converted to 'serious religion' through Lady Huntingdon and introduced to such evangelical leaders as William Romaine, the Wesley brothers, and George Whitefield. His wife was Frances Catherine (Nicoll) Legge (d. 1805).

⁴Thomas Patten (1714–90) was active for a while among the Oxford Methodists (see John Clayton to JW, Sept. 4, 1732). He received his DD degree in 1754 and was soon after appointed rector of Childrey, Berkshire.

Christian Apology and Answer to Heathcote.⁵ What do you think of them? Has he set Scripture authority on its proper basis? To my judgment he is still a little beside the mark.

You ask if my sermons were printed in Ireland without my knowledge. What I know of the matter is from my friend Mr. Vivian of Cornwood,⁶ who tells me when some soldiers were at Plymouth, in their way from Ireland to America, many of them be 'swaddlers' (or Methodists, so called in Ireland) had copies of *The Christian*,⁷ which they said were printed at Dublin and given away to the number of a thousand.

Is Mr. Conon my father?⁸ I think I may say 'yes'. I had little knowledge and less practice of vital Christianity till known to him. His manner struck me at first sight, and under God I am more indebted to him than to the whole world beside. He is indeed an excellent Christian, bore with me while I was weak, and now stands by me in all my endeavours. He is indeed the father of the regular work of God in these parts.

I waited a post, if I might give you some account of the issue of the Conference at Bristol. But as I hear nothing, [I] will delay no longer. Soon as I am informed what they have done, you shall know it. Meantime, believe me

Your truly affectionate and obedient servant and brother,

Source: Walker's manuscript copy for his records; Pitts Library (Emory), Samuel Walker Papers (MSS 437).⁹

⁵Thomas Patten, *St. Peter's Christian Apology ... further illustrated and maintained against ... Ralph Heathcote* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1756).

⁶Thomas Vivian (1720–93) was curate in Truro briefly years earlier, and now vicar at Cornwood, Devonshire; about 8 miles northeast of Plymouth.

⁷Samuel Walker, *The Christian: Being a Course of Practical Sermons* (London: J. Oliver, 1755). No evidence of a printing in Dublin survives.

⁸George Conon (1698–1775) was master of Truro Grammar School 1728–71, and an important mentor of Walker.

⁹A significantly edited transcription was published in Edwin, *Life of Walker*, 220–23.

From Judith Beresford¹

[Ashbourne]
September 7, 1756

How can you love me, since there is still such a mixture of evil in all I say and do? But why should I ask this question? The Lord himself loves me, and in the late dispensation of his providence he has mercifully discovered to me some sins of a refined nature, which before I was almost ignorant of, and now wait and pray to be delivered from. And I can joyfully add, the Lord is nigh to all that call upon him. He will fulfil my desire, though not *as* I desired. ... His way and his will are best. But how long shall I acknowledge this without implicitly submitting to it? My own will I am apt to think good in such cases and to grieve when it is crossed. So that I easily discern how needful it is for me to be tried and made to sacrifice to the Lord of that which costs me something. I need not say (for the above, alas! will tell you) that I cannot answer all your questions in the affirmative. For did I continually find God present with me and always walk in the light of his countenance, most surely there could be no part dark in me. Yet this I can say, that I see his hand stretched out to save and to deliver. And my trust is that before I go hence I shall behold all his salvation. And if it can serve any good purpose, he will open my lips to declare his praise and let a poor creature glorify him in her death. For this I pray and rejoice in hope, knowing the God whom I serve is able to fulfil in me all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power.

As to the shadows of this world, I think I may truly say, they are as nothing to me. The evil (for certainly it must be *some*) that at times interposes between God and my soul is, I believe, of a more spiritual nature. The stirrings of pride I sometimes feel, and I trust shall bewail as long as one spark remains.

My dear friend, adieu! I trust we shall have an happy meeting at last. In the meantime, I am persuaded, a few lines from you would add greatly to my peace and comfort. I am,

Your very loving, and (I hope) obedient child,

J. B.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, May 5, 1757 (*Works*, 21:98).

¹Judith Beresford (c. 1732–56), was converted in 1754, under the preaching of Thomas Hanby (see Jackson, *EMP*, 2:140–41), and helped organize the Methodist society in Ashbourne. She died in late 1756 and JW included accounts of her death (along with this and a subsequent letter) in his *Journal* the following spring when he visited the Ashbourne area again.

From the Rev. Thomas Adam to the Rev. Samuel Walker¹

[Winteringham]
September 21, 1756

Dear Sir,

I write immediately to give you my sentiments of your late correspondence with the Wesleys. And if I differ from you, forgive me, most dear sirs [Samuel] Walker, [George] Conon, [Thomas] Vivian, and take all into the love.

[1.] Methodism, as to its external form, is such a deviation from the rule and constitution of the Church of England that all attempts to render them consistent must be in vain. Lay preaching is a manifest irregularity, would not be endured in any Christian society, and is given up by you. To salve this sore you say let some of their lay preachers be ordained. But suppose they could (which I very much question), and would consent to it (which they cannot do without condemning themselves for what is past), to what end should they be ordained? That they might still go on to preach in fields or private houses, and hold separate meetings? This would still be as great a breach upon the order of the Church as ever—a church within a Church, or more plainly, a church against itself, and perhaps attended with greater inconveniences than their present practice. The truth is, either they set out wrong and must return wholly to the order of the Establishment, so long as they will assume to be of it; or they have acted hitherto by superior direction from the Spirit and must not flinch from their leader. The latter they pretend to, have gone all along upon that supposition, and if I mistake not it is what they will abide by.

John Wesley cannot, will not, give up the point of lay preaching. It will be giving up all. He will cry ‘peccais’,² and his heart will hold him a tug before he comes to that. But if he would, the generality of his followers will not. ~~Many of them have had their conversion in that way.~~ The Spirit’s call to the work is all in all to them, and where they think that is they will make no reckoning of any further ordination. And indeed it would be as vain the piece of work, for consider their preachers must offer themselves to be ordained with a view to act irregularly, and take authority from a bishop to preach where they shall be lawfully appointed thereunto, with a full resolution to act point blank against the tenor of their commission, and preach where and how they please. I could say more, but so much for your first expedient.

2. The second is, ‘That those who remain’ (unordained) ‘be not allowed to preach, but be set as inspectors over the societies and assistants to them.’ Dear sir, what societies? Societies disunited from their proper minister? And under what form, method, or regulation? Your disqualifying unordained persons from preaching to them supposes that others may. Suppose such a society in your own parish, would you not look upon it with a suspicious eye, and think yourself obliged to remonstrate against it as in effect a separation and an inlet to confusion?

3. ‘That they be not removed from place to place, to the end they may be personally acquainted with all the members of such societies.’

4. ‘That their business may be to purge and edify the societies under their care, to the end that no person be continued a member whose conversation is not orderly and of good repute.’

These directions are good, supposing such societies to exist conformably to the Church of England. Though I am a little at a loss to know who you mean by ‘they’ in no. 3. If unordained persons, how can they well be anywhere else but in the place where they dwell and get their livelihood? If ordained, this would hardly become a constitution among them—it being a piece of art with them, not disowned by themselves, to be often changing hands, lest their preachers should grow stale.

Upon the whole, my judgment is that they have embarrassed themselves past recovery and must either go on in their present form, or separate totally and openly. The latter many think would be more

¹While this letter is not to JW, it provides helpful context for the letters between JW, Thomas Adam, and Samuel Walker.

²‘Transgression.’

ingenious than an underhand separation from the Church (i.e., from the external form and polity of it as you rightly understand the matter) and still affirming themselves to be of it, which is only *protestatio contra factum*.³

I am greatly concerned to hear you mentioning again your declining state of health and growing unfitness for service. If a long journey is thought proper, I shall rejoice to see you and shall meet you anywhere upon the road. I suppose you have no assistant, but by all means get one some way or other for a time. Please to let me know whether you are perpetual curate of Truro in your own right or curate to another. I shall be glad to see what you have drawn up for your young clergymen. And in return I must desire your sincere and well-weighed sentiments of my advice to Lord Dartmouth by letter since I wrote to you—that I may retract it upon better information, or persist in it if right. I love and long after Father Conon and Mr. Vivian. God bless you all, and enable you to stand in the gap. I forgot in my last to thank you for Mr. Williams. I think you must even let the Methodists alone. I do not see what help you can afford them consistently both with their principles and their own. Every plant, etc., should make us tremble on one side and the other. I am obliged to you for communicating to me what you did of the state of their affairs and the share you had in them; and am with great esteem and affection, reverend dear sir,

Your unworthy brother,

A[dam]

Source: Adam's original draft; Pitts Library (Emory), Samuel Walker Papers (MSS 437).⁴

³'Protesting against the facts.'

⁴A significantly edited transcription was published in Edwin, *Life of Walker*, 224–27.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[[Leeds]]
[[September]] 26, 1756

[[To My Brother,

[[I do not remember that I told Mr. [William] Romaine we were either of us on the point of leaving the Church or no, for we were only on the point of ordaining, which you know is quite another thing.

[[I allow your consequence. 'If I am hot and boisterous in the matter, I am more likely to leave the Church than you, an even and steady person.'¹ But who told you I am hot and boisterous? Poor Charles [Perronet] and poorer Nicholas [Norton]; the same who told you, you are a persecutor.² You really rob God of his glory, if you do not consider he has greatly restrained my spirit in the whole affair. But I will not vindicate myself. Vileness I own [rather] than disgrace a good cause. Ours needs no boisterous ad[vocacy]. But you will allow for diversity of gifts. You are the shield of Rome and I the sword.³ *Tu Maximus ille es, unus qui nobis cunctando restituit rem.*⁴ Deal with [John] Trembeth as you please, only let him have nothing of yours to show as an allowance for his parting ways.]]

Source: CW shorthand copy for records; MARC, DDCW 8/1e, p. 95.

¹CW is apparently quoting from a letter to him by JW. This letter is not known to survive.

²See JW's letter to Nicholas Norton (and Charles Perronet) of Sept. 3, 1756, *Works*, 27:45–50.

³Two famous defenders of Rome, Fabius Maximus and Marcus Marcellus, were known respectively as 'The Shield of Rome' and 'The Sword of Rome'.

⁴Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.845–46; 'You are that Maximus, one who by delaying saved the state for us.'

From the Rev. James Clark¹

Hollymount
September 30, 1756

Reverend Sir,

I received your favour, dated from London the 18th instant, and that very unexpectedly because, though I did at first design to have sent the letter to you, to which this comes as an answer, yet finding you had left this part of the country before I had an opportunity of sending it to you, and (on account of the quickness of your motions from one place to another) not knowing whither to direct it for you, I took a resolution of dropping all further epistolary correspondence with you, foreseeing that the dispute between us would, in the end, come to what I find, by this your last favour, it has actually done; namely, that you would put me off with some inconsistent sophistical answers and shuffling evasions, or else that when you had nothing else to say for yourself you would (like most disputants in the like circumstances, have recourse to bare-faced scandal and personal reflection; both which, but especially of the last, you have in a manner very unbecoming a gentleman or a scholar, not to talk of the Christian or the clergyman, given me sufficient proof in this your last letter.

But because some of your disciples have, by some clandestine means, procured a copy of the letter which I had designed to have sent you and transmitted it to you to London, I will for this time break through the resolution I had taken and will continue the correspondence. And shall, because I design it for the last essay, give you so full and particular an answer, paragraph by paragraph, as I hope may, if you are capable of it, convince you of your errors and make you ashamed of the ungentleman-like treatment which, out of your great and tender compassion, you have been pleased to afford me.

[I.] In your first paragraph you excuse your not mentioning the charge of blasphemy exhibited against Langston because, as you say, he denied the charge and that you had not the accuser and the accused face to face.

Whether Mr. [James] Langston denied the charge or not is best known to yourselves both. But then I think his denying it, instead of being a reason for your silence about it, ought to be the only motive to induce you to say something of or concerning it, both in justice to him and charity to me, as you could not but know it was natural for me to take your silence for consent and acknowledgment of the charge, and thereupon conclude him guilty. But sir, please to inform me how came you, when Mr. Bermingham in one of your meetings at Castlebar accused the same Mr. Langston of several heinous crimes and enormities, and offered to produce undeniable evidences to support and prove the accusation; how came you, I say, to quash and smother the indictment, and not suffer it to be brought to the test? I suppose if an accuser had appeared to prove the charge of blasphemy against him, he would meet with no better encouragement or reception than Mr. Bermingham did—so tender were you of the reputation of a blasphemous lay-preacher of your own society, and so very ready to entertain a false and groundless calumny against the reputation of a brother clergyman.

And here, sir, you must give me leave to put you in mind that, having told me in your first letter that Mr. Langston was no preacher approved by you, I did (as I thought, very civilly) entreat the favour of you to let me know by what authority you took upon you to approve or disapprove of preachers, or who gave you that authority? Or by what (more than pontifical) authority you presumed to fix lay-preachers, or leaders as you call them, in several districts of the country, in open defiance to the chief governors of the Church [of England] to whom at your ordination you vowed all due submission and obedience. But to this very civil request you have given a deaf ear, and not vouchsafed to return the least word of answer, either because you thought it beneath you to give me the satisfaction I requested or rather, more probably, because you were conscious to yourself that you could not assign any authority sufficient to justify your presumption in so irregular and altogether illegal a conduct. I am afraid, sir, I shall have more occasion to put you in mind of some other more material omissions before I have done with you.

¹Replying to JW's of Sept. 18, 1756.

But to return to Mr. Langston. If the unhappy man was guilty of the blasphemy (I fear too truly) laid to his charge, he may thank you, and no other, for it. For if ever he read your *Serious Answer to Dr. Trapp*,² and understood the consequence of what he read, it was almost impossible for him, if he believed what he read to be true, not to fall into that or some other equivalent blasphemy. For in that *Answer*, besides many bold unwarrantable propositions advanced by you concerning the fall of men and angels, and which you yourself (or somebody for you) acknowledge with a *nota bene* at the bottom of the page to be destitute of all Scripture proof or authority,³ I find the following words: 'As we are', say you, 'earthly, corrupt, worldly men, by having the life and nature of the first Adam propagated in us; so must we become holy, paradisiacal, and heavenly men, by having the nature and life of the second Adam propagated in us—or, as the Scripture speaks, by being born again. Jesus Christ therefore stands as our regeneration to help us, by a second birth from him, to the same holy, undefiled nature which he himself assumed in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, and which we should have received in paradise from our first father before his fall.'⁴ And you positively affirm, 'that if the very life and identical nature of Christ be not propagated and derived in us, he is not our Saviour'.⁵

Now who can admire that Langston reading this passage, and taking all your doctrines for oracles, and in one of the paroxysms of his enthusiasm fancying himself thus regenerated; who can admire, I say, that he should thereupon believe that he had, by being so regenerated, the very nature, life, and spirit of Christ derived and propagated in him; nay, that holy, undefiled, and paradisiacal nature which he assumed in the womb of the holy virgin; from which nothing could be more natural for him than to conclude that he was thereupon become as righteous and free from sin as ever Jesus Christ was.

For if it be really true that by regeneration, or the second birth, we have the holy, spotless, and paradisiacal nature of Christ, even that undefiled nature which he assumed in the womb of the holy virgin; if, I say, we have this very nature as truly and really derived and propagated in us by a second birth as we have the corrupted nature of the first Adam propagated and derived in us by our first birth, it seems evidently to follow, that upon this second birth we become as righteous and free from sin as ever Jesus Christ was. For if we have his very identical nature, life, and spirit propagated in us, we must of necessity have his righteousness and freedom from sin, which are the necessary consequences of his holy, undefiled, and paradisiacal nature, propagated in us also. And thus, sir, by a plain and necessary consequence from this doctrine of yours,⁶ you were the (almost) unavoidable occasion of that poor soul's blasphemy; for which, unless you endeavour to disabuse him, you will most certainly be accountable as an accessory at the last day.

[II.] To your second paragraph I answer that it is not only past doubt that there are some enthusiasts among the Methodists, but it is certain and evident to all the world that most, if not all, of them are so. This at least is most manifest, that there are more enthusiasts among them than among any other denomination of Christians in the three nations. And I am very apt to think that you yourself are as great an enthusiast (though you may not be sensible of it) as any among them. And that all this must be owing to your doctrine and discipline, no better proof can be desired, or indeed rationally expected, than that however sober or rational men may be before, yet they no sooner become your disciples than they do

²Clark is referring to JW's abridged republication of William Law's, *Serious Answer to Dr. Trapp's Four Sermons on the Sin, Folly, and Danger of Being Righteous overmuch* (Cork: Harrison, 1748).

³See *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Clark footnote in source: 'This doctrine, besides its being directly contrary to the ninth Article of our Church, which affirms the corruption of nature to remain in the regenerate, is over and above bordering upon blasphemy.'

then, or soon after, become manifest enthusiasts.

As to the anonymous pamphlet upon inspiration,⁷ I can no otherwise prove the author to be a disciple of yours than by affirming, as I can with truth do, that it was recommended and put into my hands for a Methodist book. And I am very much inclined to believe that it was really so for this very good reason, because the author, whoever he was, copies exactly after yourself. For you (as well as all other Methodists with whom or their writings I have had any conversation or acquaintance) strenuously plead for the extraordinary and immediate inspirations and influences of the Holy Ghost as absolutely necessary to every Christian. And you in particular, in your *Answer to Dr. Trapp* (p. 49) ridicule the distinction and difference between the extraordinary and immediate, and the ordinary and mediate influences and inspirations of the Holy Ghost, calling it a mere dream. And how naturally such doctrine as this leads to enthusiasm, the evident effects of it upon the generality of your disciples, who take all your doctrines for oracles, plainly demonstrate.

[III.] In your third paragraph you tell me that you believe several are called of God to preach the gospel, though not episcopally ordained. And yet you say you have no exception to the twenty-third Article of our Church, though you judge there are some cases exempt.

[1.] Never, I believe, was so much sophistry and inconsistency couched together in so few lines. For by your mentioning episcopal ordination, one would be apt to imagine you had some other kind or species of ordination in view—and who knows but you mean some ordination of your own, by virtue of which you think your preachers may lawfully preach, though not episcopally ordained, and that therefore you may say you have no objection to the Article. For though the Article says that no man may take upon him the office of public preaching before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same, yet as it does not mention an episcopal mission in terms, possibly you may imagine that your own call and mission may be equivalent to any episcopal call or mission whatsoever. For I know no other possible means of clearing you from a most evident and glaring inconsistency in allowing men to exercise the office of public preaching without any visible call or mission but what they receive from yourself, and at the same time declaring that you have no objection to the Article which flatly condemns all who take upon them that office without a regular call from those who have public authority given them in the church or congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard—and in the Church of England none have this authority but the bishops. In a word, either the Article is false or, if true, there is no other way of clearing you of acting in opposition to it but by supposing that you look upon your society as a distinct church, and that your call or mission in your own church is equivalent to an episcopal call or mission in the established Church. But,

2. By 'being called of God to preach the gospel' you must either mean that they have a direct and immediate call, such as the prophets and apostles had, or else that though they have not such an immediate and direct call, yet they have by their own study and the ordinary blessing of God upon their endeavours acquired such gifts and talents as qualify and enable them to preach, though they are neither episcopally or otherwise ordained. If you mean it in the first sense, I readily grant that such as are so called may lawfully preach, without any other ordination, provided they can prove their call after the same manner that the prophets, apostles, and other inspired persons proved theirs—that is, by plain and incontestable miracles. Otherwise no man can in reason or prudence believe that they are so called, or consequently that they can preach by virtue of such a pretended call (for it can be no more than pretended till sufficiently proved, nor can it be so proved otherwise than by miracles) lawfully preach, that is, become public preachers of the gospel in the church or congregation.

If you mean it in the second sense, then you must either allow that they have no right to become public preachers of the gospel until their gifts and talents are examined and approved by the governors of the Church [of England], and are thereupon regularly admitted to execute that office according to the rules of the gospel and the laws and canons of the Church; or you must entirely give up the twenty-third Article, which enacts and provides that no person whatsoever—be his gifts, talents, or endowments ever so great or eminent—shall presume to take upon himself the office of a public preacher or teacher in the

⁷The pamphlet mentioned in Clark's letter of July 9, likely by John Cennick.

Church until he is so examined and called. So that, in short, your assenting to the truth of the Article and declaring that you have no exception to it, and your allowing mere laymen, without any public call or ordination from the governors of the Church, to take and assume to themselves the office of public preachers of God's Word, are altogether inconsistent and mutually destroy each other.

[3.] As to your exempt cases, I am sure the Article exempts none. And I could wish you had mentioned some case which you believed to be exempted. I know but of one (except the case of an immediate and direct call or mission from God, which I presume your lay-preachers have the modesty not to pretend to) which has any resemblance of an exempt one, and that is, the case of a layman's happening into a country where the name of Christ is neither known nor acknowledged. And when this shall happen to be the case with any of them, we shall find no fault with them to become public preachers of the gospel. But till then, we must look upon them to be schismatical and sacrilegious intruders into an office to which they have no manner of right by any law of God or man.

That Paul and Barnabas were designed and set apart for the apostolic office at large, some time before, I readily grant. But that they were ordained for the execution of any peculiar or particular ministry till hands were laid upon them by the prophets or chief governors of the church at Antioch, that I deny. For to design and set apart for the execution of an office is one thing, and to be actually ordained and deputed to execute it is another.

I do suppose, sir, that your father designed and set you apart for the ministry some time before you were actually ordained a minister, and it was the very same case with the twelve original apostles. They were designed and set apart from the rest of his disciples by our blessed Saviour, and trained up by him for the apostolic office long before they were actually ordained. For they were not ordained till after our Saviour's resurrection, when he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye remit, they are remitted'; and again, 'as the Father sent me, so I send you'.⁸ After which he desired them to stay at Jerusalem until this their private (as it were) ordination was made more publicly authentic by the visible and miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. And although I grant that the rite of imposing hands was used on other occasions, as well as ordination, yet every circumstance of the passage under present consideration plainly shows that the imposition of hands here mentioned was applied to Paul and Barnabas for no other purpose (the ceremony of induction being, I suppose, not quite so ancient as the days of the apostles) than for ordaining them for the discharge of a peculiar office, for which they had been before designed and set apart by the Holy Ghost.

In one word, though Paul and Barnabas were called and ordained of God, and not of man or by men, to be apostles at large, yet they were ordained and deputed to the particular ministry of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles by the church at Antioch.

IV. In your fourth paragraph you tell me there are several questions concerning diocesan episcopacy which, you say, you would be glad to have answered. The first of which is: 'Where is it prescribed in Scripture?' Before I can answer your set of questions, I must here again put you in mind of another omission of yours. In my former letter to you I told you that you yourself having, in your discourse upon Catholic Spirit, acknowledged that you believed episcopacy to be both scriptural and apostolical, by which you meant (as you explain yourself in your first letter) that it was very well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles; I told you, I say, that this was equivalent to, and the same thing with, being prescribed in Scripture. For if it was the form of government which the apostles settled in all the churches which they founded, and which they recommended in their writings (and if it was not so, pray tell me how could it be, as you confess, agreeable either to their practice or their writings), every man of common sense and reason must allow that this was, in other words, the same thing as a scriptural prescription.

But of all this you take no manner of notice. But for reasons good and weighty, you pass it by in profound silence, and instead of endeavouring to take off the manifest and apparent inconsistency between your acknowledging episcopacy to be very well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles and denying it a scriptural prescription, or acknowledging your error and mistake, you only

⁸See John 20:21–23.

endeavour to embarrass me with a set of sophistical questions, altogether inconsistent with you own express acknowledgments.

To your first question therefore: 'Where is episcopacy prescribed in Scripture?' I answer, 1. *Ad hominem*,⁹ that if you will tell me where the change of the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week is prescribed in Scripture, then I will tell you where episcopacy is prescribed in Scripture also. For either you believe the change of the Sabbath to be prescribed in Scripture, or you do not. If you believe it to be so prescribed, then I defy you to prove it any other way than by its being (as it certainly is) agreeable to the practice and writings of the apostles. If then, according to the supposition, you believe the change of the Sabbath, at first instituted expressly by God himself to be held on the seventh day, in memory of his resting from the works of creation on that day, to the first day of the week, in memory of our Lord's rising from the dead on that day, to be a scriptural prescription, and that you neither have nor indeed can have any other authority for so believing but that changes being agreeable both to the practice and writings of the apostles, why do you not believe the scriptural prescription of episcopacy, for which, according to your own express acknowledgement, you have the very same authority? Lest the world, as it well may, should conclude that you have some particular pique to episcopacy, in denying it a scriptural prescription when you allow that prescription the change of the Sabbath, upon no other ground than (you confess) there is for the scriptural prescription of episcopacy.

But if you do not believe the scriptural prescription of the change of the Sabbath, then this change can have no other foundation to stand upon but the authority and tradition of the church prescribing it. And then it is incumbent upon you to tell us how the church came by an authority to change a positive institution of God, or why her authority may not extend to all, or any other positive institution, as well as the Sabbath? For to allow the church, exclusive of the apostles, any such authority is a manifest and a main principle of popery, which all Protestants unanimously deny.

2. I answer *ad rem*,¹⁰ that episcopacy being only the government of one ruling in chief, or in superiority over other inferior church officers or ministers, it is easy to show where it is prescribed in Scripture. It is prescribed and set down by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 12:28, where the apostle tells us expressly that God has set in his church, 1. apostles, 2. prophets, 3. teachers, etc. The plain meaning of which can be no other than that God ordered and appointed his church to be governed by officers, or ministers, acting in superiority one over another, which is the very same thing, in other words, with episcopacy. For though I should grant that episcopacy or bishops were not in these express words or terms mentioned, or prescribed in Scripture, yet if the thing meant by both be prescribed in it, as I think it plainly is in the above text of St. Paul, this must be allowed by all to be abundantly sufficient to my purpose. For to dispute about words or names, when we are agreed as to the thing, is both childish and ridiculous. But I am under no necessity to take advantage of this, because the very name, office, and qualifications of bishops and ministers are mentioned and prescribed in Scripture—as particularly 1 Tim. 3:1–2, where the very name, office, and qualifications of a bishop are set down and prescribed at large; and ver. 8 the office and qualification of a deacon, minister, or any other inferior attendant upon, or assistant to a bishop are prescribed and set down. In the Epistle to Titus 1:5 we are told that he was left by St. Paul in Crete to ordain elders, or bishops, in every city. That by elders are meant bishops is apparent from verses 6–7, where the qualifications of a bishop (as the elder which Titus was left in Crete to ordain) are set down and described. Timothy was ordained bishop of Ephesus, the metropolis of the proconsular Asia, by St. Paul, with archiepiscopal inspection over all the other bishops of that province; and accordingly St. Paul in his first Epistle to him (5:1) directs him how to behave towards the bishops and presbyters of his province: 'Rebuke not', says the apostle, 'an elder' (or bishop) 'but entreat him as a father, and the younger men' (that is according to the learned Dr. Hammond on the text, any inferior church officer or minister, whether priest or deacon) 'as brethren'. The same St. Paul inscribes his Epistle to the Philippians to the bishops and deacons, that is, not to the bishop of Philippi alone but to all the bishops of that *μαγίς*, or province, of Macedonia, whereof Philippi was the chief or metropolitan city.

⁹To address one's argument 'to the person'.

¹⁰To address one's argument 'to the topic'.

Hence it appears that episcopacy was the form of government which St. Paul established in that province, upon its first conversion to Christianity by his ministry.

And as the universal practice of the church is the very best evidence we can possibly have of that form of church government which was prescribed in Scripture, so we find that episcopacy was the form of church government which obtained from the very beginning, as a divine and consequently a scriptural institution, in all churches of the apostles planting. We are as certain as we possibly can be of any matter of fact at so great a distance of time, and the most universally and undoubtedly believed by all mankind.

That St. James the brother of our Lord, surnamed 'the just', was ordained by the apostles the first bishop of Jerusalem; that St. Peter was the first bishop of Antioch; that St. Mark was the first bishop of Alexandria; and lastly, that St. Peter and St. Paul were jointly the first bishops of Rome, the one presiding over the Jewish and the other over the Gentile converts of that city. Eusebius and other church historians has left us a catalogue of all the bishops that succeeded these original bishops in these four great cities, in a direct line all the way down to the first Council of Nice[a]. And the evidence for episcopal government in all other churches, as well as these four patriarchal and mother churches, both before and since the Council of Nice[a], is unquestionable. England, as well as all other nations, received episcopacy together with its Christianity, the one was coeval with the other.

Lucius the British, and probably the first Christian monarch upon earth, sent two bishops on an embassy to Rome, to which Britain was then tributary and a province of the Roman empire, above two hundred years before Austin the monk¹¹ came to convert the Saxons. And the same Austin, upon his arrival in Britain, found a regular church in England, under an arch and other suffragan bishops.

[3.] Lastly, I answer that episcopacy is founded upon and prescribed by the very words of our Lord to St. Peter, Matt. 16:18, 'I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.' Upon which words of our Lord the great and glorious martyr and archbishop of Carthage, St. Cyprian, discourses thus, in his 33rd Epistle (p. 66. of the Oxford Edition¹²):

Our Lord (says he) whose precepts and injunctions we ought to dread and obey, providing for the honour (or power) of a bishop and the order (or the frame, contexture, and government) of a church, speaks thus to St. Peter in his gospel, 'I say unto thee, etc.' From hence, through all the vicissitudes and turns of times and successions, the ordination (not of any one bishop, as sovereign monarch over all others, as the Church of Rome contends, but) of bishops in general, and the order or frame and government of a church is handed down to us. So that the church is built, not upon any one but upon the college of bishops; and all the administration of the government of the church is managed by the same governors, the bishops. Seeing therefore that this (that is most plainly the government of the church by bishops) is founded on the DIVINE LAW, it is wonderful to me that some lapsers should take upon themselves, with so much boldness and rashness, to write to me in the name of a church, whereas a church consists of a BISHOP, his CLERGY, and a faithful or unlapsing laity.

This is the full import and meaning of the martyr's own words (as near as I could render them) which, to prevent caviling about their sense and meaning, I have transcribed at the bottom of the page.¹³

¹¹I.e., Augustine of Canterbury (6th cent.).

¹²*Sancti Caecilii Cypriani Opera* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1682), p. 66 of the epistle section.

¹³Clark footnote in source: 'Dominus noster, cujus praecepta metuere et observare debemus, Episcopi honorem et ecclesiae [suae] rationem disponens in Evangelio loquitur, et dicit Petro; ego tibi dico quia tu es Petrus et super istam Petram ... Inde per temporum et successionum vices, Episcoporum ordinatio, et Ecclesiae ratio decurrit, ut Ecclesia super Episcopos constituatur. Et omnis actus Ecclesiae per eosdem gubernetur. Cum hoc itaque DIVINA LEGE [Clark added emphasis] fundatum sit, miror

Give me leave now, sir, to point out to you the principles upon which this great and learned martyr founded the aforesaid conclusion, which I shall do in the words of a very learned advocate and confessor for episcopacy in Scotland:¹⁴

1) That our Lord, when he said to Peter ‘I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, etc.’, did thereby institute (not the supremacy of any one over all others, but) the honour and power of every bishop, together with the ratio that is the frame, the contexture, and government of every church.

2) That in virtue of that divine institution, disposition, settlement, or ordinance of our Lord, there had always been, to that very day, a succession of such bishops.

3) That, according to our Lord’s promise to St. Peter, all particular churches had been always built upon their particular bishops.

4) That all those bishops had always ordered the discipline, managed the government, and tempered the administration of those particular churches. And that therefore,

5) By divine precept, which all men ought to stand in awe of and to observe, everyone ought to obey the power of those particular bishops, which power ought to be acknowledged and regarded, by every member of those particular churches whereof they are bishops. And let me add to these principles, taken from the aforesaid learned author,

6) That by the divine law, in the words of our Saviour to St. Peter, every church must consist of a bishop, his clergy, and a faithful (or according to St. Cyprian’s phrase) a standing laity—that is, a laity that fell not from their Christian profession in time of persecution.

From all which it evidently follows that episcopacy is so firmly established upon and prescribed by Scripture that (at least in St. Cyprian’s opinion) ‘no bishop, no church’ is an incontestable maxim. Hence the same great saint and martyr defines the church to be ‘*Plebs Episcopo fuo adunata*’, that is, a flock closely united and adhering to their bishop. Hence he everywhere in his epistles makes every bishop the centre and principle of unity to his own church, to be the ‘*unus Judex vice Christi*’, the one judge instead of Christ—that is, his vicar to his own flock, without any visible superior on earth. All which principles, besides their evidently plucking up the pope’s supremacy from the very roots, do over and above, necessarily and unavoidably, not only suppose but infer the scriptural, and consequently the divine, right of episcopacy.

I have insisted on this evidence for the scriptural prescription of the government of the church by bishops, not only because it is a sufficient confutation of what you do in your first letter upon the authority of Dr. Stillingfleet’s *Irenicum* assert, namely that the plea for the divine right of episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive church, but also because it is the evidence of a great, a learned, and holy martyr, who made a glorious stand for the liberties of the church and the episcopal college against the encroachments of the Church of Rome, even then appearing in the world. Who flourished in the third century, an age wherein by the consent of all it is allowed that the doctrine, discipline, and government of the church as yet remained sound and uncorrupt, according as they were at first preached, settled, and modeled by the holy apostles; an age strictly tenacious of divine and apostolical institutions, and extremely cautious of the least variation from them; an age wherein the extraordinary manifestations and illuminations of the Holy Ghost were common and ordinary, many of which were communicated to this holy martyr upon special occasions; and finally, an age wherein they might as certainly know, even by oral tradition (supposing there were no written monuments or records to inform them) what form of government the apostles established in all the churches which they planted, as we of this age can know what form of government was established or agreed upon in England and Ireland at the Reformation, it being much about the same distance of time from the death of St. John to the death of St. Cyprian as from the Reformation to our days.

quosdam audaci temeritate sic mihi scribere voluisse ut Ecclesia nomine literas sacerent, quando Ecclesia in Episcopo et Clero et in omnibus stantibus [note, Clark reads: ‘in stantibus Laicis’] sit constituta.’

¹⁴Clark footnote in source: ‘Sage, *Vindication of the Principles of the Cyprian Age*, ch. 10’ [p. 504].

Upon the whole matter I must be very free and plain with you, and therefore must needs say that you are a man of very extraordinary and out-of-the-way principles, first to acknowledge episcopacy to be scriptural and apostolical and then to deny that it is prescribed in Scripture; which is just as if one that could not deny monarchy to be agreeable to the practice, the laws, and constitution of England, yet would make it a matter questionable and disputable whether it was prescribed by either.

Having thus, sir, answered your first question largely, and I hope satisfactorily, the rest of your questions will admit to a quicker dispatch.

[V.] To your second question, namely, 'How does it appear that the apostles established episcopacy in all the churches which they planted?' I answer, 1. That you must allow that it was episcopacy alone and no other, or presbytery or independency in other churches. If it was episcopacy alone, and no other, which they established in all the churches of their plantation, how came you to make a question of it? If it was presbytery alone, and no other, which they established, then pray, sir, be pleased to inform me how can episcopacy, as you expressly acknowledge, be agreeable either to their practice or their writings?

But if you say that they established episcopacy in some and presbytery in other churches, I must still be bold to demand of you to specify and name the particular churches in which they established the one, and in which they established the other? Which is a task that, I presume, upon reflection, you will not readily undertake to execute. And I shall make a fair offer, name but any one church upon the face of the whole earth, from the first foundation of churches to the days of John Calvin, that was governed by mere presbyters alone acting in parity and I shall most cheerfully recant and give up the argument.

2. I answer that we have as clear and undoubted evidence that it was the episcopal form of government alone which the apostles established in all the churches which they planted, as we have that the several books of the New Testament which go under the names of their authors were really and actually wrote by them. For all the evidence we have for this last is the constant, uninterrupted and invariable tradition of all ages, from their times to our days. But we have the very same constant, uniform, and invariable tradition that episcopacy alone was the form of church government which the apostles established in all the churches which they planted. For all those who have handed down to us the books of the New Testament as books wrote by the authors whose names they bear, have in like manner handed down to us episcopacy as the form of government alone which the apostles established in all the churches which they planted. And if you admit the evidence as good and sufficient in one case, why not in the other? For where the evidence is one and the same for two different matters of fact, to admit it in one and reject it in the other is absurd and ridiculous.

[VI.] To your third question, namely, 'How does it appear that the apostles established episcopacy in any church so as to make it of perpetual obligation?' I answer that government of some kind being essentially necessary for the preservation of the very being, as well as the well-being of every society; and the church being a society instituted for the noblest ends, namely the glory of God and salvation of souls; it would be a great reflection upon the wisdom and goodness of God to suppose that he would not settle it under such a form of government as best suited these ends, and was most conducive towards the attaining of them. And as the apostles acted by a divine commission and under the immediate influence and directions of the Holy Ghost, it is not to be questioned but that they did establish episcopacy as a form which they knew, and were informed by the Holy Ghost, best suited the ends of the institution of the society, and was most conducive towards attaining of them, and consequently of perpetual obligation, until some other set of men, acting by the same divine commission and under the same influences of the Holy Ghost that they did shall cancel the obligation.

[VII.] Part of your fourth question being the same in effect with your second question needs no other answer than what was given to it. To the other part, namely, 'Can we prove the form which now obtains in England to be the same which the apostles established in all churches?' I answer that having proved episcopacy, or the government of one ruling in chief or in superiority over other inferior church ministers, to have been the form which the apostles established in all churches, we can easily prove that to be the form or substance (though there should be some little difference or variation in the outward mode or manner of administration) which now does and ever has obtained in England, because that is a

government of one ruling in chief or in superiority over other inferior church officers or ministers.

[VIII.] As to heresy and schism, which are the subjects of your fifth paragraph, you do not say one word more, or more to the purpose, in this than you did in your first letter. In answer to which I told you that there was a difference to be observed between the strict notation of the word *αἵρεσις*, or heresy, and the ecclesiastical use of it as a technical term; that accordingly it was *vox media*, as I now remember Grotius somewhere calls it, that is, a word which is sometimes taken in an indifferent sense and sometimes in a bad sense. I quoted some texts of Scripture where it was taken in both these senses, and particularly one, namely 2 Pet. 2:1, where it is evidently taken for a denial of an article of faith. For the apostle in that text speaks of some false prophets who brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord Jesus that bought them.

Now whether those false prophets were the gnostic heretics (according to Dr. Hammond), who taught that it was lawful to deny Christ in times of persecution with the mouth, provided they believed on him in their hearts; or whether (according to the judicious Grotius) they were the Carpocratian heretics, who denied the divinity and eternity of Christ, is no way material, since in either case it evidently appears from the text that heresy is the denial of some necessary article of faith. Now of the answer in my second letter you take no manner of notice, but pass it by in profound silence. Sir, whether you know it or no, you seem to be admirably well qualified for a commentator, for I find you can pass by a difficult passage with as much ease and as little concern as any of the whole fraternity.

You tell me over again that in all the Bible heresy is no where taken for an error in fundamentals or any thing else. To which I answer that if your meaning be that it is no where in the Bible said, *totidem verbis et syllabis*,¹⁵ that heresy is the denial of an article of faith, or an error in fundamentals or any thing else, you do but trifle and play the sophister most egregiously. For though it be nowhere in the Bible in so many express words so said, yet that heresy is such an error is evidently colligible from the foregoing text, where denying the Lord Jesus is reckoned among the damnable heresies which the false prophets there spoken of endeavoured to introduce into the church. Now I hope you will allow that denying the Lord Jesus, in any sense of the word ‘denying’, must be (if not a fundamental) at least some kind of error. And if this does not convince you that heresy is the denial of, or some kind of error concerning, an article of faith, you must, in my humble opinion, be plentifully stocked with that for which God has provided no ordinary remedy—and that is willful obstinacy.

Indeed, the bare and simple denial of an article of faith does not denominate a man an heretic. No, nor a simple error maintained against even a fundamental point, unless it be maintained with willful obstinacy and pertinacious animosity. Hence the great St. Austin¹⁶ used to say, ‘*errare possum, hareticus esse nolo*’, ‘I may be mistaken, but will not be an heretic.’ The good man knew he was not infallible, and was therefore subject to mistakes. But he was resolved not to be an heretic, because he was resolved never to maintain any opinion with willful and pertinacious animosity, but always with a mind duly disposed and prepared to receive the truth, whenever it was sufficiently proposed to him. Therefore he lays it down as a rule that

whoever maintains and defends his opinion though never so perverse, without any pertinacious animosity, especially if he was not the first author or broacher of it, but received it by tradition from his seduced and erroneous forefathers, and in the meantime carefully seeks the truth, with a mind duly disposed to receive it whenever he finds it, is by no means to be reckoned among heretics.¹⁷

His opinion indeed is still (considered in itself) an heresy, but not so in him because not maintained with wilful and pertinacious animosity; just as poison is still poison in itself, though some constitutions may be

¹⁵‘The same number of words and syllables’.

¹⁶I.e., St. Augustine.

¹⁷Apparent translation from Augustine’s Letter 162, to a Donatist bishop.

so strong as to get the better of it. The man (according to the language of the schools) is a material but not a formal heretic; he maintains the matter of an heresy, but he holds not the formality of it.

You make no more of schism, in the Scripture sense, than indulging a little unkindness of temper towards our fellow Christians. And if this be all, it is wonderful and surprising to me that the primitive fathers and Christians should all agree so unanimously in painting it in such black colours as they do, esteeming it a sin of almost as black a character as murder, adultery, or even idolatry, and not to be expiated without repentance and an actual forsaking of it, even by martyrdom.¹⁸ Surely they must have looked upon it as something of a more heinous nature than a little unkindness of temper expressed or indulged towards our fellow Christians. But the very import of the term 'schism' implies a great deal more, for it implies a rending or scissure, a tearing to pieces. It is, as the great primate Bramhall says, like a mutiny in an army, or a sedition or rebellion in the state.¹⁹ In a word, it is an ecclesiastical sedition or rebellion against our spiritual superiors. And therefore our Church in her excellent litany, because of their kindred and near affinity to each other, next after 'all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion', directs us to pray for deliverance 'from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism'.

You reject and slight Phavorinus's definition of heresy, and indeed the definition of any other, and will, you say, stick to your Bible, as the sixth Article of our Church teaches you. Sir, I perceive where it imports and concerns you most that you are very regardless of the Articles of the Church, and can easily deviate from them, as in the case of lay-preachers and the doctrine of regeneration, before observed. But when it avails you nothing, there you would fain be thought very observant of them, as in the case in hand. For what manner of affinity or relation have articles of faith necessary to be believed by all (of which only the sixth Article speaks) with the definition of a term? And might you not, without any prejudice to the article, allow the definition of Phavorinus, notwithstanding the Article says, and that truly, that Scripture is the only rule of articles of faith necessary to be believed by all. But hast thou appealed to the Bible? To the Bible then let us go.

You say then that the first place you meet the term 'schism' is 1 Cor. 13:10, and again you meet it [in 1 Cor.] 11:18. But it is plain, you say, that in both places is meant not any separation from the church but uncharitable divisions in it, for the Corinthians continued still to be one church, without any separation of the one from the other, etc. So then it seems that a little unkindness of temper towards each other, though no violation of external communion or solution of unity should ensue thereupon, is the Scripture sin of schism. But if this unkind and uncharitable temper should end in an open violation of external communion and the solution of unity (which the Holy Scriptures so earnestly and pathetically recommends among all members of the church, which would have been the effect of the mutual animosities and divisions among the Corinthians, had not the apostle seasonably interposed) so that altar is set up against altar. Then, according to your casuistical divinity, it cease to be a sin, at least it is no more to be called the Scripture sin of schism; the plain and evident consequence of which is that the further and higher Christians carry their unkind temper against each other, and the more scandalous and uncharitable the effects of it are, the less sinful it is—which is such comfortable doctrine to all our Dissenters that I dare venture to promise you the hearty thanks of all sorts and sizes of them for it. But because I am one of your old-fashioned divines, I cannot possibly come into your way of thinking as to this particular. For it appears to me that the effect must of necessity partake of the nature of the cause that produces it, and that the branches must be of the same nature with the tree from which they grow. Now I am of opinion that uncharitable divisions and unkindness of temper in the church are the direct and immediate causes of separation from the church, of the violation of external communion and the solution of unity, and that consequently these latter are of the same nature with the former; and therefore if one be evil and the Scripture sin of schism, the other must be the same. That is, in plain terms, if the root be bitter, the branches that sprout from it can never be sweet. Nay, sir, I am apt to think that a causeless separation from a true church, which necessarily implies the violation of external communion and the

¹⁸Clark footnote in source: 'See Dr. [Henry] Hammond's treatise *Of Schism* [London: J. Flesher, 1653], where you will meet with testimonies of the ancients to this purpose in abundance.'

¹⁹John Brahmall (1594–1663), Archbishop of Armagh, likely in his 1643 treatise *Serpent Salve*.

dissolution of unity, is much more schismatical, and consequently more criminal and sinful, than a little unkindness of temper and strife and contention, which proceeds no farther and is not attended with the foregoing violent effects, and in all reason ought to be deemed scriptural schism; rather than the latter, because it is much more opposite to charity, and more productive and preservative of uncharitable censures, rancour, and malice, which are the things that render all ruptures, schisms, divisions, or separations, either in or from the church, so very heinous and criminal in the sight of God.

You conclude your account of the scriptural sense of heresy and schism by saying they are sins which, in the modern sense, the Scripture knows nothing of. Here, sir, I am somewhat inclined to agree with you, because your sense of these sins is the modern sense. For I dare venture to affirm that you will find no other sense of these terms than what I have assigned in all the records or monuments of ancient times. And for aught I know to the contrary, never any divine before yourself and Mr. Hoster²⁰ affirmed that uncharitable divisions in the church, or indulging a little unkindness of temper towards our fellow Christians, was the only Scripture sin of schism, and denied that appellation to a causeless separation from a true and orthodox church when no sinful term or condition of communion is either imposed or required, which is the genuine and natural consequence and effect of such divisions.

But notwithstanding this opinion of yours, you say, you are far from being indifferent as to any man's principles in religion, as appears by your several writings against deists, papists, etc., etc., etc. What you have wrote against this bead-roll of sectaries is nothing to the purpose, though in all the catalogues of your writings which I have seen, I could see no treatise or tract of yours on purpose wrote against any of them. Indeed, in some of your *Appeals* which I have read, I find you charging the Presbyterians and Quakers with degenerating from and acting contrary to their own original principles, but very little (if any thing) said in confutation of these principles upon which they break off from the established Church. But however that be, all I am at present concerned in is your *Discourse upon Catholic Spirit*, which you made me a present of, and the maxim which in your *Plain Account* you say you laid down to yourself and your brother, that orthodoxy was but a very slender, if it may be allowed to be any part at all of religion. And whether from both these, and your defence of them in your letters to me, it doth not manifestly appear to any impartial and indifferent judge that you discoursed and reasoned like one that was quite indifferent as to any man's religious sentiments, I leave to the judgment of all those that either have or shall read that sermon or the letters which passed between you and me upon it, and whether your strange notions of heresy and schism do not administer just grounds, without any breach of charity, to suspect that you are a perfect latitudinarian in principle.

I did not, as you seem to apprehend, charge you with concealing your sentiments. I only said that either you were a latitudinarian or concealed your principles to ingratiate yourself with the Dissenters. But then, sir, you may remember I told you at the same time that I rather suspected the former than the latter, as one might in reality be an error of your judgment but the latter being a gross piece of hypocrisy, I would not willingly suspect any man, much less a brother clergyman, would be guilty of it.

You say you need not dispute with many of the Dissenters to know there is no probability of success, as you have, you say, found your father's words a thousand times true, etc. And so, sir, you might your grandmother's words too, if you could remember them. But all this does not excuse your not endeavouring, according to your opportunities and abilities, to make them sensible of their errors, if happily they may be brought to the acknowledgment of the truth, that whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, they may know that there was a prophet among them. I believe if your father, of whom I have heard a very good character, were still alive, he would tell you that after the concessions you have frankly made both to Quakers and Presbyterians (the two most considerable parties among the Dissenters), [if] you should attempt to dispute with them, they would not only out-face and out-lung you, but also out-reason you into the bargain. For as you maintain the negative of the scriptural prescription and perpetual obligation of episcopacy, I cannot conceive with what face or assurance you could dispute with a Presbyterian about church government, which is the most material difference between them and us, and which gives them the denomination of 'Presbyterians'. For grant them that episcopacy is not

²⁰The identity of this person is unclear.

prescribed in Scripture, and that its obligation is neither necessary nor perpetual, and there will be a perfect agreement between you as to that point of episcopacy. Neither can I perceive with what better grace or hopes of success you could dispute with a Quaker, after declaring publicly that you look upon baptism and the Lord's Supper as mere trifles and things indifferent, and that you desire the dispute about them may never come in sight.

But it seems it was only to humour me that you graciously condescended to dispute a little with me, but not out of any hopes of success, though I should have a single eye, and did not aim at victory but at truth, because you say a man of three score can hardly, if at all, be convinced, etc. Sir, if you undertook this debate only to humour me, as if you imagined it were any sort of pleasure to me to have any dispute with you or any other, you had very little to do and are greatly mistaken in your imagination. For I take no kind of pleasure in having any debate with you; and were I influenced only with the desire of victory, I would not think the credit of gaining one over you (as great a man as you, or any other, may fancy yourself to be) worth the labour and pains it cost me. As to my age, I believe the difference between it and yours is not so great, but you may be as incapable of conviction as you fancy or imagine me to be on account of my years. And you may be as sensible of stiffness and inflexibility stealing upon your mind, to put a bar to all conviction, as I am or can be. However, be my years either few or many, I do not think (and I believe every disinterested person will be of the same opinion) that you have hitherto advanced any one argument capable of convincing any one, at any period of his life, who has any tolerable knowledge of the subjects of our controversy.

[IX.] In your last paragraph you say you will add a few words upon orthodoxy, because it is of the last importance, etc. And yet as great as the importance of it is, you have not added one grain of weight more to the scale in this than you did in your former letter. You only sing the same song over again, without ever taking the least notice of what I wrote to you in my second letter in answer to it, in which I think I did evidently prove that orthodoxy was a most necessary and essential part of religion, even as necessary as faith, without which it is impossible to please God; and that by such arguments as I find you are not able to answer, or otherwise I cannot conceive why you did not put in some kind of answer to them. But instead of that which was incumbent on you to do, if it was in your power, you content yourself only with telling (as you did before) what you mean by a child of God, and what by a child of the devil. And therefore if my aim was only victory, I might without giving myself any further trouble take my leave both of you and the controversy together, and so leave the reader to judge whether you or I best deserve the application of your old man's Latin motto, *Non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris*.²¹

But because this part of our dispute is indeed, as you say, of the last and greatest importance, and that my aim is not victory but that truth may prevail, and especially because for want of any other topics of argumentation you have (in a manner very unbecoming either a gentleman, a scholar, or a Christian) betaken yourself to scandal and personal reflection, I am content to continue the debate a little farther and to endeavour, if possible, to convince you of the dangerous and pernicious consequence of this maxim.

[X.] In your seventh paragraph you furnish me with three several definitions of the religion of a child of God: the first is that it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; secondly, that it is the love of God and man, producing all holiness of conversation; and lastly, that it is the mind that was in Christ, and walking as he walked. And of each of these definitions you affirm severally and distinctly that orthodoxy is but a very slender part of either, questioning at each time whether it be any part at all of it. But in answer to this I must observe that in all these definitions you either artfully, or through an error or mistake of your judgment, mistake the fruits and effects, or rewards of religion for religion itself. For righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, love of God and man, strictly and properly speaking are only the fruits and effects of religion, and differ from it just as the conclusion differs from the principle from whence it is deduced or the effect from the cause.

²¹'I will not be persuaded, even though you should convince me.' JW had quoted this in his Sept. 18 letter.

Religion, as I told you in my former letter, is the entertaining such orthodox notions and sentiments of the Supreme Being, his nature, attributes, and words as produce those fruits and effects in us which you mistake and confound with religion itself. And it does as naturally do so in everyone *obice non ponente* (that does not put a bar to it) by the depravity of his own corrupt will and affections, as a tree brings forth its natural fruit if no injury of weather or an unnatural season prevents or obstructs it. So that the entertaining of sound and orthodox sentiments of the nature, attributes, and Word of God is the very soul and foundation of all religion, which produces those fruits and effects of it mentioned by you in everyone that does not put a bar to it by the depravity of his own corrupt will and affections. And consequently orthodoxy is a most necessary and essential part of religion, without which we cannot have those effects of it mistaken by you for religion itself. As for instance, what peace or joy could you have in the Holy Ghost if you had not a right belief of his nature, person, or office? Suppose you were an Eunomian or Socinian heretic. What joy or comfort could you have in the Holy Ghost if, with the first, you believed him to be a mere creature; or, with the last, to be only a quality of the divine nature, without any personal subsistence? How could you love, fear, or serve God in a way suitable to his will and word, if you entertained wrong notions either of himself, his attributes, his purposes, or decrees? Suppose a rigid Calvinist who believes absolute and unconditional predestination and reprobation, how could such an one have a cordial love for him? Fear him, I grant, he might—as a cruel tyrant, who without any other motive but his own mere will and pleasure, and to show his power, did from all eternity, without any regard to their good and bad actions, irreversibly and irrevocably doom the greatest part of his creatures to eternal damnation. So that you see, sir, that orthodox sentiments are the very soul and prolific principle of all religion, without which we can neither love, fear, or serve God as we should do, and consequently that orthodoxy is a most necessary and essential part of religion.

By a child of the devil, you say you mean one that neither loves, fears, or serves God, yet such a man may be orthodox and entertain true opinions; and yet it is equally certain that these can be no parts of religion in him that has no religion at all. I wish, sir, you would forget your sophistry, and not endeavour by such sophisms to impose upon yourself or others. For this argument of yours proceeds, as the logicians speak, *a dicto simpliciter, ad dictum secundum quid*,²² which you that either are or sometimes were a fellow of Oxford must know to be false reasoning. That is in plain English, when the question between you and me is whether orthodoxy, simply and absolutely without any respect or relation to this or that person, of this or that qualification, be a part of religion, you endeavour to prove that it is not because it is no part of it in him that has no religion at all—than which there cannot well be a more fallacious piece of sophistry. But sir, though a child of the devil has not the fruits and effects of religion (that is, though his orthodoxy does not produce the saving love and fear of God in him, because he puts a bar to it by the depravity of his corrupt will and affections), why may it not be in itself really and truly a most necessary part of religion, as faith, though it does not in all men operate by love, is yet a necessary part of religion, though to him of no use or advantage because it doth not produce in him those effects and fruits of religion which you mention. For as reason is indisputably essential to man, though natural idiots or madmen have not the use of it; so orthodoxy, or right believing, is essential to religion, though a child of the devil puts a bar to its influences by the depravity of his corrupt will and affections.

[XI.] In the close of your letter you crave permission to speak exceeding plainly, and to do you justice, you do so to a very great degree of scurrility and in a manner unbecoming your character. You suppose then that I may be very orthodox and yet possibly I may have no more religion than the devil or his angels, if it be true that I frequently drink to excess and that in my passion I call my brother a fool, and take God's name in vain. But, sir, what if instead of being true all this be scandalously and notoriously false, what manner of man must the world take you to be thus (even hypothetically) to asperse a brother clergyman, of whom and with whom you had no sort of personal knowledge or acquaintance to entitle you, with any assurance of truth, to charge him with such immoralities? And consequently for which you could have no other authority but the false information of some of your disciples, who for the

²²I.e., moving 'from a general statement to a qualified statement', or the 'fallacy of accident', where one applies a universal rule to an irrelevant instance.

opposition I gave them would not scruple to make mountains of mole-hills, and improve the most innocent liberty into an immoral crime? Suppose, sir, I could prevail with myself to follow the example you have set me and to give you a yard of your own measure, and tell you that though you never drank any thing but water, and never in passion or otherwise took God's name in vain, yet it is possible (according to your own way of reasoning) you may have no more religion than the devil or his angels, if it be true that having inveigled a young lady with fourteen thousand pounds fortune to marry you, you in a little time quitted and turned her off, giving her only four thousand pounds of her fortune, reserving the rest for charitable uses, upon pretence that the married state was incompatible with the discharge of the apostolic mission which you took upon yourself; that you afterwards lived in adultery with another man's wife; and that even when you were last in this kingdom you carried off considerable sums of money that were collected in your societies in Dublin for charitable uses among themselves. Suppose, I say, I should return upon you in this manner (though I have heard all these things reported of you), would not you, and very justly, think me a very bad man and that I had done you a very great injury? I do not hint these things as having any moral assurance of the truth of them, but to let you see how an innocent man (as in charity I will suppose you are) may very often be causelessly injured in his reputation by malicious people; and that you ought to have considered that this might be my case, as I can prove it to be, before you either directly or indirectly exhibited such a charge against a brother clergyman, founded only on groundless hearsay or report, which is doing that to me which I appeal to your own conscience whether you would not take it very ill in me if I did (as you seem to do in your letter) seriously exhibit the above charge against you—which is so far from being either Bible, or traditionary, or any kind of Christianity that it is not so much as common honesty, or even heathenish morality.

In the meantime, I am surprised that you who set up so much for what you call 'Bible Christianity', should forget that precept of our Lord (Matt. 7:1–2), 'Judge not and you shall not be judged, condemn not and you shall not be condemned, for with the same measure you mete to others, it shall be measured to you again.' Or that you did not reflect how contrary to St. Paul's description (1 Cor. 13:5) of the Christian grace of charity it is even to think, how much more to speak, evil of our brother? And that the same St. Paul, in his pastoral instructions to Titus (3:2), desires he may put the people under his care and inspection in mind to speak evil of no man. And let me entreat you to read Doctor Tillotson's excellent discourse on the last quoted text of St. Paul,²³ in hopes it may prevent your being guilty of such another uncharitable crime again. And because I am unwilling to be in your debt for any of your civilities, or any instance of your brotherly love, as you have very uncharitably and unjustly (because you did it without any knowledge of your own) applied the words of David to me, so you must pardon me if I very justly (because I have a pregnant demonstration of it lying before me on the table) apply the words of a greater than David to you, 'Else how canst thou say to thy brother, brother let me take the mote out of thy eye, when thou seest not the beam that is in thine own eye. THOU HYPOCRITE, first cast out the beam that is in thine own eye, and then shalt thou clearly see to take out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.'²⁴ You cry out with an exclamation, what an idle thing is it in me to talk of lay-preachers, for is not a lay-preacher preferable to a drunken, etc., preacher? But without any exclamation, let me ask you calmly whether it be not more idle, more senseless, and indeed more uncharitable in you to be making odious comparisons, when the question is not which is preferable, but when the question is whether a layman, without any direct or special call from heaven or a legal mission from the governors of the Church, may lawfully take upon himself the office of a public preacher of God's Word in the Church; and whether your allowing such preachers be consistent with your acknowledgment that you have no exception to the Twenty-third Article, which condemns them. To clear this inconsistency was what you ought to have done, if you could, and not make odious comparisons which, however true, are nothing to the purpose. For though a sober layman is a better man than an intemperate (though never so well authorized) preacher, yet it does not therefore follow that a mere layman may lawfully presume to be a public preacher of God's Word in the Church.

²³John Tillotson, 'Against Evil Speaking.'

²⁴Matt. 7:4–5.

In the meantime, as to myself, let me be as I will. To my own master I stand or fall. Neither do I regard being judged by you or any other, so long as my own conscience acquits me. And I do assure you, sir, that I had much rather take my chance with the poor publican in the parable, who went to the temple to pray with a pharisee, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smiting his breast cried 'God be merciful to me a sinner'; than with any pharisee, whether Jewish or Christian, who boasts of his own righteousness, and not only despises but also falsely accuses and uncharitably censures others.

After all, whatever (in your great charity) you may think of me, I thank God I have so much Christianity that I can with all sincerity say the Lord's Prayer, and beg forgiveness of my sins, which I am not ashamed to confess upon no other terms than as I heartily forgive both you and your informer, whoever he was, the scandal you have endeavoured to fix upon me. And so, sir, I take my leave of you and this dispute together. For once an adversary betakes himself to scandal and personal reflection, I am resolved to have no farther dealing or correspondence with him, since, in my humble opinion, there can hardly be any greater sign of a bad cause or a bad man, or indeed of both together, than such a poor, unmanly, and unchristian behaviour.²⁵

I am, reverend sir,

Yours, etc.

J. C.

Source: published transcription; Clark, *Montanus Redivivus*, 59–93.

²⁵Given the tone of this third letter, JW did not reply. He did however visit Rev. Clark when he was again in Ireland, on June 2, 1758 (cf. JW, *Journal, Works*, 21:150). Clark was extremely ill at the time.

From Judith Beresford¹

[Ashbourne]
October 1, 1756

How does it add to the glory of the almighty Saviour that from my very infancy this rebel heart has felt the drawings of his love! Therefore, since you desire to know how I was first convinced that I was a poor, guilty sinner, I must begin with saying that goodness and mercy have followed me all my days. But I know not how to proceed; the workings of sin and grace that I have felt are beyond description. Yet out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the Lord can perfect praise.

My childhood was spent in much simplicity and peace. The Lord drew me to himself with the cords of love, and I found great joy in pouring out my soul before him. Original sin I was quite ignorant of, but actual sins I felt and bewailed, and after some time spent in weeping for them I felt peace and renewed my resolutions. But they could not last long, for pride, envy, and all manner of evil now sprung up in my heart. Yet at times I had strong convictions and often resolved to be very serious when I was older.

So I went on from eight or ten years old till seventeen. Then I was indeed as bad as bad could be, desired nothing but to be admired and was filled with all that foolish vanity which poor young women are most prone to. Christmas 1750, I was advised to partake of the Lord's Supper. I knew it was right but was conscious of my ignorance and unfitness for it. However, I endeavoured to prepare myself and was pretty well satisfied after I had made a formal confession of my sins and shed some tears for them.

About this time there was a great talk of *Methodism*, and a cousin of mine was brought to seek the Lord. I went to visit her in January 1751, and told her before I came away, I knew I was 'not what I ought to be' and should 'be glad to be instructed'. From this time we carried on a correspondence, and by degrees light broke in upon my heart. But alas! Though I well knew that in me was no good thing and seemed to disclaim my own righteousness, yet the idol lurked within, and I really trusted in my own prayers and other duties. In this manner I went on that whole year, toward the end of which my corruptions were more violent. Sin took occasion by the commandment, and I was often ready to be carried away by the torrent.

February 1752, it pleased God to take my dear friend. This appeared to me a heavy judgment. Yet I afterwards saw how it was tempered with mercy, as it taught me to trust in none but the everlasting arm. Her death happily proved the occasion of her elder sister's conversion. The blessing of a Christian friend was restored to me, and we received each other as from the Lord.

In '53 and '54 I had great outward afflictions and at times strong inward conflicts, though, blessed be God, I generally found comfort in pouring out my complaints before him. But towards the end of 1754, I began to feel my hope decline, and for several nights in secret prayer I was in strong agony of spirit. The Lord then, while I was upon my knees, stripped off all my fig-leaves. At the same time he showed me the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ to save sinners, to save me, the chief, and I was enabled to cry out, 'My Lord and my God! I have redemption in thy blood.' From this happy time I went on my way rejoicing, though I was at times grievously assaulted, both by the stirrings of my old corruptions and temptations from the devil, blasphemous thoughts in particular. I always experienced something of this before the sacrament—but the Lord made a way for me to escape.

In the beginning of the year 1755, we had preaching near Ashbourne. This I had wished for long. And now I was honoured with suffering a little for the name of Christ. At first I was rather ashamed, but the Lord strengthened me. And so great a blessing did I find by conversing with these dear people that I feared none of those things which I did or might suffer. My acquaintances were now less fond of my company, and they that looked upon me shook their heads. This proved an unspeakable blessing, for often had I cause to fear the love of men.

¹Beresford was responding to JW's request for 'some account of her experience'. On Beresford, see her earlier letter of Sept. 7, 1756.

From the time of my becoming serious, or rather beginning to aim at it, my health visibly declined. This at first occasioned me some trouble, because all cried out it was 'being too religious'. But afterwards I saw great mercy in this chastisement and the consequences of it, one of which was that I had a *just excuse*, even in the judgment of others, for refraining from many things which in my circumstances could not otherwise have been avoided without great opposition from those who were near and dear unto me. Not that I ever fasted—God knows I have been deficient in this as well as every other duty. But I had an happy liberty of using some little self-denial, for which the Lord be praised.

Oh how has he led me and carried me in his bosom! Is it not wonderful? And yet I have not told you a tenth part. But the time fails. And my strength fails. Praise God with me, and let us magnify his name together.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, May 5, 1757 (*Works*, 21:99–100).

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[[Leeds]]
[[October]] 11, [1756]

[[Dear Brother,]]

Alex[ander] Coats² is [[come. He may have both sense and grace, but I wish he had a little more utterance. I am of George Whitefield's mind, that he will never do for Leeds. He is a barbarian to me, I am sure, for I can't understand one word in three which he speaks.

[[The worst of poor James [Rouquet] is his instability. If marriage helps to settle him, I shall much rejoice.³ <Your?⁴> namesake also is far from being a pillar, whatever he seems in his own eyes.⁵

[[I will read the *Notes*⁶ as soon as I possibly can.

[[By what I hear, brother]] Fisher⁷ [[is little better than a false brother. He sent Mr. Edwards⁸ a letter not much to your honour, soon after you left Ireland, which was read in Mr. Edwards' meeting. This should justify Mr. Edwards, [but] will not easily steal my confidence.

[[What passed between you and me about ordaining, if you have forgot, I will never remind you of it. Be it so, if you please. I have done you much wrong by supposing you capable of any wrong impression.⁹ I shall never be so uncivil and so idle as to justify my suspicion.]] *Ipsa res non redixit in gratiam.*¹⁰ [[Neither shall I dispute with you which is the greatest friend of the Church. You gave me great pleasure by insisting I am of the two [of us] the most likely to leave it. Most glad am I to believe you; and if you stand by it, it is no great matter whether I leave it or no.¹¹

[[I hear from Bristol that you are far from well. If you are ill and send me no notice of it, you do me wrong. Some at London who dearly love you complain of your impotence of mind and unadvisableness¹² in preaching oftener than your strength can bear. For my part I shall last as long as I can, and spare myself (if my friends are pleased to call it so) that I may last the longer.

Farewell.]]¹³

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

Endorsement: by JW, 'Oct. 1756'.

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

¹This personal letter comes at the end of a journal letter.

²See Coats' exchange of letters with John Wesley in 1761.

³Rouquet had married Sarah Fenwicke the preceding month.

⁴A small portion of the ms is torn away by the seal.

⁵This is likely a reference to John Fenwick, who was the Assistant in Leeds in 1755.

⁶JW had asked CW to review *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, published the previous year, for corrections to make in the second edition.

⁷Likely John Fisher, who served as an itinerant from 1751 to 1760.

⁸John Edwards, a former itinerant who had become an Independent minister in Leeds.

⁹This expansion is a bit uncertain.

¹⁰'These things are not repeated, out of grace.'

¹¹This paragraph also appears in shorthand by CW in MARC, DDCW 8/1e, p. 97.

¹²CW wrote out 'impotence' and 'unadvisableness' in longhand, under the shorthand signs.

¹³This expansion of the shorthand provided by Frank Baker and Richard Heitzenrater.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

c. October 15, 1756

Reverend Sir,

The glory of God and the good of mankind are the motives that induce me to write the following.

...¹

As it is our duty to do all we can to make all around us happy, I think there is one thing that may be done to promote so blessed an end, which will at the same time be very advantageous to them that practise it, namely, to efface all the obscene words which are written on houses, doors, or walls by evil-minded men. This, which I recommend to others, I constantly practise myself, and if ever I omit doing it I am severely checked unless I can produce some good reason for that omission. I do it with a sponge which for that purpose I carry in my pocket. The advantages I reap from hence are: 1) Peace of conscience in doing my duty. 2) It helps me to conquer the fear of man, which is one of my greatest trials. 3) It is matter of joy that I can do any, the least, service to any one. And as all persons, especially the young, are liable to temptations to impurity, I can't do too much to remove such temptations, either from myself or others. Perhaps too, when the unhappy writers pass by and see their bad labours soon effaced, they may be discouraged from pursuing so shameful a work, yea, and brought to a better mind.

Perhaps in some places it might not be amiss in the room of what is effaced to write some serious sentence or short text of Scripture. And wherever we do this, would it not be well to lift up our heart to God in behalf of those sinners, in this or the like manner: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'² 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'³

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Oct. 20, 1756 (*Works*, 21:79–80).

¹JW shows the elision in his extract.

²Acts 7:60.

³Luke 23:34.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley¹

[[Manchester]]
[[October]] 23, [1756]

[[Dear Brother,

[[I talked fully with [Eleazer] Webster, and had great satisfaction in him.

[[What opportunity could I have at Bolton, which I came to late at night, and left early next morning? One subscriber I have got to the school, and two to the *Notes*.² I have mentioned both to every person I have yet met who was likely to subscribe.

[[Ask John Nelson and William Shent what good Joseph Tucker does in our societies. He is an unnecessary burden in every place. Let me entreat you not to keep him from returning home. I will speak to him again, fully and kindly, when I've come to Bath, and send you the result.

[[Surely John Whitford slandered you when he told me you pressed him at London to preach with us again. You then knew him to be a graceless predestinarian.

[[Mr. Walker's letter³ deserves to be thoroughly considered.⁴ Your answer I assent to. One only thing occurs to me now which might prevent in great measure the mischiefs which will probably ensue after our death, and that is *greater, much greater, deliberation and care in admitting preachers*. Consider seriously if we have not been too easy and too hasty in this matter. Let us pray God to show us if this has not been the principal cause why so many of our preachers have so lamentably miscarried. Ought any new preacher to be received before we know that he is grounded, not only in the doctrines we teach, but in the discipline also, and particularly in the communion of the Church of England? Ought we not to try what he can answer a Quaker, a Baptist, a Papist, as well as a Moravian or predestinarian? If we do not insist on that]] στοργή⁵ [[for our desolate mother as a prerequisite,⁶ yet should we not be well assured that the candidate⁷ is no enemy to the Church?

[[I have but one thing more to offer at present. Is it not our duty to stop Joseph Cownley,⁸ and such like, from railing and laughing at the Church? Should we not now, at least, shut the stable-door? The short remains of my life are devoted to this very thing, to follow your sons (as Charles Perronet once told me we should follow you) with buckets of water, to quench the flame of strife and division which they have or may kindle.⁹

[[You may send me another letter before I leave this place. Help us by your prayers.

[[Farewell in Christ.

[[I am glad James is so teachable. And Charles so quiet.]] *Sed non ego credulus illi*.¹⁰

¹This personal letter comes at the end of a journal letter.

²I.e., the *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*.

³Samuel Walker (1714–61), rector of Truro; cf. his letter to JW, Sept. 5, 1755, in *Works*, 26:582–86.

⁴CW wrote 'considered' in longhand, beneath the shorthand sign.

⁵'Affection', or 'love'.

⁶CW wrote 'prerequisite' in longhand, under the shorthand sign.

⁷CW wrote 'candidate' in longhand, under the shorthand sign.

⁸CW spelled his last name in longhand, under the shorthand sign.

⁹CW included an abridged longhand transcription of this and the preceding paragraph in his MS Journal (Oct. 21, 1756), with some slight variations from the shorthand letter given here.

¹⁰Cf. Virgil, *Eclogues*, ix.34; 'But I do not trust him.'

[[You do not tell me your opinion of the matter.]]¹¹

Address: 'To / Mr Robert Windsor / in King street / Tower Hill / London'.

Postmark: '25/OC'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Oct. 19, 1756 / a[nswere]d Nov. 4'.

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

¹¹Expansion of shorthand provided by Frank Baker and Richard Heitzenrater.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Bristol¹
November 9, 1756

[[To Brother,

[[John Hampson sends me a poor account of Norwich. How can it be otherwise if they neglect the ordinances? How can he press them when he has forsaken them himself? He was the last man I should have stationed there. Settle it at our next Conference in a cabinet council that promises[?] far away places. I should divide the lame ones and sequester them in Israel, whereas now they are sent to their station to satisfy each other's hands.

[[All you can do at present with Joseph Cownley is to write a plain kind explanatory letter insisting 1) on the treachery of any of our preachers for leaving the Church [of England], 2) on his being the grand corrupter of them, 3) on his giving us some security that he will do no further evil through his abuse of our influence and confidence no more. If you please to send the letter to me I will countersign it.]]

Source: MARC, DDCW 8/1e, p. 99 (CW's shorthand copy of letter sent; expansion provided by Richard Heitzenrater and Timothy Underhill).

¹A shorthand mark appears after 'Bristol' that looks like a 'k' or a 'q'; its purpose is unclear.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

Bristol
November 16, [1756]

[[Dear Brother,]]

I wish you would re-consider your note [on] v. 26 Romans 15 (p. 419) ‘*Some* of the church were in want, the rest being barely able to subsist themselves.’¹ This proves to my apprehension that they had not all things common, or how should *some* be in want and not *all*?

I wrote yesterday by brother [John] Jones, since which I have received yours of the 13th.²

Doubtless you guard in your preservative³ against that levelling, devilish root and branch spirit which breathes in every line of the *Mitre*.⁴ I kept in my own thoughts till you imparted yours, which I entirely agree with. Only you do him too much honour by naming him with the *Independent Whig*.⁵ The religion of both is equal, but Ted exceeds in bitterness and malice beyond all comparison. Much wit I can see in the *Independent Whig*, but in the *Mitre* none at all. Such unsufferable dullness would surfeit every reader but those whose hearts are as thoroughly corrupted as the writer’s. I marvel how he can look you or me in the face after writing and propagating such a book! How he can pretend to be our fellow labourer. Notwithstanding his promise to us at John Jones’s, he continues to spread his notions with his book. He does not sell but gives it to *our* preachers and friends. One he made me the bearer of to York. I have heard none commend its wit but Mrs. James and Christopher Hopper, which convinces me nothing is too stupid to do hurt. Is it right or fair that he should go on to poison our children and wound us through the influence we lend him? I love both him and Charles [Perronet] and the whole family. So do you, as we have abundantly shown. But must we therefore suffer this madman to cast firebrands and tear our flock to pieces? I know he is totally fallen from grace. And *can* I, *ought* I ever to trust him, *till* he is *sensible* of his fall! In my private capacity I show him what love and civility I can, and intend to continue his friend, as far as he is capable of receiving good from me. But as ministers of Christ, as guardians of this particular Church, as fathers of the poor Methodists, what *ought* we to do? Let us first agree betwixt ourselves and cut off all his hope of ever coming in between us. Then whatever you say, do, or judge; I say, do, and judge the same. Only what we do we must do quickly. You can better write than speak your mind. He stays here another week. Suppose you wrote him a letter (for me also to subscribe and deliver) and set before him some of the things which he hath done.

1. He has set himself against us almost from the beginning, counteracting us with our preachers, spiriting them up, poisoning, proselytising them to his own wretched notions.

2. He has withstood the utmost efforts both you and I have used to make him our friend.

3. He has stirred up persecution against us and given such a wound to the cause as may never be healed. For of all the prejudice, bitterness, disaffection of both preachers and people he is *et caput et fons*⁶ (unless he says Joseph Cownley corrupted him; and he, his brother Charles).

4. To sum up all and perpetuate his evil, he has sent forth his *Mitre*—in open contradiction of all we have said, wrote, done from the beginning. If we say the Church of Christ and England are but one, he says the Church of Rome and England are but one. If we condemn lay-administering [the sacraments], he

¹CW was systematically reviewing the first edition of *NT Notes* at JW’s request, who was preparing a revised second edition. JW left this sentence unchanged through later editions.

²Neither CW’s letter of Nov. 15 nor JW’s letter of Nov. 13 appear to survive.

³JW was preparing *A Preservative Against Unsettled Notions in Religion* (Bristol: Farley, 1758).

⁴Edward Perronet’s *The Mitre: a Poem* (London: s.n., 1756), a strident critique of the Church of England and argument for separation.

⁵Thomas Gordan, *The Independent Whig; or, a Defence of Primitive Christianity, and of our Ecclesiastical Establishment* (London: J. Peele, 1720–21).

⁶‘Both head and fountain’.

attempts to justify and prove it, etc. What Charles [Perronet] told Dr. Tucker,⁷ that he had not one sentiment in common with the Church of England, Ted might say with equal truth.

At Canterbury I saw our sacrament hymns,⁸ which Ted has scratched out and blotted, hardly leaving twenty entire lines. How can two walk together, except they be agreed?⁹ How can he *pretend* to labour with us? He has no power over his own will or words. If in a relenting fit he promises us to be quiet, his vanity soon betrays him again into his old spirit and conversation.

Let us try, with the help of God, whether *we* cannot hinder his doing further mischief. Things are come to this, that we must conquer or be conquered. My advice is:

1. That you write and insist upon his keeping his promise to us by calling in and destroying his book. If he will part with that right eye,¹⁰ we may have some hopes of him.

2. That he settle to *something*.

He is unwilling to break with us: 1) because he still in some sort loves us; [and] 2) because he comes, recommended by us, to all our friends.

But his own soul can never recover while he wanders from house to house in such a lounging way of life. Therefore let him go home to his wife,¹¹ and do as much good and as little harm as he can at Canterbury. Poor Mr. Lepine he had almost assimilated.¹² I hope your late visit has set him right.

I will join with you in your *kindest* treatment of him. But let him never get within your guard. Make him not your companion or counsellor. Keep your absolute superiority by steady serious love. The same behaviour might suit his brother [Charles] also.

I have much more to say, but time and paper fail. When do you expect your *Notes*¹³ will be out? Sally [Wesley] writes in love to you. I am half choked with a cold, yet setting out for the country.

Farewell.

Address: 'To Mr [Robert] Windsor in King Street, Town Hill, London. For JW with speed'.

Postmarks: '18/NO' and 'Bristol'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Dr Robertson. C. Nov. 16 1756' and 'W. Aldrich 2s 6d'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/84.

⁷Josiah Tucker (1713–99) appeared earlier as a critic of Methodism while serving as rector of All Saints in Bristol in 1739. By 1756 Tucker had earned his D.D. degree and was a canon of the Cathedral in Bristol. He would go on to become Dean of Gloucester.

⁸*Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745).

⁹See Amos 3:3.

¹⁰See Matt. 5:29.

¹¹In Sept. 1748 Edward Perronet married Duriah Clarke (d. 1792).

¹²This was likely the current patriarch of a Huguenot family that had settled in Canterbury a century earlier, Samuel Lepine (1705–83), a hosier.

¹³The second edition of *NT Notes* appeared in early 1757.

From John Fletcher

Tern
November 24, 1756

Reverend Sir,

As I look upon you as my spiritual guide, and cannot doubt of your patience to hear and your experience to answer a question proposed by one of your people, I freely lay my case before you.

Since the first time I began to feel the love of God shed abroad in my soul, which was, I think, at seven years of age, I resolved to give myself up to him, and to the service of his church, if ever I was fit for it. But the corruption which is in the world, and that which was in my heart, soon weakened, if not erased those first characters which grace had written upon it. However, I went through my studies, with a design of going into orders. But afterwards, upon serious reflection, feeling I was unequal to so great a burden, and disgusted by the necessity I should be under to subscribe the doctrine of predestination, I yielded to the desire of my friends, who would have me to go into the army. But just before I was quite engaged in a military employment, I met with such disappointments as occasioned my coming to England. Here I was called outwardly three times to go into orders. But upon praying to God that if those calls were not from him they might come to nothing, something always blasted the designs of my friends. And in this I have often admired the goodness of God, who prevented my rushing into that important employment, as the horse into battle. I never was more thankful for this favour than since I heard the gospel in its purity. Before I had been afraid, but then *I trembled* to meddle with holy things, and resolved to work out my salvation privately, without engaging in a way of life which required so much more grace and gifts than I was conscious I possessed. Yet from time to time I felt warm and strong desires to cast myself and my inability on the Lord, if I should be called any more, knowing that he could help me, and show his strength in my weakness. And these desires were increased by some little success which attended my exhortations and letters to my friends.

I think it necessary to let you know, sir, that my patron often desired me to take orders, and said he would soon help me to a living; to which I coldly answered I was not fit, and that besides I did not know how to get a title. The thing was in that state when about six weeks ago a gentleman I hardly knew offered me a living which, in all probability, will be vacant soon; and a clergyman I never spoke to gave me of his own accord the title of curate to one of his livings. Now sir, the question which I beg you to decide is whether I must and can make use of that title to get into orders? For, with respect to the living, were it vacant, I have no mind to it, because I think I could preach with more fruit in my native country and in my own tongue.

I am in suspense. On one side, my heart tells me I must try, and it tells me so whenever I feel any degree of the love of God and man. On the other, when I examine whether I am fit for it, I so plainly see my want of gifts, and especially of that *soul* of all the labours of a minister—*love, continual, universal, flaming love*, that my confidence disappears. I accuse myself of pride to dare to entertain the desire of supporting one day the ark of God, and conclude that an extraordinary punishment will sooner or later overtake my rashness. As I am in both of these frames successively, I must own, sir, I do not see which of these two ways before me I can take with safety, and I shall gladly be ruled by you, because I trust God will direct you in giving me the advice you think will best conduce to his glory, which is the *only thing* I would have in view in this affair. I know how precious your time is, and desire no long answer—*persist* or *forbear* will satisfy and influence, reverend sir, your unworthy servant,

John Fletcher

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 46–48; reprint, Fletcher, *Posthumous* (1791), 71–73; reprint, *AM* 17 (1794): 219–20.

From John Fletcher

[London]
December 13, 1756

Sir,

Whenever I have received the sacrament in your chapels, though I admired the order and decency with which that awful part of the divine worship was performed, I thought that there was something wanting which might make it still more profitable and solemn.

As the number of communicants is generally very great, the time spent in receiving is long enough for many, I am afraid, to feel their devotion languish and their desires grow cold, for want of outward fuel. In order to prevent this, you interrupt from time to time the service of the table to put up a short prayer, or to sing a verse or two of an hymn. And I do not doubt but many have found the benefit of that method. But as you can spare very little time, you are obliged to be satisfied with scattering those few drops, instead of a continual rain. But would not that want be easily supplied, sir, if you were to appoint the preachers who may be present to do what you cannot possibly do yourself, to pray and sing without interruption, as at a watchnight? This would have several good effects: 1. Experience, as well as the nature of the thing itself, shows every sincere seeker that it is the fittest time to ask, and the most ordinary to receive grace; every moment ought then to be improved to the best advantage. 2. Continual praying and singing would prevent the wanderings of many who are not convinced of sin deeply enough, or influenced by grace strongly enough, to mourn and pray without interruption if they are left to themselves. 3. It would increase the earnestness of believers, for though everyone wrestles (probably) in his own heart, both for himself and the congregation, yet their prayers would certainly have more power if united; and the general fire would increase the warmth of their affections. 4. In praying frequently for universal love, as the remembrance of Christ's bleeding love naturally directs us to do, you would add, for many, the benefit and comfort of a love-feast to the advantages that attend the holy Eucharist. 5. If the prayers were especially calculated for those that receive, is it not profitable, sir, that they would be extremely encouraged to act faith, to touch the hem of Christ's garment, to cast their burden upon him, and lay hold of eternal life, if they heard their weak petitions supported by the fervent prayer of their brethren at the same time that they feed, or are going to feed, on the blessed signs of Christ's body and blood?

It may be objected, 1. That some may prefer to pour out their souls before God according to their different frames, whether it be deadness, desertion, joy, overflowings of humility, repentance, love, etc. And so they might. For I do not see how general prayer and singing would rob them of that liberty, if they thought it more acceptable to God and beneficial to themselves. And their praying in private would not hinder the bulk of the congregation from uniting with joy in the public service.

2. That this method might bring in a confusion greater than the advantages it seems to be attended with. But could not prudence obviate this? I am sure it could. For I have seen that, or something like it, performed in a congregation of some thousand communicants, without the least confusion, and to the great edification and comfort of many.

But you are the best judge, sir. And if I take the liberty of giving you this hint, to make of it what use you think fit, it is because you said lately in the society that you heard willingly the observations of your people and was ready to follow or improve them, if they were just and reasonable.

I am, sir,

Your unworthy servant,

John Fletcher

From John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]

Monday, December 27, 1756

Sir,

I have tried you^a by your insolently despising and Antichristian silence, since not by a friendly and Christian answer of yours to my friendly and very Christian letter. I know you now, and I ought to let the world know in a few words what you are, with showing you to be but a dissenting disciple and divided mate of Mr. George Whitefield, the man of dissension, and division, and revolt, a chief of those false prophets, that is, false teachers foretold to come in the world and seduce many,^b of those false apostles transforming themselves into apostles of Jesus-Christ^c our God, who tells us that he did not send them, nor tell them what they say abusing in all senses his name.^d You transform yourself truly into an apostle of Jesus-Christ our God when, mimicking St. Paul in his narrations, not imitating him in his humility, sincerity, and faithfulness, you publish a journal of your seditious unapostolical works,¹ with letters received by you, artfully publishing your pretended praises, as well as your deceitful answers to these letters. Will you also insert in this journal of yours the preceding, and unanswered letters you received from me; and this, of which I don't expect nor care for any answer? Be sure that as we read with respect the Acts of the true apostles and faithful disciples of Jesus-Christ our God, posterity shall read yours with indignation, as of a false apostle, of a deceitful worker,^e of a man of dissension, division and revolt like your master, as one of those false prophets, false teachers running about without mission,^f and without order, even against all good order, in these very new days of the coming reign, and glory, and triumph of Truth the universal Principle, and sovereign Master,^g our God in Jesus Christ, which I publish silencing all his and our enemies^h such as you prove yourself to be by your unfaithful silence; when you should speak, by your insignificant, or ill significant speaking, when you should be silent.

I send copies of this letter to your bishop, and archbishop, chief and lawful ministers of the living Church of your nation, to make them remember you, as well as your master² the unfaithful chief of your contagious apostasy,ⁱ dissension, division, and revolt. And by sending you the copy of my letter to your bishop and others, I let you know how I speak on both your accounts in order to carry you in the way of a true justification.

^a 1 John 4:1 and 2:18–19; 2 Cor. 10:4–5.

^b Matt. 25:5–11.

^c 2 Cor. 11:13–15.

^d Jer. 23:21–40.

^e Matt. 7:15–23. Luke 13:25–27, 1 John 2:18–19.

^f Jer. 23:21–40.

^g 1 Esdras 4:35–41.³

^h Luke 1:71–74; 1 John 2:18–19.

ⁱ 2 Thess. 2:3–4, 7–11; 1 John 2:18–19. 1 Tim. 5:20.

Source: John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar, *The Fall of the Old Serpent ... and one [letter] to Mr. John Wesley* (London: J. Marshall, 1757), 12–14.

¹JW had just issued extract VIII of his *Journal*, covering July 20, 1749 – Oct. 30, 1751.

²[I.e., George Whitefield].

³John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar consistently refers to this book by its name in the Roman Catholic canon of the time: 3 Esdras.

From the Rev. Samuel Davies¹

Hanover [County, Virginia]
January 28, 1757

Though you and I may differ in some little things, I have long loved you and your brother, and wished and prayed for your success as zealous revivers of experimental Christianity. If I differ from you in temper and design, or in the essentials of religion, I am sure the error must lie on my side. Blessed be God for hearts to love one another!

As I knew your correspondence must be very extensive and your labours various and incessant, I intended to have kept my peculiar love for you a secret till we arrived where seas shall no more roll between us. But your late pious charity² constrains me to give you the trouble of a letter. I am confident God will attend it with his blessing and render you useful at the distance of near four thousand miles.

How great is the honour God has conferred upon you in making you a restorer of declining religion! And after struggling through so much opposition and standing almost single, with what pleasure must you behold so many raised up, zealous in the same cause, though perhaps not ranked under the same name nor openly connected with you!

I am endeavouring in my poor manner to promote the same cause in this part of our guilty globe. My success is not equal to my wishes, but it vastly surpasses both my deserts and my expectation. I have baptized near an hundred and fifty adult Negroes, of whom about sixty are communicants. Unpolished as they are, I find some of them have the art to dissemble. But, blessed be God, the generality of them, as far as I can learn, are real Christians. And I have no doubt but sundry of them are genuine children of Abraham. Among them, in the first place, and then among the poor white people, I have distributed the books you sent me.

I desire you to communicate this to your brother as equally intended for him. And let me and my congregation, particularly my poor Negro converts, be favoured with your prayers. In return for which I hope neither you nor your cause will be forgotten by, reverend sir,

Your affectionate fellow labourer, and obliged servant,

Samuel Davies

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Jan. 28, 1757 (*Works*, 21:84–85).

¹Rev. Samuel Davies, (1723–61), president of the College of New Jersey (i.e., Princeton) from 1759–61, was at the time of his earliest correspondence with JW an active New Light Presbyterian evangelist, building upon a nondenominational revival in Hanover County, east Virginia. See *DEB*, 298; and *ODNB*.

²JW had sent a present of some books.

From William Hitchens¹

February 28, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

When I was at Freshford, on January 30, in the morning, I scrupled singing those words,

Ye now afflicted are,
And hated for his name,
And in your bodies bear
The tokens of the Lamb.²

I thought I was not afflicted or hated for the name of Christ. But this scruple was soon removed. For at Bradford [on-Avon], in the evening, I was pressed for a soldier and carried to an inn, where the gentlemen were. Mr. Pearce,³ hearing of it, came and offered bail for my appearance the next day. They said they would 'take his word for ten thousand pound'; but not for me — I 'must go to the round-house', the little stone room on the side of the bridge. So thither I was conveyed by five soldiers. There I found nothing to sit on but a stone and nothing to lie on but a little straw. But soon after, a friend sent me a chair on which I sat all night. I had a double guard, twelve soldiers in all—two without, one in the door, and the rest within. I passed the night without sleep but not without rest, for, blessed be God, my peace was not broken a moment. My body was in prison, but I was Christ's freeman—my soul was at liberty. And, even there I found some work to do for God—I had fair opportunity of speaking to them who durst not leave me. And I hope it was not in vain.

In the morning, I had leave to go to a private house with only one soldier to guard me. About three in the afternoon I was carried before the commissioners, and part of the act read which empowered them to take 'such able-bodied men as followed no business and had no lawful or sufficient maintenance'. Then I said, 'If these are the men you are to take, I am not a proper person. For I do follow a lawful calling, in partnership with my brother, and have also an estate.' The Justice said, 'If you will make oath of that, I think we must let you go.' But the commissioners said no man could swear for himself. I said, 'Gentlemen, give me time and you shall have full proof.' After a long debate, they took a fifty-pound bond for my appearance on that day three weeks. All the time I could bless God that he counted me worthy to suffer for his name's sake.

The next day I set out for Cornwall. I tarried at home four days and then, setting out with my brother James,⁴ came to Bradford last Saturday. On Monday in the afternoon I appeared before the commissioners with the writings of my estate. When the justice had perused them, and my brother had taken his oath, I was set at liberty. So the fierceness of man turns to God's praise, and all this is for the furtherance of the gospel. I hope you will return God thanks for my deliverance out of the hands of unreasonable and wicked men.

William Hitchens

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Feb. 28, 1757 (*Works*, 21:86–88).

¹William Hitchens (1727–73), one of four sons of Capt. James Hitchens of Gwennap, served JW as an itinerant minister from about 1745–58 (see *Works*, 10:260, 286). In 1757 he was briefly forced into military service. He subsequently married and settled in Bristol as a hatter, serving many years as a local preacher. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 190–91.

²CW, Hymn 8, st. 6, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 10.

³Richard Pearce, a leader in the Society at Bradford-on-Avon.

⁴James Hitchens Jr. (c. 1723–88), another son of Capt. James Hitchens.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[April 8, 1757]

In order to acquaint the world with the greatness of the matter treated in some letters entitled *The Fall of the Old Serpent, etc.*, and directed to Mr. Joseph Stennett, to Mr. George Whitefield, and to Mr. John Wesley his mate and disciple, which letters otherwise could be misled and confounded with many loathsome, stupid productions of false Christianity, John Baptist the Arch-Teacher has caused these universally important letters to be distributed in many of the most noted coffee houses, which are become the common meeting places of men of good sense and unprejudiced heart and spirit, as true lovers of Truth, as enemy of all chimerical religion, false learning, and piety (Matt. 21:32; 1 Cor. 9:18; and 2 Cor. 12:15).

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Apr. 8, 1757), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[April 30, 1757]

To the Editor of the *Public Advertiser*

Had Mr. John Wesley given all due attention to the definition of man published in the *Daily Advertiser* of November 3, 1753, and sold (price 3 d.) at Mrs. Chastel's in Compton-Street, Soho,¹ he would have learnt what man is, and the true, positive, absolute, immediate origin of man. He would not have been so bold as to publish a mercenary subscription (John 10:12–13) for a book concerning what he calls the 'original sin', whereof even the title is a stupid contradiction of Truth our God and universal Father in Jesus-Christ (Mal. 2:10, Eph. 4:6), consequently of the true sense of the sacred Scriptures, consequently of all good sense. That is what I will prove to him in the face of the world, if he dares go on with producing in the present light this wrong production of the ending and vanishing reign of the universal illusion and darkness (John 1:5, 9; Rev. 28:1–8).

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher

Source: Public Advertiser (Apr. 30, 1757), p. 4.

¹No copies of this issue of the *Daily Advertiser*, or of this piece in its pamphlet form, can be located.

From Thomas Walsh

London
April 30, 1757

Honoured Sir,

I thank you for your letter. I longed exceedingly to hear from you. Your account of the good woman in your journal was refreshing to my soul. What I have to say at present is as follows.

1. Mr. [Charles] Wesley is gone to Bristol. He met us on Monday mornings, and on the whole all was well. We parted in much love.

2. Mr. [John] Fletcher goes on well. I converse with him when I can.¹

3. The Lord is powerfully carrying on his work. Sinners are alarmed and saints edified. This day, in visiting the sick, my soul was greatly comforted by healing of God's dealings with their souls.

4. Brother M— is gone to Bristol, brother M—² to Norwich, and brother F— talks of leaving us next week. Brother D— and the local preachers are with me, and as Mr. Fletcher gives us much assistance, I hope the places will be supplied.

(Mr. B—³ I hear has preached lately at —, several are offended. I dare determine nothing, but ask what shall be done?)

5. On Monday I begin to change the tickets, etc. God give me integrity, wisdom, meekness, and love. I think, considering these particulars, I cannot leave London yet. It seems *providence* keeps me here still.

You have the prayers of your children. I don't forget you. A son honoureth his father, and a father loveth his son. Let it be so till death, and the devil can get little advantage. Your preaching has been often and exceedingly blest to my soul. My heart's desire and prayer to God is that the Lord will make me partaker of his holiness.

Dear sir, I trust your soul will, in time and in eternity, partake of that great salvation you have preached in the name of the Lord. O may it please God that we may meet full of holy and happy love! I feel my soul this moment strongly drawn after God, but there is yet something that keeps me out of perfect rest and liberty. Jesus, take my whole heart. 'Confound, overpower me with thy grace.'⁴ Requesting your prayers and counsel, I remain

Your very affectionate son,

Thomas Walsh

Source: published transcription; James Morgan, *The Life and Death of Thomas Walsh* (London: H. Cock, 1762), 100–01.

¹Cf. John Fletcher's letter of May 26, 1757.

²Possibly Thomas Mitchell.

³Likely Roger Ball, see CW's comment on Ball in his *Manuscript Journal*, Oct. 21, 1756.

⁴CW, 'The Promise of Sanctification' (1741), st. 27.

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
May 14, 1757

Honoured Sir,

I do not forget you, but bear you ever on my heart before the Lord. I often find communion with you, though absent in body. O the length of the love of Christ! It reaches through earth's remotest bounds, uniting the children of God in one, and joining earth to heaven. I find no desire to speak any thing of myself; but because I believe it my duty, therefore I do it. Yet properly, it is not of myself but of God. For I am nothing, God is all in all! And such he is to me. He is all my desire, all my hope, joy, love, delight. Yea, the Three-One God is my heaven on earth, and will be so for ever.

The entire resignation I feel is that from which my greatest happiness flows. But this does not at all hinder my enjoying God, first in his children, then in the least of his mercies. The constant aim of my soul is to give glory to God in the highest and to establish peace and good-will among men. Yet am I fully willing that all I say or do should be set at nought and forgotten by God and man.

From the relation I stand in to my heavenly Father I best conceive the relation I am in to you, and therefore cannot but long that you may increase, though I should decrease. And O permit me from the fullness of my heart to speak! I know the Lord Jesus loves you, and that you are a chosen vessel unto him, separated to plant and establish his gospel. And viewing you in this character, I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of your shoes. But if I may take the liberty to speak as to a Christian friend, I may ask: Do you love the Lord Jesus more than any person or thing? Do you find more happiness in thinking or speaking of him than in thinking or speaking of any creature? Does your soul delight in him? This is what my soul desires for you. And I pray that whatever is a hindrance to it may be removed, and that you may be kept restless till the full image of God be stamped upon your heart!

I shall acknowledge it a favour to have a line from you. I desire you will continue to instruct, exhort, reprove, and pray for,

Your affectionate, though unworthy daughter in Christ,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 559–60.

From the Rev.¹ John Fletcher

London
May 26, 1757

Reverend Sir,

If I did not write to you before Mrs. [Mary] Wesley had asked me, it was not that I wanted a remembrancer within, but rather an encourager without. There is generally upon my heart such a sense of my unworthiness that I sometimes dare hardly open my mouth before a child of God, and think it an unspeakable honour to stand before one who has recovered something of the image of God or sincerely seeks after it. Is it possible that such a sinful worm as I should have the privilege to converse with one whose soul is sprinkled with the blood of my Lord? The thought amazes, confounds me, and fills my eyes with tears of humble joy. Judge then at what distance I must see myself from you, if I am so much below the least of your children, and whether a remembrancer within suffices to make me presume to write to you, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.

I rejoice that you find everywhere an increase of praying souls. I doubt not but the prayer of the righteous hath great power with God. Yet I cannot believe that it should hinder the fulfilling of Christ's gracious promises to his church. He must, and certainly will, come at the time appointed. For he is not slack, as some men count slackness; and although he would have all to come to repentance, yet he has not forgot to be true and just. Only he will come with more mercy, and will increase the light that shall be at evening-tide, according to his promise in Zech. 14:7. I should rather think that the visions are not yet plainly disclosed, and that the day and year in which the Lord will begin to make bare his arm openly are still concealed from us.

I must say of Mr. [Thomas] Walsh, as he said once to me concerning God, 'I wish I could attend him every where, as Elisha did Elijah.' But since the will of God calls me from him, I must submit and drink the cup prepared for me. I have not seen him, unless for a few moments, three or four times before divine service. We must meet at the throne of grace, or meet but seldom. O when will the communion of saints be complete! Lord hasten the time, and let me have a place among them that love thee and love one another in sincerity.

I set out in two days for the country. O may I be faithful! Harmless like a dove, wise like a serpent, and bold as a lion for the common cause! O Lord do not forsake me! Stand by the weakest of thy servants, and enable thy children to bear with me, and wrestle with thee in my behalf. O bear with me, dear sir, and give me your blessing every day, and the Lord will return it to you sevenfold.

I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your unworthy servant,

John Fletcher

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 99–101; reprint, Fletcher, *Posthumous* (1791), 73–75; reprint, *AM* 17 (1794): 319–20.

¹Fletcher was ordained a priest in the Church of England on Mar. 13, 1757.

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
June 18, 1757¹

Honoured Sir,

My soul must cease to love God before I cease to pray for you. There are heights and depths in the Lord Jesus that I cannot comprehend. Neither have I apprehended that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. But this one thing I do; forgetting the things behind, I reach forth to those before, and am still determined nothing less than all shall satisfy my soul. I find my love rises higher, and sinks deeper, into him in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. O I long to be

Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in his immensity!²

The Lord has lately given me a larger manifestation of himself, from which I find a fuller union with him. O who can explain the mystery? The more I have, the less I seem to have. The stronger I am, the more deeply sensible am I of my own weakness. The more I know of God, the more I see that I know nothing of him in comparison. Yet does my soul centre in him, and rest in him continually. And yet I cannot rest, for I seem but just beginning to be a Christian. Let not me, who have just put on the harness, boast like them who are putting it off.

I am fully employed for my Lord, but do daily get time for meditation and prayer. I am more persuaded than ever that nothing shall, for one moment, hinder the Lord Jesus from loving me, or my soul from loving him, in time or eternity.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate child,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 560–61.

¹Printed in *AM* as '1751'.

²CW, 'Hymn to the Holy Ghost', st. 3, *HSP* (1739), 184.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 25, 1757]

This Day is published, Price 6d.³

A Short Examen of Mr. John Wesley's System, as it appears in his public Proposals concerning the Doctrine of Original Sin; or the Doctrine of Original Sin examined at the living Light of the Doctrine of Truth, in a letter publicly directed to Mr. John Wesley by John Baptist the Arch-Teacher. This letter contains important solutions and explications of the most enigmatical strokes of the sacred Scriptures, especially of the Book of the Revelation, with some reflexions upon Mr. John Des Champs's book entitled *The Christian Religion proved by the Reasonings*, upon Mr. William Jones's new book, entitled *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, and upon the fundamental article of Mr. William Romaine's *Discourses*, in consequences of which he has been refused the pulpit of the University of Oxford.

Printed and sold by J. Marshall, in St. Clement's Church-yard in the Strand, and at all pamphlet shops.

To be sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to the Bishop of London, as well as the preceding writings concerning the coming universal reign of Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master our God in Jesus Christ.

Source: *Public Advertiser* (July 25, 1757), p. 4.

³We include this series of advertisements and observations published by Sulamar, because they demonstrate his attempt to elicit a public response from JW, and his growing irritation when JW did not issue such a response.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 27, 1757]

This Day is published, Price 6d.

A Short Examen of Mr. John Wesley's System, as it appears in his public Proposals concerning the Doctrine of Original Sin, and in which he is convinced of having adulterated the very words of St. Paul upon which he is principally grounded, and of having corrupted even the sacred word Truth in the wrong applications of it. This examen contains a new important demonstration of the two equally divine natures of Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master our God in Jesus Christ—the nature feminine, and the nature masculine; with likewise important solutions and explications of the most enigmatical strokes of the sacred Scriptures, especially of the book of the Revelations, likewise some new reflexions upon Mr. John Des Champs's book entitled *The Christian Religion proved by the Reasonings*, upon Mr. Jones's new book entitled *The Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity*, and upon Mr. William Romaine's *Discourses*, in consequences of which he has been refused the pulpit of the University of Oxford.

Sold by J. Marshall, in St. Clement's Church-yard in the Strand, and at all pamphlet shops.

Source: Public Advertiser (July 27, 1757), p. 4.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 30, 1757]

A Public Letter sent this day to our friends called the Quakers, in their chief meeting house of Gracechurch Street, and in the name of all their fellowship.

My friends, I always deemed you to be sincere and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, expecting in an humble and friendly silence the renovations of the earth, that is the universal regeneration in the spirit and knowledge of Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master our God in Jesus Christ, which I publish with the loudest voice, and which nobody dares loudly and publicly contradict (John 1:6–9; Rev. 19:1–21; 1 Esdras 4:39–41). You deserve to be the judges between the false apostles, ministers of the old serpent, of this spirit of the vanishing universal illusion, and me the disciple and writer of the everlasting, living, and reigning Truth my God, the universal teacher of her doctrine, for which reasons and others I send you this new *Examen* of the dark system and wrong doctrine of those who are not willing to have Truth for their God and Principle.

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher

Source: Public Advertiser (July 30, 1757), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 3, 1757]

To the Public

Even to the days of Jesus Christ visible upon the earth men did not call truth their God, because few of them had truth which they knew (Rom. 1:21, 32). Even to the days of John Baptist (Matt. 11:12, 19) men did not call truth their God, because not one of them knew truth which they loved (Acts 18:23; Rom. 3:9, 18; 1 Esdras 4:33–41). John Baptist, the first in the world who called Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master his God, who affirms and nobody denies, who denies and nobody affirms (Rev. 3:7), affirms and proves that Mr. John Wesley corrupts and adulterates the sacred Scriptures, even to the sacred name of Truth which he denies sophistically to be his God. The *Short Examen* of the system of this Mr. John Wesley, as it appears in his proposals concerning what he calls the doctrine of Original Sin, is sold (Price 6d.) by J. Marshall in St. Clement's Church Yard in the Strand. It contains besides some new reflections upon Mr. John Deschamps' book entitled *The Christian Religion proved by the Reasoning*, upon Mr. William Jones's book entitled *The Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity*, and upon Mr. William Romaine's *Discourses*, in consequence of which he has been refused the pulpit of the University of Oxford. See the publication of the 25th and 27th in this paper.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 3, 1757), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 5, 1757]

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher, first in the world who called Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master his God; who opens the universal reign of truth and nobody shuts it, who shuts the universal reign of illusion and nobody opens it; who affirms and nobody denies, who denies and nobody affirms (Rev. 3:7). This John Baptist affirms and proves that Mr. John Wesley, a mate and disciple of Mr. George Whitefield, and a chief like him of new dissensions and divisions from the church of his own nation, corrupts and adulterates the Scriptures, even to the sacred Word Truth; taking always in vain, and more than in vain, the great incommunicable name of the universal sovereign Master our God, the name in and by which the three people in the world are to be reconciled forever to compound one people called the people of Truth; as the churches of every nation, one church of all nations, one family, of which Jesus Christ our God shall be acknowledged the Father, one body of which he shall be acknowledged the head forever (John 27:20, 26; Eph. 4:11, 16; Matt. 7:15, 23).

The *Examen* of this Mr. John Wesley's system, with reflections upon some articles of Mr. John Deschamps, Mr. William Jones, and Mr. William Romaine's doctrine, are to be sold (Price 6d.) by J. Marshall, Bookseller, in St. Clement's Church-yard in the Strand, and at all pamphlet shops. See the publications of it on July 25, 27, 30; August 3.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 5, 1757), p. 3.

From the Rev.¹ Martin Madan

Cheltenham
August 6, 1757

Dear Sir,

I received the favour of yours, and thank you much for the kind advice it contained, and hope God will give me grace to follow it.

I have been this month at Cheltenham to drink the waters, and have preached every Sunday. Some of the company are much offended, others very thankful. The poor people of the place are very desirous to hear, and those of all persuasions flock in to hear the word of life. Last time, the Quakers and Baptists made no inconsiderable part of the congregation, and this confirms me in an opinion I have long had that if the truth was preached *in the Church* [of England], few if any would separate from it.

Lord and Lady Dartmouth² are here. We pass much time together and I have daily more and more reason to rejoice before God on their behalf. All prejudice is taken out of their hearts. And I verily believe their delight is in the saints that are upon the earth and in such as excel in virtue, without any party spirit or narrowing their affections towards any of their brethren in Christ Jesus upon account of any outward difference. O sir, how extraordinary is it to see people of their rank, youth, and property, joined to every qualification and endowment of mind and body which can make them amiable in the eyes of the world, desiring to become yet *more vile* for Christ's sake; to see them breathe after inward holiness, as the hart panteth after the water-brooks!³ Surely nothing less than almighty power could effect this. I trust you will remember both them and me in your prayers, that we may not stop short of the crown and prize.

I have had a manuscript fallen into my hands which the Hutchinsonians are fond of showing about, as the author is their favourite Mr. [Charles] Leslie. When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will show it you. I think it fairly favours all they would oppose, and yet they seem quite insensible of it (I mean as to the knowledge of the remission of sins). I have their leave to publish it, and if you approve of it will certainly do it, if I live to come to London.⁴

I propose being at Bristol about the 17th instant, and about a week after that to be in London, where I hope to meet you and all friends in perfect health. My love attends Mrs. Wesley. Pray accept the same yourself, and believe me, dear sir,

Most affectionately yours in Christ Jesus,

M. Madan

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 611.

¹Madan was ordained a priest in the Church of England in 1757.

²I.e., William Legge (1731–1801) and his wife Frances Catherine.

³Cf. Ps. 42:1.

⁴Madan is almost certainly referring to Charles Leslie's *A Short and Easy Method with the Deists* (London: Brome et al., 1699). JW included an abridgement of this piece the following year in his *Preservative Against Unsettled Notions in Religion* (1758), 5–17.

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
August 7, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your desire lays me under the blessed necessity of recollecting past mercies.

From my childhood I had desires to serve God and in particular to love Jesus Christ, and often wished I had lived when he was upon earth, that I might, like Mary, have sat at his feet and followed him wherever he went. I also often felt a painful wish that I might be as good as ever any one was, and on seeing funerals often say, 'When I die, what will become of my soul? If I were but sure of going to heaven, I would not care what became of my body.' Whenever I feared punishment for a fault, I prayed fervently against it, and do not remember to have been blamed much, or corrected, except when I forgot to pray. — Yet was I extremely rude and heedless, so that some who knew me feared for me. But, O Lord, thy thoughts are not as our thoughts!

When I was about fourteen years of age, I began seriously to think I must not live as I had done. Accordingly I went to church on week days, learned forms of prayer, and did many things for a time, but was always subject to bondage through fear of death, saying in my heart, 'O that I might never die, or that I knew God loved me!' Nevertheless, I found in me a strong propensity to delight in singing, dancing, playing at cards, and all kinds of diversions. But this I endeavoured to check from the beginning, not because I thought it sinful but because I found the more I gave way to these things the more unhappy I became.

About the age of seventeen, while sitting alone, I was struck, as I thought, with *death*—being seized with a cold trembling from head to foot, which increasing, I directly fell on my knees and prayed the Lord to forgive my sins and save my soul. All that I knew to be sin was then placed before me, so that I had but little hope of mercy. But while I laid myself down to die my strength came to me again, for which I was very thankful and made great promises to live to God. But [I] did not begin to put them in practice till some months after, when, reflecting on many things, I discerned in my soul an insatiable thirst for happiness. At first I thought it consisted in the abundance of things pertaining to this life, but was soon clearly convinced if I possessed the whole universe I should still be as far from happiness as ever.

A little after this I was providentially brought to hear Mr. Andrews, a Dissenting minister, who preached from these words, Isa. 62:3, 'Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God'—from which words he showed, first, that Christ was so; and secondly, every Christian through Christ. I found my soul so drawn after God at this time that I determined to be a Christian at all events, and to hear this minister at all opportunities, for I thought there was not such another man upon earth. I had many difficulties to break through, but was fixed to lose my life rather than not hear him.

I now began earnestly to strive against every thing that I knew to be sin, and to practise all known duties. And I continued instant in prayer, for it was the very delight of my soul to pray at all times and in all places. I also searched the Scriptures, as I had time, day and night. But the more I read, the more I was convinced I was not a Christian. Yet I could not fear hell, for although I knew I was not fit for heaven, I firmly believed I should not die till God had made me fit. And whenever I was oppressed, these words were my support: 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'¹ Hearing Mr. Andrews observe that without an interest in Christ we could not be saved, I believed him, but thought I must make myself good in order to come to Christ. Innumerable were my thoughts concerning God, myself, and the things of God for upwards of two years. At the end of this time, finding myself worse, in my own apprehension, than when I began this new course, I was more distressed than ever and knew not what to do; till at length I resolved to ask Mr. Andrews how I might get an interest in Christ. After asking me several questions, he told me I had an interest in Christ, and that where God had begun a good work he would carry it on. I believed what he said, and instantly felt my burden removed and the peace of God flow into my heart. For several

¹Job 19:25.

days my soul had felt an heavy burden and I expected to hear Mr. Andrews say, 'You have done *all* that you can *do*, and must now perish.' I now praised God, and was amazed that I had an interest in Christ. What! Such a wretch as I, be saved by grace?

I was twenty years old, within a week, when God revealed his Son in my heart, and now I thought all my sufferings were at an end. I laboured to persuade all with whom I conversed to come to Christ, telling them there was love, joy, peace, etc., for all that came to him.

I now feared neither earth nor hell. And as to temptation, I scarce knew what it meant. My soul was happy and I desired only to suffer and die for him who had revealed himself in my heart.

Soon after this I was persuaded to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield, and many blessings God gave me through him, in particular while he was showing the marks of one whose sins were forgiven. I found them in myself and this caused me to rejoice more abundantly. For till then I had not heard of such a thing, only of having an interest in Christ.

A fortnight after God spake peace to my soul I was seized with, I believe, a rheumatic pain in my arm, from my elbow to my shoulder, so that I could not move it. This continued more than a week, during which time I often prayed the Lord to give me power to stretch out my arm, and was tempted to think I had no faith, otherwise I should immediately do it. But hearing my father was near death, I was obliged to go into the country, and being grieved on account of my arm, not knowing how I could travel with it, while I was getting myself ready to go I was suddenly enabled to lift it to my head and felt no more pain than I do at this moment, nor have I felt any since. This filled me with a joyous surprise and more abundant confidence in God, which supported me under a trial that I was soon called to pass through.

From this time, for about two months, I had a persuasion I should not live long. And the chief ground of it was that I was at such a distance from God in my heart and had not the mind which was in Christ. I was told there was no deliverance from sin here, that I was in my first love but should not always remain so. I thought if there be no deliverance from sin here then I must die, for I cannot rest without a fuller union with Christ and it is better for me to die than not to be made like him my soul loveth. Accordingly, I wrote a letter to Mr. Andrews and chose as a text for my funeral sermon Rev. 21:4, from which passage I desired him to preach when I died. Believing my time would be short here, I was willing to make the best of it and often sat up till three or four in the morning to write, read, and pray. At the end of the two months just mentioned the Lord laid his hand on Mr. Andrews. His life was despaired of, which, when I heard, I immediately retired and, falling down before God, sincerely desired and pleaded with the Lord that he would take my life and spare his—using this argument, that he might be instrumental of much good to others, but that I could do no good to any. But God answered me, 'My thoughts and ways are not as *yours*.' From which I had no hopes of his life, and also gave over all thoughts of my own death for the present, being then convinced I had more to do and to suffer before I could enter the everlasting kingdom.

From the time I was justified I had much conversation with a person (who was afterwards my husband) respecting Mr. Wesley and his works, but my prejudices were strong against him. I read his *Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion*, and thereby began to entertain a better opinion of him. Soon after, his sermon on a *Catholic Spirit* was put into my hands. I liked it much and longed to experience all that was there recommended, allowing it to be the truth. But I met with many discouragements and was surrounded with persons who did all they could to keep up my prejudices, and as yet their efforts prevailed.

About eight months after I had found peace with God, one Sunday morning I was awakened by a voice that seemed to come from the clouds and reached my heart, filling it with peace and joy, expressing several times, 'I will make with thee an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.'² This was an hour before preaching at the Tabernacle.³ I said, 'I will go to the Foundry first, for I want to see Mr. Wesley.' He preached but, as I thought, with no power. I remembered nothing he said but this—'If it be possible for God to give us a little love, is it not possible for him to fill us with love?' This I have reason

²Isa. 55:3.

³That is, Whitefield's preaching house in London.

to remember, for I answered in my heart, 'Yes, it is possible, but he will not do it.' Mr. Wesley was just then going to Ireland, and I heard him no more for eight months.

A short time after this I married, and can truly say my ultimate end in so doing was to live more to the glory of God, which, by his over-ruling providence, has been accomplished. Before this I desired to suffer, but now I began to do so in reality. And because I can hardly bear to reflect on some of my trials, much less relate them, I shall pass over what I now went through in silence. It is sufficient God knoweth it all. The Lord had before allured me, now he began to lead me into the wilderness. I found I had still a barren and uncultivated heart. Satan often suggested that I was not justified, and that my faith was all a delusion. But I thought, 'If I am not justified, there is no such thing as justification.' Still, however, I was not happy. I was like Noah's dove—nor found I, in the whole creation, ought whereon to rest my soul.

During this time I frequently heard Mr. Charles Wesley, and was often much comforted under his ministry. I thought, 'It is possible for God to fill a soul with love. And if he will fill me, sure I am willing to receive.' But I knew not myself, though I painfully felt my want of purity of heart. I now read Mr. John Wesley's sermon on *Christian Perfection* and was convinced, if this were what he meant by perfection, God could and would make me thus perfect. But I felt much need of that faith and patience which inherit the promises. I was greatly tempted, and often thought what I felt was a judgment from God for speaking against Mr. Wesley, and that the Lord, to humble me, would help me only by him. Soon after he returned from Ireland I went to speak to him and freely acknowledged all I had said and thought against him. Immediately I joined the society, and it was unto me according to my faith, for I never spoke to him without a peculiar blessing.

The Lord now showed me, more deeply than ever, that my inward parts were very wickedness, and that I was as an unclean thing before him. Yet I prayed to know myself as I was known of God, for I could not bear that he should see a sink of sin within me and I could not know it myself. Whatever damped my hope of holiness was like separating my soul from my body, for I could no longer be any farther happy than I was holy, and it was often impressed upon my mind that, after I had suffered awhile, I should be made perfect.

I still had reasonings about predestination, till (after a deliverance from great temptation) God applied this verse to my soul by the power of his Spirit—

Infinite unexhausted love!
Jesus and love are one:
If still to me thy bowels move,
They are restrained from none.⁴

Since that time I have had no doubt but grace is free for all. This has been well for me, for in times of great distress I have said, 'Could I believe God made one soul to be damned, I should believe I was that soul.' But I cannot believe he did.

Many times I was tempted to curse the day that I was born, and often spoke unadvisedly with my lips. In the depth of my distress I cried, 'My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?' For I saw, as it were, the flames of hell surrounding my soul. And once in particular, after I had so said, falling down on my face before the Lord, Jesus appeared to the eye of faith and spoke those words to my soul: 'Look on him whom thou hast pierced and mourn.' Immediately the words were fulfilled, for I seemed to be permitted to wash *his* feet with tears, whose blood had flowed for me.

For three years especially did I drink of the cup of trembling, being afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted. Sometimes I said,

⁴CW, Hymn 92, st. 9, *HSP* (1749), 1:163.

Who shall tell me if the strife,
In heaven or hell shall end?⁵

During this time I denied myself in all things, and took up my cross daily, being not so much grieved that God gave me (as I thought) more trials than *others*, as that I did not *bear them* like a Christian. For,

Obedience was my pure delight,
To do the pleasure of my Lord.⁶

Even now I found no happiness but in obeying God, and constantly endeavoured to walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameless. Yet I was *deeply* sensible, without *love* it would profit me nothing.

At this time I painfully felt the sins of all mankind, as well as my own. For the more conscious I was of the depravity of my own soul, the more was I constrained to say, 'Lord, what havoc has sin and Satan made in thy world!' From the love I felt to those I knew to be equally fallen from original righteousness with myself, I often desired to be instrumental in turning them to God, and never had a moment's peace any longer than I endeavoured to aim at this wherever I came.

God continued to give me a still deeper knowledge of myself. And most of the evils which I heard of in others, I felt in some degree in my own heart—but pride, self-will, anger, and unbelief were most predominant. And in my most trying times I never found help but by falling down before God, freely confessing all my wretchedness, and then asking if he *could* and *would* have such a wretch for his Son's sake?

I had one friend who always succoured me in my distress. But he did not know half my trials. Besides, I feared trusting in an arm of flesh, therefore often kept my troubles to myself and found the sinner's Friend to be mine. I can truly say I have often kneeled down before the Lord, as wretched and miserable as I can conceive it possible for a soul to be on this side [of] hell, and risen again with the peace and love of God in my heart. When I have asked the Lord why I was thus afflicted, it was often suggested for the good of others. Then I have said, 'I will gladly suffer it all.'

I know not that, for almost seven years after I knew the Lord, I was ever a day together without being tempted. And the inward conflicts I endured day and night added to outward labours, and constant abstinence weakened my body and hurt my constitution much. But I have often been thankful that, amidst all my temptations, I was scarce ever tempted to doubt of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and one reason is because I have so often found that, when I have been surrounded with an host of foes and could find no other help in earth or heaven, his mighty name has set me free.

During this time of trial, however, the Lord often comforted me by applying his promises to my soul, causing me to hope for his perfect love, and once spoke most powerfully to my heart in those words: 'Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.' So that then, and at many other times, I had as clear a witness that I should be fully sanctified *before death* as that I was *then justified*. At other times I doubted it, but still determined that the struggle but with life should end.

I again now enjoyed much peace, and was often warned of a greater trial coming upon me than ever I had experienced. Once in prayer I seemed to be taken into heaven and permitted to lean on the breast of Christ. He seemed to weep over me, because there would be but an hair's breadth between *life* and *death* in my soul in the trial that was coming. Yet my Lord assured me, if I were faithful in this trial, he himself would be my portion in time and in eternity. My soul was melted down before him. I prayed I might resign my breath *then*, through fear I should not endure the fiery trial.

Soon after this the Lord showed me that an idol was in my heart *still*, which I thought I had given up *long before*. But I now found I could no more give it up that I could reach heaven with my hand.

⁵CW, Hymn 7, st. 9, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741), 15.

⁶Cf. CW, 'Psalm 1', st. 2, *CPH* (1743), 1.

Therefore I prayed God to command me rather to pluck the eye out of my head, or cut the arm from my body, because I could more easily obey him in that than give up what he required. The Lord now showed me that I was the vilest of the vile. For by tracing this to the root I discovered such a depth of wickedness as before I knew not to be in me, and I plainly saw it was only owing to his mercy and restraining grace that I was not outwardly as bad as any. Therefore, I was under greater obligations to love and serve him alone. And from this time I believed that a sinful thought, indulged *by me*, was more abominable in the sight of God than all the sins committed by unawakened persons. Till now I knew not the time that I had not the desire to love Jesus Christ. But now I saw if I could have found happiness in any creature, I should never have sought *him*, which base ingratitude cased me to abhor myself still more.

During this time all the sensible comfort I felt (more than from hope) was once in prayer, when these words were applied to my mind, 'When thy flesh and heart fail, I will take thee up.' Frequently, however, in the midst of my sufferings, when I could find no help from any other quarter, I have found relief in reading and singing Mr. Charles Wesley's hymns—which, as well as many of your [John Wesley's] sermons, have been special blessings to me.

I was now convinced that I had previously sought *knowledge* more than the *love of God*, which error I prayed God to forgive, promising I would now seek his love alone. I often said not all the creatures on *earth*, nor all the angels in *heaven*, can help my soul! None but Jesus Christ can save me. At length, one day while I was sitting at work, the Lord Jesus appeared to the eye of my mind, surrounded with glory, while his love overwhelmed me. I said this is the power I have waited for, and was

Constrain'd to cry, by love divine,
My God! thou art for ever mine.⁷

I now felt my idol was beneath my feet, and so it has remained ever since. My soul seemed all love and I desired nothing so much as to lay down my life for others that they might feel the same. This was about three and a half years after I was justified, and for the three years following God gave me to walk in the light of his countenance, until 'the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleansed me from all sin'.⁸ From this time, I had no fear respecting my perseverance. And when you have said, 'The greatest trial may come at last', my heart has answered to God, 'Thou wilt never more hide thy face from my soul, as thou has done in times past.' And since then I have never doubted my justification before God.

Soon after I was made a leader of a class, an office which I was tempted to think God did not require me to undertake. I knew not but he could enable me to guide souls aright, and therefore prayed much to know whether I was not doing the will of others or my own, rather than his will, beseeching him to answer me by giving some one a great blessing. But he showed me, while on my knees, that I should be *tried*, *thwarted*, and *contradicted*; and that the evil must be purged out of my own heart, before I should see much fruit respecting others. This satisfied me for a time, and I went on doing all the good I could to all that came in my way, bearing many burdens in my body and mind, and all the injuries offered me from others; and making this my motto, *Do well and suffer ill*.

The greatest of my sufferings now was that I had not always a witness that I pleased God. I no more thought hardly of any thing I met with, but received all as from the hand of God, blessing him from the ground of my heart for accounting me worthy not only to *believe* in his name but also to *suffer* for his sake. And I could truly say, 'I wrestle not *now*, but *trample* on sin'; but might add, I 'wrestle with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places',⁹ and was often much distressed thereby. I was willing, however, to endure it to the end of my life, if I knew it were the will of God.

I now began to meet with trials from an unexpected quarter. But God had taught me by this time to be amazed at nothing but his goodness. I therefore accounted all things but dung, that I might so win

⁷CW, Hymn 42, st. 8, *Redemption Hymns* (1747), 54.

⁸Cf. 1 John 1:7.

⁹Cf. Eph. 6:12.

Christ as to attain to a resurrection from dead works, to serve the living God in spirit and truth continually. Often did I tell the Lord my soul should never know rest till I was *saved* from the *root* of bitterness I felt within.

And day and night my ceaseless cries,
Did to the mercy-seat arise.
Come, thou holy God and true!
Come and my whole heart renew.¹⁰

The trials I now met with were not on account of my seeking *my own good*, but because I sought the good of others. I could easily have shunned them if I had dared to lay down the cross. But I now loved the cross of Christ more than my life. Nevertheless, I was much tempted to think I went too far. But some scriptures were often deeply impressed on my mind, through which I dared not act otherwise than I did. And I was often as clearly convinced as of the shining of the sun that the time I spent in endeavouring to do good to others was God's, and that if I would not give it [to] him in this way, he would take it either by sickness or some other providence, from which I might easily discern his will.

At one time, fearing I did wrong because the fruit did not appear to be answerable to the labour, while I was praying God showed me two pieces of ground, wherein two persons had sowed seed. The one sprung up immediately and was covered with young green plants, the other did not spring up at all for some time and then but in a small degree. But he made me sensible that the last might take deeper root and bear more lasting fruit; and if it should not, 'everyone should receive his own reward, according to his own labour'.¹¹ I mention these particulars to show the amazing condescension of God, and because all the trials I met with *now* were on account of my meeting classes, bands, and visiting the people. From this time I walked in glorious liberty, and

Nothing sought beneath, above,
Happy, happy in his love.¹²

It seemed now only needful for God to speak the word and sin should be no more! Sometimes I thought *he had* done this, but then I feared deceiving myself and continued to pray that he would seal me his, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant. Once, when I was kneeling down to pray, it was suggested to my soul with such power, 'Ask what you wilt, and I will do it for thee.' My soul was amazed and replied, 'Lord, I ask nothing in earth or heaven but perfect holiness.' And this I was assured I should receive. My heart seemed now to be dissolved in love. The presence of God surrounded me and I have slept as in the arms of his love.

I was fully assured I should be finally saved, but what I wanted was that God would show me whether he had taken the root of sin out of my heart and sealed me by his Spirit.

Not long after this, as I was praying, my soul was overwhelmed with the power of God. I seemed to see the Lord Jesus before me and said, 'Lord, I am ready to follow thee, not only to prison but to death, if thou wilt give me strength.' And he spoke these words to my heart, 'Feed my sheep.'¹³ I answered, 'Lord, I will do as thou hast done; I will carry the lambs in my bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.'¹⁴

From this time I continued happy for some months, till one that love me said, 'You go too far. You bring many pressures upon your mind and destroy your body. Others do not so and God does not

¹⁰CW, 'The Beatitudes', lines 95–98, *HSP* (1749), 1:38.

¹¹1 Cor. 3:8.

¹²Cf. CW, 'Psalm 131', st. 4, *CPH* (1743), 95.

¹³John 21:17.

¹⁴Cf. Isa. 40:11.

require it of *you*.' On this I reasoned and thought perhaps I do go too far, and judged myself so much the more unfit for heaven for all I had said and done for God. And this was an inlet to such floods of temptation as it is not easy to describe. And I often deplored my loss of the delight and happiness which I before enjoyed in my Beloved, mourning all the day long as one that mourns for her first-born; determining, however, never to rest till I knew the true state of my soul, by a witness clearer than the noon-day sun. I often asked the Lord what I could *do*, or leave *undone*, and was willing to want¹⁵ all earthly comforts so I might enjoy his constant presence. But unbelief wrought powerfully. I could not cast myself, as afore time, on my precious Saviour.

I was often constrained to say, 'O that my day of Pentecost were fully come! O that God would deliver me from this bondage of original corruption.' Once, in this time of trial, the Lord showed me that he was preparing me for a greater blessing than I had ever had. After this, when I was at prayer I could indeed say,

I loathe myself when God I see,
And into nothing fall,¹⁶

and felt myself joined to the Lord in one spirit. I then saw my Pattern go before me, and read these words as in the traces of his feet, 'Christ also suffered, leaving us an example';¹⁷ and said, 'Lord, I desire to suffer with thee, and for thee, but am not able'; and was answered, 'As thy day, so shall thy strength be'. My soul exulted in God, and from this time till it was fulfilled these words were in my mouth and heart:

[Then] burst the cloud, descend the storm,
And come the fiery hour!¹⁸

And now the fiery hour came, but how shall I relate it? In an instant of time, from a small trial that happened to me, feeling yet the man of sin within, I was in such an agony of body and soul as it is not easy to conceive. In an hour and half I had hardly life left in me, though I found additional strength given me for the trial. But for several days my body was as though it had been beaten. I often said however,

Thou Man of griefs, I fain would be
Perfectly conform'd to thee.¹⁹

To give an account of all the fiery darts and suggestions I was assaulted with at this time would be impossible. But the most painful was that God had shut out my spirit from his presence *for ever*—compared to which misery, I thought, had ministers and people trampled me under their feet it would have been as nothing. Satan now suggested, 'Will you ever exalt Christ again? Will you dare to say God is love?' I answered in my heart, 'I will exalt Jesus Christ. I will say *God is love*, while I have breath.' Then said he, 'Where is now his love to let you suffer thus?'

In the midst of these exercises, however, the Lord lifted up my head and often enabled me to say in faith, 'Although the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vine, or herd in the stall, etc., yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation'; 'for when he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.'²⁰

¹⁵I.e., 'to lack'.

¹⁶CW, 'After a Relapse into Sin', st. 12, *HSP* (1740), 156.

¹⁷1 Pet. 2:21.

¹⁸CW, 'At Setting Out to Preach the Gospel', st. 4, *HSP* (1740), 113.

¹⁹CW, Hymn 43, st. 1, *HSP* (1749), 2:57.

²⁰Cf. Hab. 3:17–18; and Job 23:10.

I now perceived God has restrained the tempter, and began to enquire what condemnation is there in my soul. There is no condemnation for those that are in Jesus Christ. How is it that, in all I have suffered for these three years past, I have not felt the least inclination to turn back from the path of life, or entertained one hard thought of God? I then appealed to him, 'Lord, dost thou not know that all my aims and intentions are upright before thee?' And I felt a witness in myself it was so. I further thought, 'Has not Jesus Christ bore all my sins in his own body on the tree? And has he not bore my original, as well as my actual sin? If so, has he not answered for all my deviations from the perfect law of God too? Then God cannot be *merciful and just*, and send my soul to *hell*. *I shall never go there!*'

I now felt my soul fully cast on the Lord Jesus and found a rest which before I had not known, while peace and love filled my heart.

The day after, at church, the Lord showed me that many things which I had thought were sins were only temptations, and also what a little thing it was for him to take the root of sin out of my heart. I feared to believe he had done it, but asked a token and prayed he would stamp me with his Spirit's seal and speak to my soul at his table, and was refreshed with these words:

There, there we shall stand,
With our harps in our hand,
Interrupted no more,
And eternally sing, and rejoice, and adore!²¹

The next day I could not help believing God had taken full possession of my heart, for though I felt myself weaker than ever, yet the Lord was my strength. I enquired, how is my will now? Before I felt it had not much power over me, but now it was resigned to the will of my Lord. I felt my soul as a vessel emptied, but not filled. Day and night I was amazed at the blessed change my soul experienced, but I said nothing to any one because I was not as yet sure what the Lord had done for me, though I had always promised if the Lord would but fully save me I would declare his goodness, although I believed it would expose me to various exercises both from ministers and people.

A few days after this reasonings were suggested to my mind with regard to what I ought to *do* in order to please God. Immediately I knelt down and besought the Lord, if he were my God, to lift up a standard against the enemy and answer me from his word, which I then opened on my knees on these words, Isaiah 60:18–20. I then believed God would be a light unto me. Directly he brought to my remembrance how often he had showed me how I ought to walk to please him.

I now prayed much that God might show me if he had taken away the root of sin from my heart, and also if I had been saved from sin in the temptations that were past. And he showed me, as many waters cannot quench love, neither could the floods drown it, so neither had these floods of temptation he had brought me through quenched the love he had given me to himself, for it was the love that never fails.

I was now exceedingly happy, yet I prayed the Lord, if any farther witness was necessary he would give it me. Soon after the glory of the Lord shone around me. I saw, by faith, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit had often given me such views of the Saviour and of his love and mercy to every upright soul as had filled me with unspeakable consolation, but now I was assured of the Father's love and could not help saying they are three, and yet but one God, in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal. I then said in my heart and with my lips, 'O thou holy Triune God!' The Spirit then powerfully spoke to my soul, saying, 'I will dwell in thee for ever.' I said in my heart, 'There is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear.'²²

From this time I was more established in the truths I had been taught and which I now felt the Lord fulfilling in me. I no longer scrupled to declare the great work he had wrought in me, and after so doing generally felt he afresh shone on my soul. I walked in light and liberty and, blessed be God, continue to do so, but I long for more. Frequently he assures me he will manifest himself more fully than

²¹CW, 'Hymns for the Watchnight, #17', st. 8, *HSP* (1749), 2:141.

²²1 John 4:18.

he has yet done. This I am waiting for, and beg leave to subscribe myself, dear sir,
Your unworthy child,

Sarah Crosby

Source: published transcription; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 29 (1806): 419–22, 466–73.

From Sarah Ryan

London
August 10, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have considered well your proposal,¹ and it appears to me to be the will of God, which my soul desires to do. For this month past it has been laid upon my mind to pray that I might be the servant of his servants, and that God would use me for his glory in whatever way he pleased. So that when I received your letter, I saw it was an answer to prayer and needed not to entreat the Lord to show if it was his will. I am conscious of my own weakness, but trust in him who is everlasting strength and believe whatsoever he calls me to, he will give me strength to perform.

I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate but unworthy child and servant,

S. Ryan

Source: MARC, manuscript copy in hand of Mary Bosanquet in uncatalogued portion of the 'Fletcher-Tooth' collection; published transcription in *AM* 5 (1782): 44.

¹JW had invited Ryan to become the housekeeper at the New Room and its related school, both in Bristol. She would hold the position for four years.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 12, 1757]

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher
To the Public

The Son of man, now acknowledged Son of God, and he did not find (good) faith on the earth (Luke 18:8; John 10:34–36; 1 John 3:1–3). Had Mr. John Wesley the least shadow of this justifying faith spoke of there by Jesus Christ, he would have answered me when I addressed privately to him as his friend, concerning the beginning reign of Truth, or at least when I addressed to him the most publicly as his judge and examiner, affirming and proving him to corrupt and adulterate the sacred Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16), even the incommunicable name of Truth, which he denies sophistically to be his God in Jesus Christ, daring not to deny it plainly and publicly.

The *Short Examen* of his anti-Church, anti-Christian system, is sold (Price 6d.) by J. Marshall, in St. Clement Church-yard; it contains besides, some new reflections upon Mr. John Deschamps' book entitled *The Christian Religion, etc.*, upon this of Mr. William Jones entitled *The Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity*, and upon Mr. William Romaine's *Discourses*, in consequence of which he has been refused the pulpit of the University of Oxford. In the publications of it on July 25, 27, 30, Aug. 3, 5, in this paper.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 12, 1757), p. 4.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 23, 1757]

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher
To the Public

The Son of man is come and he did not find (good) faith on the earth (Luke 18:8; John 10:34–36; 1 John 3:1–3). Had Mr. John Wesley the least shadow of this justifying faith spoke of there by Jesus Christ, he would have answered me when I addressed privately to him as his friend, concerning the beginning reign of Truth, or at least when I addressed to him the most publicly as his judge and examiner, affirming and proving him to corrupt and adulterate the sacred Scriptures (2 Peter 3:16), even to the great incommunicable name of Truth, which he denies sophistically to be his God in Jesus Christ, daring not to deny it plainly and publicly.

The *Short Examen* of his anti-Church, anti-Christian system, is sold (Price 6d.) by J. Marshall, in St. Clement Church-yard; it contains besides some new reflections upon Mr. John Deschamps' book entitled *The Christian Religion proved by the Reasoning, etc.*, upon this of Mr. William Jones entitled *The Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity*, and upon Mr. William Romaine's *Discourses*, in consequence of which he has been refused the pulpit of the University of Oxford. In the publications of it in this *Advertiser* on July 25, 27, 30, Aug. 3, 5, 12, in which last were three essential words omitted.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 23, 1757), p. 3.

From the Rev. John Gillies

Glasgow
September 1, 1757

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

I have delayed too long to answer your kind letter of June 16. But that I had not, till now, any religious intelligence of importance to send you. The following extract, from a letter I received from Mr. [Samuel] Davies of Virginia lately, will no doubt be very acceptable to you.

Hanover, June 3, 1757

My honest friend Mr. Henry, has had remarkable success last winter among the young people in his congregation. No less than seventeen of them were struck to the heart by an occasional evening lecture. And he tells me he has great hopes of the perseverance of sundry of them, and that hardly any of them appear discouraging.

But the best news that perhaps I ever heard in my life, I lately received from my favourite friend Mr. Samuel Finley, minister of Nottingham in Pennsylvania, tutor of a large academy, and one of the trustees of the College of New Jersey. I had sent him some extract from my British letters, giving an account of the revival of religion in sundry parts of England, particularly among the clergy. In answer to which he writes thus:

[April 16, 1757]

I greatly rejoice that our Lord Jesus has put it in my power to make you a large compensation for the good news you sent me. Our glorious Redeemer has poured out his Holy Spirit upon the students at our college. Not one of all who were present neglected, and they were in number sixty. The whole house, say my correspondents, was a Bochim.¹ Mr. William Tennant, who was on the spot, says he never saw any in that case who had more clear views of God, themselves their defects, their impotence and misery, than they had in general. That there never was, he believes, in any house more genuine sorrow for sin and longing after Jesus. That this glorious work was gradual, and spread like the increasing light of the morning. That it was not begun by the ordinary means of preaching, nor promoted by alarming methods. Yet so great was their distress that he judged it improper to use any arguments of terror in public, lest some should sink under the weight. That what makes the gracious visitation more remarkable was that a little before some of the youth had given a greater loose to their corruptions than was ordinary among them—a spirit of pride and contention prevailing, to the great grief and even discouragement of the worthy president. That there were no public outcries, but a decorous, silent solemnity. That before he came away several had received something like the spirit of adoption, being tenderly affected with a sense of redeeming love, and thereby disposed and determined to endeavour after universal holiness. Mr. [Richard] Treat, and Mr. G[ilbert] Tennant tell me, in their letters, that the concern appeared rational, solid, and scriptural—and that in a remarkable degree. I was informed by some of the students, who had been my pupils, that this religious concern first began with the son of a very considerable gentleman of New York. The youth was dangerously sick at college, and on that occasion awakened to a sense of his guilt. His discourse made some impression on a few others, and theirs again on more. So that it became almost general, before the good president or any other knew any thing of it. As soon as it became public, misrepresentations were spread abroad and some gentlemen sent to bring their sons home. But upon better information, the most were sent back again. The wicked companions of some young gentlemen left no methods untried to recover them to their

¹A 'place of weepers'; cf. Judg. 2:1–5.

former excess of riot; and with two or three, have been lamentably successful. Mr. [George] Duffield (a worthy young man) informed me the other day that a very hopeful religious concern spreads through the Jerseys, especially among young people. In several letters from Philadelphia, from Mr. G[ilbert] Tennant and others, I have assurance of a revival there, for which good people are blessing God. Lawyer Stockton informs me that he is certified by good authority of a gracious work of God at Yale-college.

This, sir, [says Mr. Davies] is some of the best news from one of the best of my correspondents. You will join with me in blessing God, and congratulating posterity upon this happy surprising revolution, in a college to which the eager eyes of so many needy churches look for supplies. Perhaps it may afford me the more pleasure, as my having taken so much pains to promote that institution, and gives me a kind of paternal solicitude for it, though I live near four hundred miles from it.

The finger of God is the more conspicuous in this affair as the students, who had so often heard such excellent sermons from the worthy president and from the many ministers from various parts who have occasionally officiated there without any general good effect, should be universally awakened by means of a sick boy. Who but a God could do such great things by such means? Though this college was well founded and is well conducted, yet I must own I was often afraid it was degenerating into a college of *mere* learning. But now my fears are removed by the prospect that sincere piety, that grand, ministerial qualification, will make equal advances.

Reverend and dear sir,

I thought proper to send you the above good news, in case you have not got them from some other. I sent off your letter to Mr. Davies some time ago.

I suppose your book against Dr. Taylor is now in the press.² I find both now and formerly that Scotland is a bad place for getting subscriptions for books. I have hardly been able to publish the *Historical Collections* but for the subscriptions you got me in England.³ Please to order thirty sets of your book against Taylor to be sent me. If I can dispose of any more, I will write for them. Mrs. Gillies joins me in our respectful salutations.

I ever am, reverend and dear sir,

Yours most affectionately,

John Gillies

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797): 53–55.

²JW's monograph *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, an extended response to John Taylor's *The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin*, was published by Felix Farley in Bristol in Nov. 1757.

³Cf. John Gillies, *Historical Collections Relating to Remarkable Periods of the Success of the Gospel, and Eminent Instruments employed in promoting It*, 2 vols. (Glasgow: Printed by Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1754).

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[September 3, 1757]

John Baptist, the Arch-Teacher
To the Public

Every reader who loves Truth, calls her the God of his heart, as I do. The power of her name strikes dumb like stupid oxen all those who don't love her; they gnash on me with their teeth, like coward dogs who dare not bark (Ps. 73:22, 35:16–18; Isa. 56:10). I make the enemies of my God his foot-stool, with publishing his beginning reign and glory, and triumph; for he hath sent me before I saw the light of his sun, he hath put in my spirit the Spirit of his words, to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant (Ps. 110, 93, 94; Jer. 1:9–10). England of old, as famous country, as faithful to thy God and sovereign Master, how long shalt thou suffer the most noted enemies of Truth to breathe in thy children the contagious spirit of new dissensions and divisions, and thus bring thee to ruin and desolation (Luke 11:17; 2 Pet. 2:1–3, 9–10; Matt. 7:15–23).

The *Examen* of the system of religion of Mr. John Wesley, Mr. George Whitefield's mate and disciple, is sold (Price 6d.) by J. Marshal, in St. Clement's Church-yard; it contains important reflexions and solutions of the universal riddle. See the publications of it on July 25, 27, 30, August 3, 5, 23, in this *Public Advertiser*.

Source: Public Advertiser (Sept. 3, 1757), p. 3.

Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley to Sarah Ryan¹

London
November 12, 1757

Although I do not love writing, yet I cannot help telling my dear sister [Sarah] Ryan that *you* are very near and dear to my soul! And the Lord will reward *you* for that labour of *love* that I have not found in anyone before. I know my dear friend will be glad to hear that I do not repent of my abasing and humbling myself, as though I had been the *only* aggressor! No, I have cause to be thankful, for the Lord has given *me* ever since to pray without ceasing, and to thirst after the fullness of God. ⟨I⟩² pray that I never more may be overcome of evil.

I have been very ill ever since I came from Bristol, with a very great cold and loss of voice, so that I have not been able to see your mother. But I sent to hear how she did. She is well and your sister ⟨is⟩ not yet in bed [for child-birth]. Sister [Sarah] Crosby was with Mr. [Wesley ⟨at th⟩e house this morning, and then with me. I believe ⟨sh⟩e is upright of heart. I found great freedom in speaking to her. We prayed together ⟨abou⟩t dear sister Clark [and?] Colston.³

Pity(?) and pray for

Your affectionate and loving sister in the Lord,

M. Wesley

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/454.

¹Sarah Ryan came to Bristol as housekeeper at the New Room about Sept. 1757. At the time Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley was there, helping care for the house while JW was on a preaching tour through Cornwall. After his return to Bristol, JW and his wife Mary departed on Nov. 7, 1757 for London. In a manuscript life of Ryan, Mary (Bosanquet) Fletcher recorded that a positive relationship developed over this first meeting, which led Ryan to share with Mary Wesley the account of the three husbands who had deserted her. By the time Mary Wesley returned to Bristol the following summer, she had reversed her initial affection for Ryan, and during a dinner where Ryan was helping serve at a table for the preachers during their annual Conference (held in Bristol, May 6–8, 1758), Mrs. Wesley pointed to Ryan and said, ‘See that whore who is serving you! She hath three husbands now alive!’ See MARC, MAW Fl 24, folder 3, p. 2.

²A thin strip of the left margin is missing, affecting a couple of letters in several lines.

³Likely Mary (Gardiner) Clarke of London (where Ryan had boarded); and possibly Sarah Colston of Bristol.

From Sarah Ryan¹

Bristol
November 13, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received your welcome letter with much pleasure. It was the mouth of God to my soul. O sir, God has made me deeply sensible what a wondrous work he hath wrought in me, and truly out of nothing, less than nothing! I am altogether what you describe me to be, and much less. Nothing is so great a wonder to me as that God should deal so bountifully with one of yesterday. I do not wonder you should tremble for me. I almost tremble for myself, to think I cannot fear amidst those great snares and dangers I am surrounded with. If I could have chose for myself, I should have been glad to be despised by all. But is not God's time best? As to your confidence in me, I am no less amazed. But all is of God. O sir, often have I said, since I have been in your house, if all the omnipotence of God does not stand on my side, I shall dishonour him in this place! But I feel my life is hid with Christ in God.

Dear sir, pray that all your desires may be answered in me, by me, and upon me. If God is able and willing to keep me, I shall stand 'firm as a beaten anvil to the stroke'!² I find no power to resist any thing, but my soul *sinks* below all. I take it as a great blessing from God that you deal with me as a father with a child. The day that I shall think myself past your help, I shall have little reason to think well of myself.

I trust God will enable me to keep to your rules, and to shine as a light in a land of darkness. It is easy to obey where God has the heart. We are all in peace with God, and in love with one another.

Dear sir, look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen! Time is well-nigh at an end; eternity is at hand! O that with Enoch you may walk with God and be perfect! I pray God, you may forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to the things which are before! I believe you will excuse my simplicity and freedom with you. That burning love I feel to your soul makes me almost forget you are my father in Christ. Pray, sir, speak plainer still to me. I find my soul like a little child, waiting to be taught of God. I would not only be free from sin, but worship him as the angels do above! I am,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 45–46.

¹Replying to JW's letter of Nov. 8, which highlighted some 'rules of our family' for her role as housekeeper.

²Samuel Wesley Jr., 'The Parish Priest', line 28, *Poems on Several Occasions* (1736), 66.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[November 24, 1757]

Observations of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

Mr. John Wesley, a chief of the new anti-Church men, and the most learned of all, saith in his book against Mr. John Taylor, a true minister of the true Church (page 273, etc.) that (his) God does not create, but only produce the body of every man that cometh in the world, as he produces the oak. (His) God is not his immediate creator, but only his idle productor, and in the most remote sense. He adds that he is the creator of all souls in an higher sense than of the bodies, which he creates not as he saith. The spirit of Truth our God does not create, nor produce, such reasonings, which are the corruption of the right reason and good sense which he creates and produces truly in us. He is the God of Job (36:15), of David (Ps. 119:73), of Isaiah (44:2), of Jeremiah (3:5), and mine; who did create and form us in the belly, giving us his own life or soul which dwelleth in us (Luke 1:73, 1 Cor. 3:16, 21). Thus he is our original and actual Principle, as Father of all men (Mal. 2:10), the original and actual productor of the oaks, as maker of all the universe (Isa. 45:6–7).

A fuller refutation of Mr. John Wesley's sinful doctrine may be had, price 3d., at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard, with letters to Mr. George Whitefield, price 6d.

Source: Public Advertiser (Nov. 24, 1757), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[November 25, 1757]

Second Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

Mr. John Wesley, a chief of the new apostasy called Methodism, brings forth in his book against Mr. John Taylor (page 308) a bestial definition of man, pretending man to be partly animal or beast, partly a man; thus he accomplishes the absurdity which paganism did only represent by its fictitious centaurs, minotaurs, sirens, fauns, satyrs, tritons, etc. (1 Cor. 10:11; Ps. 44:12–13). The beast are framed in the material likeness of man's body and life, even of the affections of his heart and spirit, as man is framed in the spiritual likeness of his God, even of his perfections and powers (Ps. 8:1, 9); but man is no more animal in any part or sense than he is the God who creates and frames him in the belly (Jer. 1:5). Thus Mr. John Wesley must go to school again, but to the school of Truth, to learn what man is in the Truth, and consequently what Truth is (Heb. 5:11, 14).

A fuller refutation of this book of Mr. John Wesley's may be had, price 6d., at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard, with letters to Mr. George Whitefield, price 3d.

Source: Public Advertiser (Nov. 25, 1757), p. 4.

From Sarah Ryan¹

Bristol
November 29, 1757

Dear and Honoured Sir,

I received yours with no little satisfaction. For several days my soul had been grieved for you. For I have heard of what has lately been, and it has pierced my soul through.² The Lord knows how I bear all your burdens. I am a partaker of your griefs. And yet will not God bring great good out of this evil? O may I answer the end for which it is sent! May you not hear the voice of God in this? 'Look at no creature, trust to no creature, lean on no arm of flesh!' Surely God intends a great blessing for your soul, by beating you off from every prop! O when will you be willing to be forsaken of all, as your dear Master was? When we are thus willing, doth he not take the will for the deed? Doth he strip us of all human comfort? Experience shows he doth not. It appears to me at present that I shall be able to comfort you and yet to commend myself to your conscience in the sight of God. Shall I make your hands hang down, by any thing I say or do? I pray that God would first take me to his bosom. I do not wonder that you should fear for me after all this. O pray that the Lord would keep me every moment! I am very sensible that I am liable to mistake every day, to be deceived as to persons or things. But God has hitherto given me a watchful spirit. If you have heard any thing I have said or done amiss, I should be glad to know it. For I have the cause of Christ so much at heart, I would not stagger any one. The Lord Jesus keep me from hearkening to the voice of a stranger! I find more and more the need of being taught of God in all I think, speak or do. The Lord answer your last prayers on my soul!

As to your questions, I answer, I do always find joy in the Lord, though at some times more than others. Likewise, I always see God, though at some times more clearly. I find a constant offering up of myself to God in every thing I do and my soul is thankful for every thing without exception, as I see all things working together for good. I do not know that I do anything merely to please myself. God knows I do not feel any affection contrary to the pure love of God. I think I do not speak anything but from a principle of love. But I have need to grow in all these things. For I have but one grain of true holiness.

Permit me to ask, if God should strip you of all earthly friends, would you believe he did all things well? O sir, do not choose for yourself! Be willing I should be estranged from you also. I trust I shall always behave as your child, but if not, *Behold the Lamb!*

I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate, but unworthy child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 99–101.

¹Replying to JW's letter of Nov. 22.

²Cf. JW's comment about a disturbance that had broken out in the London society over 'some imprudent words spoken by one who seemed to be strong in the faith'; *Journal*, Nov. 26, 1757, *Works*, 21:132.

From Sarah Ryan

[Bristol]
December 1, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have been more than once or twice forsaken of all. And I verily believe, was God to call me to it, I should still be willing to drink of this cup. May I be more and more willing so to do! As great a value as I have for *you*, I verily think I could give you up. And I am fully assured, were God to strip me of all my friends, I should know he did all things well. I do not dare to choose. I only say, '*If it be thy will*, let not *this friend* be estranged from me.'¹

I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate, but unworthy child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 102.

¹Ryan was surely aware by this point that JW's wife Mary was unhappy with the correspondence between JW and Ryan. Cf. JW's letter to Ryan on Jan. 27, 1758; and Ebenezer Blackwell's letter to JW on June 30, 1758.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 7, 1757]

The Third Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

Adam was formed by the hands of his God and creator, in the proper sense of the word creator; thus his nature was not originally corrupted when he sinned. All men being formed like Adam by the hands of the same God, creator and father of all, likewise in the proper and positive sense of these words (Job 31:15; Mal. 2:10), any man may sin like Adam though his nature be no more originally corrupted than the nature of Adam. Had Mr. John Wesley been willing to answer truly and faithfully to this chief argument of Mr. John Taylor (pp. 110, 231) and others, not falsely and against all true love and sense of Truth our God, as he does especially [on] page 142, etc., he would have spared himself the trouble of printing more than 500 pages of false reasonings, and five shillings to every one of his last subscribers (Ezek. 18:1–32; Jer. 3:12, 15). See the precedent observations in this paper on Nov. 24 and 25.

A fuller refutation of the new book of Mr. John Wesley may be had, price 6d., at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard, with letters to Mr. George Whitefield, price 3d.

Source: Public Advertiser (Dec. 7, 1757), p. 3.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
December 13, 1757

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You say I *oblige* you by my freedom. But do I *profit* you? That is my end. It is more easy to please than to profit. If I do not lead you to Christ, I shall be taken from you. We shall be glad to see you soon, if it be the will of God, but not one moment before his time.

I have received a letter from —, and understand she saw the last you sent me.¹ O sir, we cannot be too close till eternity comes, and then to our comfort all will be made manifest.

God is with us, one and all, and blesses us every day more and more. As for myself, my soul is constantly happy in doing the will of God. My body is very weak and ill, but his will be done!

I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate, but unworthy child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 155.

¹It may be Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley who had written to Ryan. See her reaction to another letter that JW wrote to Ryan the next month (Jan. 20); reported in JW to Ryan, Jan. 27, 1758, *Works*, 27:112–13.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 17, 1757]

The Fourth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

The Monthly Reviewers, nor any of the writers whom Mr. John Wesley calls of that class,¹ care nor want any regard from any man of the class of false ministers who don't pay any regard even to the Truth as it is in Jesus Christ, that is as the universal Principle and sovereign Master, the God only of those who love her (1 Esdras 4:33–41). Till Mr. John Taylor judges fit to reply to the low sophisms and paralogisms, and counter senses which compound the whole new book of Mr. John Wesley, we think fit to publish and prove that he is as false a writer in every point, sense, article, and page, as he is a false minister of Jesus Christ which he ridicules even in his quality of God of armies (pp. 56, 59²), that is of those who sacrifice their life for their nation, and thus for the world, according to his precepts and example (John 15:13, 13:15; Ps. 18:31, 43; Mal. 2:6, 10).

Truth our God shuts the mouth of her enemies, the enemies of mankind (Rev. 12:10). She opens the mouth of those who love her in mankind, and mankind in her. See the observations of the 7th inst., [and] Nov. 24, 25.

Source: Public Advertiser (Dec. 17, 1757), p. 3.

¹Sulamar is responding to a message JW added to an advertisement of The Doctrine of Original Sin, after a negative review of it was published in the *Monthly Review* (Nov. 1757, pp. 445–46). This advertisement appears in the Dec. 3–5, 1757 issue of *Whitehall Evening Post*, p. 4 and includes this closing: 'Whatever reply Dr. Taylor himself makes hereto will be carefully and thoroughly considered. But I do not promise to pay the same regard to remarks made by the Monthly Reviewers, or any writer of that class, John Wesley.'

²I.e., JW, *Doctrine of Original Sin*, Part I, II.10, 12:192–95; where JW describes war as an example of the sinfulness and corruption of our world.

From Sarah Ryan¹

[Bristol]
December 20, 1757

Dear Sir,

Yours laid me in the lowest dull before the Lord. Am I not surrounded with snares on every side? O what power do you put into my hands? How honoured by your brother, Mr. Jones, my bands and classes, and many others! Added here unto are so many outward comforts—food, and raiment, with many other mercies! Considering the whole, how shall I escape the snare of the devil? I find but one way, a constant sense of my own nothingness and helplessness, and a clear view of eternity at hand. This makes me every moment cleave to the Lord Jesus; and he is faithful, his grace is sufficient for me.

As to your questions, I do often find in prayer many *impertinent thoughts* come into my mind. But they do not distract me. I never find my soul pressed down by any bodily weakness. I often find Satan exercises my *imagination* with impertinent thoughts. Sometimes I can banish them as they appear. At other times I bear them as my burden. They never trouble my soul. Yet I think the deeper communion I have with God, the less power Satan will have. I do find every *reasoning* brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. As to my *dreams*, I seldom remember them. But when I do, I find in general they are harmless. Sometimes I dream of being in danger, and always escape by the power of faith. My soul is pierced through with a sense of God's goodness and my own unworthiness! If my happiness were dependent on any creature, how often would it be at an end? But

Stands my house on Jesus fast,
My Rock cannot remove.²

Blessed be God for Christ, the sinner's friend! And blessed be Christ for free grace! What great things hath God laid up for them that give him their whole hearts?

I never sit down to write to you but I find my soul filled with the goodness of God. As to being offended at *you* by any thing I can hear, I think my soul is guarded against it, I am enabled to look through all I hear. There is but one thing which would lessen my affection to you, that is to find in you any evil allowed. My heart cannot be joined to any one who hath not the glory of God at heart. Nothing but sin can separate the soul from God, and nothing but sin can separate my heart from you; and that, not by hearing it from others, but *my* eyes must see, and *my* ears hear.

You said once, 'By your plain dealing you have the key of my heart, and free liberty to search it as you please.' I think I use it. God grant it may answer the end for which he intended it! He would not have put this power into my hands, were not to answer some great end. I feel a love that would break through fire and water, so you may love God with all your heart! O that you was filled with the Holy Ghost, with all inward and outward holiness! How my heart is expanded at the thought! Sir, in writing and conversing let you and I always consider ourselves as before the throne of God, and then we shall surely speak in the uprightness of our hearts. My strength fails me, so I conclude,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 212–14.

¹Responding to JW's letter of Dec. 14, 1757.

²Cf. CW, Hymn 17, st. 3, *HSP* (1749), 2:25.

From John Nelson

c. December 23, 1757

We have had four triumphant deaths lately of three men and one woman. The woman was Hannah Richardson of Briestfield. When Enoch Williams¹ preached there she was the bitterest persecutor in the town and vowed if ever he preached there again she would help to stone him to death. But he never went to try. The only one 'of this way' in the town was Ruth Blacker. Against her she was violently enraged, till Ruth went to her house, reasoned the case, and at length persuaded her to go to Dewsbury to hear Mr. Charles Wesley. That day God begot her by his Word, so that she could never rest till she found Christ in her own heart. And for two years she has been a steady follower of him. By her zeal and circumspect walking many have been since stirred up to seek the Lord. As soon as she was taken ill, she began to praise God more than ever for the work he had wrought in her soul. She said: 'At first I thought, I had no will, and that God's love was all that was in my heart. But when my little child gave a sudden shriek, I found my heart was not free. And it damped the love of God in my soul for two hours. But the Lord is come again, and now I am fully assured, he does take up all the room in my heart. He has sanctified me throughout, body, soul, and spirit. I am a witness for Jesus Christ that he is a greater Saviour than Adam was a sinner. O watch and pray, and ye shall not be overcome in the hour of temptation. Keep close to your meetings, and the Lord will meet you. If you neglect these or private prayer you will become barren in your own souls, and the God of this world will get an advantage over you. But if you keep close to God and one another, you will find Jesus a Saviour to the uttermost, as I, the most unworthy of mankind, do.' For some time before she died her prayer was turned into praise. All her prayer then was, 'Thy will be done.' We have one by us that we think will hardly live till to-morrow, who is above seventy and is as a shock of corn full ripe, crying out, 'Come, Lord Jesus!'

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Dec. 23, 1757 (*Works*, 21:132–33).

¹Enoch Williams was one of the earliest itinerant preachers, but also one of the earliest to die in the itinerant ministry; little more is known of him. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 505.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 23, 1757]

The Fifth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

The question between Mr. John Taylor, a true minister of the living Church of this nation, and Mr. John Wesley, a chief and minister of a new chimerical church, is concerning one single original sin. And all the first part of the book of this Mr. John Wesley mentions but many actual sins; which low sophism being the foundation of all this book, can deceive only the blind followers of his apostasy. The spirit of Truth our God in Jesus Christ teaches us, that all flesh corrupted their way, that consequently their way was not originally corrupted (John 1:20). The spirit of illusion, our enemy in Mr. John Wesley, spends more than 500 pages to corrupt actually the original sense of these words, and to blind us upon their most clear consequences. See the precedent observations on Dec. 7, and Nov. 24, 25.

A fuller refutation of the originally sinful doctrine of Mr. John Wesley, and false ministers of that class, may be had, price 6d., at J. Marshall's, in St. Clement's Church-yard, with letters to Mr. George Whitefield, Price 3d.

Source: Public Advertiser (Dec. 23, 1757), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 30, 1757]

The Sixth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, who teaches the world how and what Truth is in Jesus Christ (1 Esdras 4:33–41; Gen. 4:26).

Jesus Christ is come in the world to bear witness unto the Truth which is himself the universal Principle, and sovereign Master our God (John 8:25, 32, 31, 36), and to prove to us that the pains and sufferings, even death, are no punishments inflicted by an everlasting wrath of a vindictive implacable God (John 9:1, 3; Jer. 52:12), but an universal necessary order, and perfect means of proving to him our particular love in our subjections to this order of his, as he proves to us his general love in his own subjection to this very order. A black angel, minister of the old serpent,² enemy accuser of man, and of the God of man (Matt. 12:15, 23), attempts to prove quite the contrary by the foul sophisms and paralogisms of his book against Mr. John Taylor, a true and faithful minister of the living Church of his nation. Mr. John Taylor seeks the Truth which he loves, Mr. John Wesley shuns the truth which he knows, after I taught him personally what Truth is (John 15:22; Ps. 58:1, 6). See the observations of instant 23, 17, 7; Nov. 25, 24.

Source: Public Advertiser (Dec. 30, 1757), p. 3.

²Orig., 'servant'; corrected in next installment.

From Sarah Crosby

London
December 31, 1757

Honoured Sir,

What a wonderful depth is there in the providence of God! We may well say with the apostle, 'How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'¹ But what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. And this we know even now, 'All things shall work together for good to them that love God.'²

I am not insensible of my present trial. It is the heaviest and closest I have ever met with. And had not the eternal God been my refuge, I should have sunk under it from the beginning. But he is faithful, and as my day is, so he maketh my strength to be. I have no room to complain. I am not *yet* 'forsaken of all men, and dying in a cottage'.³ Neither am I as they who wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, and lodged in dens and caves of the earth.⁴ But I am ready. My spirit is resolutely fixed, 'to suffer all his righteous will'.⁵

I know nothing by myself. Yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord. And surely he hath said, 'I have created in thee a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within thee.' O the depth of love divine! I can say no more. My thought is too big for utterance.

I have no desire to give up my friends, but bless God for the good I receive through them. Yet if God himself cuts off the stream, he will lead me to the fountain. Therefore I am free from every creature, for God is all-sufficient. But I do not believe it is the design of God to separate us, only to purge away the dross of nature, that there may be a more firm and spiritual union than hath ever been yet.

Indeed I grieve and joy on *your* account. I grieve for the trial you have had, as well as the many others which you must have. May the Lord bear you above them all! But I joy in this, that I believe the one desire of your soul is to be wholly given up to God. And I pray God that those who speak evil of you may be ashamed while they behold your good conversation in Christ. O that you may go on, through evil report and good report, denying yourself in the minutest circumstance wherein you are liable to get hurt, and continually watching the motions of your heart, till all that is in you is 'holiness to the Lord'.

Whatever is amiss in this you will forgive, and continue to instruct, reprove, and pray for
Your ever affectionate child,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 613–14.

¹Rom. 11:33.

²Rom. 8:28.

³Quoting JW's comment about Francis Xavier in his note on 2 Tim. 1:15 in *NT Notes*.

⁴Quoting John Gill's comment on 1 Cor. 4:11 in *Exposition of the New Testament* (1746–48).

⁵Cf. CW, 'A Hymn for Seriousness', st. 5, *HSP* (1749), 1:35.

From Thomas Joyce

c. January 1758

I was born at Portsmouth in February 1712. I did not go to school till I was twelve years old. After three years I was taken away, and wrought for a time at my father's trade of sail-making. About sixteen, I went to sea on board the *Namur*, and afterward on board the *Romney*. Here I learned cursing and swearing, and all manner of wickedness. But being weary of the sea, when I was about twenty I bound myself apprentice to a sail-maker. About six months after, being reproved by my fellow servant for swearing, I promised to amend and did not swear any more for ten years. Soon after, I began to be convinced of sin and to pray much with many tears. I grew more and more serious till my apprenticeship was out. A fortnight after, I married. My convictions then died away, and three years after I fell into outward sins. Indeed I prayed much against them, but fell again and again, for above five years, till my wife died. That was in June. In August I was walking in Deptford, when a voice, as it were, came into my soul like thunder, 'Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!'¹ It went through me, and immediately I felt a hell in my conscience. I went into my house, ran up stairs, fell upon my knees, and cried to God to save me from my bosom sin. And I was saved from it, from that hour. Coming out a few minutes after, it was suggested to me, 'There is no Christ.' But I said, 'However, I will seek him.' And from that time I sought him diligently in all his public and private ordinances. This was in August 1747. In the year 1749 I joined a religious society in Wapping. Soon after I began to hear Mr. Brewer in Stepney,² by whom I was convinced that we are justified by faith. About two years after I began to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield, and sin was more and more a burden to me. In November 1752, as I was walking from St. Katherine's [church] to Wapping, I felt such a load as I was scarce able to bear. I looked down, and thought I must drop into hell forthwith; when in a moment I saw a great light, and heard a voice, saying, 'Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice.'³ This came twice, and I answered in my heart, 'Yea, and I will rejoice.' Since that time, I never lost the sense of God's love, nor ever yielded to any known sin.

In June 1753, being out of business, I went to Wapping chapel just when Mr. John Wesley was in the pulpit. I immediately knew him again, having seen him in a dream a year and a half before. But I continued at the Tabernacle⁴ till November 5, when, by my sister's importunity, I joined Mr. Wesley. From that time I was more and more desirous to give up all for God, and I was more and more convinced that I could not go to heaven without a full deliverance from sin. On February 11, 1757, as I was going to Spitalfield's church, my sister told me what God had wrought in her. I was cut to the heart, and went on trembling. When we came to the church, I was in an agony of prayer, till my hair was wet with sweat. On Sunday, at West Street chapel, I was still more deeply convinced of the necessity of entire sanctification. Before I communicated I wrestled with God in prayer, till my bodily strength was gone. And in communicating I was exceedingly comforted, and strengthened to wrestle still more earnestly. On Tuesday evening, February 22, I went up into my room and broke out into prayer, pleading the promises till I was all over in a sweat. But I could not leave off, till I felt that word applied, 'Thou art sealed unto the day of redemption.'⁵ I immediately felt a far greater change, than I did when I was justified. I felt my soul was all renewed, and a witness that sin was all destroyed. And from that time I have found a

¹A common line, often traced back to St. Jerome, in homilies on the judgment. Cf., A Divine of the Church of England, *Divine Meditations and Pious Ejaculations on ... the Four Last Things* (London: R. Whitley et al., 1706), 43–44.

²Rev. Samuel Brewer (1724–96) was pastor of the Stepney Meeting House, a dissenting congregation, and a good friend of George Whitefield.

³Phil. 4:4.

⁴Whitefield's preaching house in London.

⁵Cf. Eph. 4:30.

continual increase of light, and love, and holiness.⁶

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 419–21.

⁶JW adds: 'A few months ago, this Nathanael went to God, dying (as he lived) in perfect peace.'
A Thomas Joyce was buried at St. Giles in the Fields, Holborn, on Aug. 6, 1779.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 7, 1758]

The Seventh Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, who affirms, and nobody denies,
who denies and nobody affirms (Rev. 3:7).

The Monthly Reviewers, who establish themselves the judges of all new productions, even to these which are the most evidently false and ridiculous, have been short of their engagement toward the public, and of their love for the truth by their silence on whatever has been published concerning namely the Truth, in *Letters* to Mr. George Whitefield upon the false Christs, etc. (Jan. 30), upon Truth herself (June 5, 1756), upon *The Fall of the Old Serpent* (Mar. 18), upon the false Christianity of Mr. John Wesley (July 15, 1757).¹ They should have acknowledged Truth with me, her disciple, teacher namely of her true doctrine; or contradict her with Mr. John Wesley, a teacher of the sinful doctrine of sin.

The universal lessons of Truth our God in Jesus Christ (John 16:13–15) are sold altogether, price is 2d. at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-yard. See the observations of instant 30, 23, 17, 7; Nov. 25, 29. Read in the former observation: A black angel minister of the Old Serpent (line 12).

Source: published transcription; *Public Advertiser* (Jan. 7, 1758), p. 3.

¹As this suggests, John-Baptist's works were largely ignored (beyond simple lists of books published) in the newspapers and journals of his day; the only review we have located is a satirical account of *Examen* in *Lloyd's Evening Post* (Aug. 10, 1757), p. 71.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 20, 1758]

The Eighth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, disciple and writer of Truth his God in Jesus Christ, who makes her enemies her footstool (Ps.110:1; Titus 1:9–11, 15–16; Rom. 3:1, 5–9).

One of the enemies of the living Church of his nation, consequently of Truth which is Jesus-Christ our God (Luke 10:16; Matt. 18:17), under the supposed name of Christianus,¹ hath newly proposed a plan of subscription for propagating the seduction, and breathing even in little children a spirit of division upon the true ministers of the Christian Church, sitting in Jesus Christ's chair as the ministers of the Jewish Church sit in the chair of Moses, servant of Jesus-Christ, and from those who hear and practice their lessons as Jesus Christ prescribed generally to all men, especially to all his disciples (Matt. 23:1–3). Let false Christians going under chimerical denominations participate of unlawful assemblies, which far from being ordered by any law, are only suffered as a contagious evil till it may be cured. True Christians going under the name of the living Church of their nation will not participate of them, but rather reprove them as unfruitful works of darkness, or reject as poisonous fruit of unfaithfulness. See the preceding observations of the 7th instant, etc.

Source: Public Advertiser (Jan. 20, 1758), p. 4.

¹'Christianus', *A Collection of Letters on Important and Interesting Subjects* (Coventry: J. Jopson, 1757).

From Sarah Ryan¹

Bristol
January 27, 1758

[Draft Version²]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received yours dated January 20th. It gave me matter of prayer and praise to God. Many thoughts passed through my mind why I did not hear from you sooner, I not knowing before whether that letter you sent to Marylebone were for me or not.³ Although I knew what had happened was by the will and permission of God, and so in this I rested content.

To answer your questions. I really was what I *appeared* to be, for I could say with my Lord: 'My soul is exceedingly troubled, what shall I say.'⁴ I found my Lord's prayer in my heart, 'Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done.'⁵ My sorrow proceeded from a y^(earning?)⁶ I felt for the house of God, knowing so many words could not be without grieving the Holy Spirit. My desire was ever that all those things were done away, and yet I seemed to despair whether I had been labouring in the fire. Though I *well* know, as often my Lord told me, it should return into my own bosom. But O that would not suffice me. As to my love, I cannot tell how I felt. I found my own life nothing, if that would put away these dreadful things. Sir, I think if you both had such a deeper sense of it, you would not rest night and day till all was love and harmony.

But as soon as you were gone God was gracious to my soul, and I found a great weight taken off my spirits, with such a sense I had bore the Lord's burden, and a thankfulness he had enabled me to deal faithfully with both your souls. I think I can say I found nothing but piety as to my own will. If that was the will of God, I would not have it otherwise. But I know it was not, as to my own soul. It was not less happy in God. Only when God is glorified [do] I find more happiness. Certainly it was no mark it⁷ was not of God because Satan raged, but rather a confirmation. I know it was made a blessing to my soul every way, and I will not despair of Mrs. [Mary] Wesley. A thought came to my mind to converse little with her when she came to Bristol. But the Lord being my helper, I will bear as my Lord has borne with me, for I love her after all.

It is true, sir, my trials hitherto have been of another kind. I find it expedient to go through fire and water, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, and all things shall work together for good. If the end is answered on your soul, I am over and above paid, if I suffer a thousand times more. I will tell you what passes through my mind now. I wish you were holy, for it seems I shall be little able to write, the pain of my head and stomach increasing. Pray for me in this particular. Maybe the Lord will answer.

¹Replying to JW's letter of Jan. 20.

²We have this letter in two versions. The first is a manuscript in Ryan's hand, which was either a preliminary draft or copy of the letter she sent. The second version is that published by JW in *AM*, where he not only improved upon Ryan's grammar and style, but omitted several portions (particularly those mentioning his wife). We present both versions in order. Like JW, we have corrected Ryan's numerous spelling deviations (for the aid of present readers), but have retained the full content and grammatical order of her draft.

³This may be the letter mentioned by Ryan in her letter of Dec. 13, 1757.

⁴John 12:27.

⁵Matt. 26:39 and parallels.

⁶A small part of the page is missing here.

⁷In his published abridgment JW identifies the matter as their 'conversation'.

Bear with my freedom—one thing comforts my heart in your letter more than all, I must repeat it. *And does indeed* conversing with me or thinking of me bring you straight to God? Why this is the very end I want it to answer. I often feared lest you should [have] stopped by the way. O sir, I find fresh life at the very thought. O Lord, let this be done, and it is enough! For Christ's sake, for his church's sake, for your soul, for my sake (or rather, the Spirit of God in me), continue to let it do so.

May I not ask you whether it is right to obey the voice of God or man? If God has commanded you to trust me, or me you,⁸ will he not give us integrity of heart? When I shall no longer be of use to you, he will not let me spend useless words. I find a measure of the desire of Mr. de Renty in the 33rd page⁹—the Lord grant it for his mercy's sake. As to my praying for you, I find no difference, for it is natural for me to pray for you as for my own soul. O sir, linger close to God in private prayer, and don't forget me.

Since you have been gone I have read my favourite book, [*The Life of*] Mr. de Renty. It fills me with shame and confusion to think how little I know of true Christianity. The Lord help me to set out afresh! Help me by your prayers! But I know the grace of God is sufficient for me.

I believe you will not spare letting me know the goodness of God to your soul. In this I am more nearly concerned than many. Do Mrs. Wesley and you live more happy? This would comfort me inside.

My very dear sir, I must pray you to pardon my manner of speaking, and look at the spirit. One favour more I must beg of you. That you would unbosom your heart to God! Mr. C.¹⁰ advised me to have the advice of Mr. Lock[?]. The Lord Almighty bless you with all the increase of God, amen and amen.

From your affectionate child and servant,

Sarah Ryan

Source: MARC, MAW FL/6/9/22 (Ryan's draft or copy in her own hand).

[Published Version]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Yours dated January 20th gave me matter of prayer and praise to God.

To answer your questions. I really was what I *appeared* to be. My soul was exceedingly troubled. I found my Lord's prayer in my heart, 'Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done.'¹¹ My sorrow proceeded from my knowing how the Spirit of God was grieved by what was spoken. I had as much desire as ever that all those things should be done away, and yet I was tempted to despair of it. As to my love, I cannot tell how I felt. I found my own life nothing, if that would put away these dreadful things. I think if we all had a deeper sense how much this dishonours God, we should pray more, till he made all love and harmony.

As soon as you were gone the Lord was gracious to me. I found a great weight taken off my spirits, with a clear sense I had been bearing the Lord's burden, and a thankfulness that I had dealt faithfully with both your souls. Certainly it was no mark that our conversation was not of God because Satan raged. I know it was made a blessing to my soul every way, and I will not despair of Mrs. —.

It is true my trials hitherto have been of another kind. But I must go through honour and dishonour. And if I suffer a thousand times more, I am paid over and above, if the end is answered on your soul.

⁸Orig., 'or I you'.

⁹Referring to JW's abridged republication, *An Extract of the Life of Monsieur de Renty* (London, 1741). On p. 33 de Renty speaks of accepting the loss of a loved one tranquilly, viewing the loss as God's will and receiving it with pleasure and satisfaction.

¹⁰Likely Clayton Carthy, JW's book steward in Bristol at the time.

¹¹Matt. 26:39 and parallels.

One thing in your letter comforts my heart more than all. Does conversing with me or thinking of me indeed bring your soul straight to God? Why this is the very end I want it to answer. I often feared lest you should have stopped by the way. I find fresh life at the very thought. O Lord, let this be done, and it is enough! For Christ's sake, for his church's sake, for your soul, for my soul's sake, let it do so still. And it will, if you are instant in prayer.

Sir, may I not ask you whether it is right to obey God or man? If God has called you to trust *me*, or me *you*, will he not give us integrity of heart? When I shall no longer be of use to you, he will not let me spend useless words. As to my praying for you, I find no difference, for it is as natural as to pray for my own soul.

Since you have been gone I have read again my favourite book, the *Life of Monsieur de Renty*. It covers me with shame and confusion to think how little I know of true Christianity. The Lord help me to set out afresh! Help me by your prayers!

I believe you will not spare letting me know the goodness of God to your soul. In this I am more nearly concerned than many. My very dear sir, I am ashamed of my freedom with you. I cannot account for it. One favour more I must beg of you. That you would *unbosom* your heart to God! O sir, pray for me continually, for I never stood more in need. That grace, mercy, and peace may follow you all your days, is the prayer of

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 266–68.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 30, 1758]

The Ninth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

This observation is upon an extract of a pamphlet entitled, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letters to the Author of Theron and Aspasio', etc.* by John Wesley, Nov. 1, 1757, page 9: “‘You say charity is the love of truth” (p. 456). Not at all’, says Mr. John Wesley, ‘no more than it is the love of the sun’.¹²

Mr. John Wesley affirms thus indirectly, what he dares not to say plainly in this public paper, that Truth is not God more than the sun is God (1 Esdras 4:33–41; John 8:25, 32–36). I must not be tired with repeating that Truth the universal Principle, and sovereign Master, is the God only of those who love her. Mr. John Wesley declares here that she is not his God more than the sun. He does not make her (his God, Eph. 4:15) the principle, the substance, and the object of his love, and hope, and confidence, more than of his doctrine and morals, which are consequently false, as I did engage to prove him before all men, by any essential article of his books, and discourses, and practices. Consequently he is as false a Christian, as false a minister of Truth, which is Jesus Christ our God (2 Thess. 2:7–12; 2 Cor. 11:13–15; Matt. 7:15–23). See the observations of instant 20, 7; December 30, etc.

Source: Public Advertiser (Jan. 30, 1758), p. 4.

¹²JW, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"'* (Bristol: Farley, 1757), IV.2, *Works*, 13:353. Wesley's quote continues: 'It is the love of God, and of man for God's sake—no more and no less.'

From Thomas Clark

February 1758

I was born near Ripley, Yorkshire, in April 1724, and had strong desires to serve God ever since I was twelve years old. I was sadly afraid of hell, and ran from one church to another, seeking something which I could not find. About eighteen I was confirmed by the bishop, and found a great blessing therein. I continued earnestly to serve God, to the best of my knowledge, and was always kept from outward sin, and felt much of the love of God. About twenty-five, I married. Then the cares and desires of the world deadened me much for above two years. But in every trouble I still called upon God, and he delivered me. Two years since, I found a desire to go to the preaching, which soon convinced me that I was under the wrath of God. I used all the means, particularly prayer, in the midst of many sore temptations. But not long after, about Whitsuntide, 1757¹ God freed me from them by a sense of his love. A month or two after, I felt my inward sins such a burden, that I could not eat, or work, or sleep. And my senses were almost gone for about a fortnight. I was then happy again for two or three months, and then unhappy again through a sense of inbred sin, till the first Saturday in August last. I was then at my work, when I was filled with such love and power that I could work no longer. My soul was melted with love, the tears ran down my cheeks. And soon after, these words came, 'I have cleansed thee from all filthiness of flesh and spirit',² which followed me for a fortnight wherever I went. I thought, however, I would tell nobody of it. But I could not refrain. I never found any doubt since, having the witness in myself continually. I feel no will but the will of God. Even my body seemed renewed as well as my soul. I have a wife and five small children, but I have no care about them. I work every day among the wicked, but I am not hurt or hindered by them. I am always happy in God, full of love and peace, and feel no deadness or heaviness, but a continual increase of loving faith, springing up into everlasting life.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 533–34.

¹Orig., '1759'; an apparent misprint.

²Cf. 2 Cor. 7:1.

From Sarah Ryan

[Bristol]

[February 1, 1758]

[Draft 1¹]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received your last. By your letter I understood you had not received my letter when you wrote. The reason for my writing to London before I wrote to you was I heard my mother was ill and needed a little of my help, which I should not fail to do. I acknowledge sir, from a sense of my duty to God and you, I dare not deprive you of any blessing that the Lord would give you by me. When I consider the beginning of our union and the wonderful way he guides it on, I am amazed. But his thoughts are not our thoughts. And yet I am often tempted to think what good can I be to you now? But I believe the Lord will make that plain when he hath done with me the more [he] will.

[this draft, likely the first, ends here and is obviously incomplete]

Source: MARC, MAW FL/6/9/19 (p. 3).

[Draft 2]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received your last.² By what you said, you had not my letter³ when you sent yours. But in that I nearly answered your questions, as God did enable me.

I am thankful if the Lord continue to make me a blessing to your soul. For O, how I long for you to be holy in spirit, soul, and body! Sir, doth God clearly show you the hindrances? Doth he enable you to put them out of the way? Has he fixed a resolution in your soul to grasp the glorious prize? Do you sensibly die daily? Does your heart pant after it like the hart panteth after the water brooks?⁴ Don't you depend too much upon any creature? We must not say, 'Lord, work by this or that person or thing'. 'Work as thou wilt, and how thou wilt! Only finish thy work in my soul.' O dear sir, it is a good but painful fight. Indeed, it is fighting up to the knees in blood. Nature will not submit to die. But away with him—crucify it, crucify it! The sins that murdered God shall die.

O sir, I seldom think how I am writing to [you], but I wonder I never found a greater reluctance in my life. The Lord give me wisdom! Dear sir, use much private prayer and much good will [be] answered by all this. Let us stand still and see the great salvation of our God. The meantime having our eye single, our intention pure, and determined to be on the Lord's side. Let us pray more for dear Mrs. W[esley]. You

¹We have this letter in three versions. Two are draft copies in Ryan's hand. A third version exists in manuscript as a copy in the hand of Mary Bosanquet, which closely parallels the letter as published by JW in *AM*. The version in Bosanquet and *AM* omits some of the personal material about Mrs. Wesley, but it also contains a more extended ending than either of Ryan's drafts—suggesting even her second draft was in preparation for the letter actually sent, not a copy of it. We give all three versions. Once again we have corrected Ryan's numerous spelling deviations (for the aid of present readers), but have retained the full content and grammatical order of her drafts.

²Ryan is clearly responding to JW's letter of Jan. 27, 1758. While she does not mention the latest incident of Mrs. Wesley reading a letter JW wrote to Ryan, she responds to some of the questions JW raises at the end of the letter.

³I.e., her letter of Jan. 27, 1758.

⁴Cf. Ps. 42:1.

comforted me, concentrate [on] her, and bear with her and with me.

O my dear sir, how good is God to my soul! I do not need *sin* to humble me, for he breaks me to pieces with his ten thousand blessings. I find a life that never dies—a hidden life above. Neither pain nor ease, smiles nor frowns, life nor death, doth part me from my love.

As to spending my time, I am often tempted I do not labour more with my hands. But O the thirst I feel for souls! I don't know but in mercy⁵ to me the Lord lays his hand on my body, or I should have little time for retirement, for I could be speaking and going about all the day long. O sir, let us make haste to live and lay up a great harvest[?].

The Lord grant you your desire of your soul upon me. O that I may be like my spotless Master. Help me by your prayers. The reason of my writing [is] I heard that my mother is ill and needed a little of my help. Pray, sir, see her. I have obeyed you concerning my body. I do not now have tea twice a day. Let us pray more than ever, and the Lord will deliver us from every snare of the devil, which is the prayer of

Your affectionate child,

Sarah

Source: MARC, MAW FL/6/9/19 (pp. 1–2).

⁵The word looks like 'fancy' in the Ryan's manuscript, but both Bosanquet and *AM* read 'mercy'.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
February 1, 1758

[Draft 3]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am thankful if the Lord continue to make me a blessing to your soul. For O, how I long for you to be holy in spirit, soul, and body! Has God fixed a resolution in your soul to grasp the glorious prize? Do not you depend too much upon any creature? We must not say, 'Lord, work by this or that person or thing'. 'Work as thou wilt, and how thou wilt! Only finish thy work in my soul.' O dear sir, it is a good but painful fight. Indeed, it is fighting up to the knees in blood.⁶ Nature will not submit to *die*. But away with it—crucify it, crucify it! The sins that murdered God shall die.

Dear sir, use much private prayer and much good will come out of all this. Let us stand still, and we shall see the great salvation of God. In the meantime, having our eye single, our intention pure, and determined to be on the Lord's side.

O how good is God to my soul! I do not need *sin* to humble me, for he breaks me in pieces with his ten thousand blessings. I find a life that never dies—a hidden life above. Neither pain nor ease, smiles nor frowns, life nor death, can part me from my love.

I am sometimes tempted because I do not labour more with my hands. But O, the thirst I feel for souls! I know not but the Lord lays his hand on my body in mercy, or I should have little time for retirement, for I could be speaking and going about all the day. O sir, let us make haste to live!

The Lord grant you the desire of your soul upon me! I want to be all like my spotless Master—the thought makes my heart leap again. This is all I thirst for, and short of this I *will not* live. Jesus hath purchased all for *me*. Pray help me by your prayers.

O my father look up—the chariots and horsemen of Israel! O for faith to lay hold on the promises! Let us pray more than ever, and the Lord will keep us from every snare of the devil.

I am your affectionate child and servant,

S. Ryan

Source: MARC, a copy in the hand of Mary Bosanquet, in uncatalogued portion of the 'Fletcher-Tooth' collection; compared with JW's published transcription in *AM* 5 (1782): 326–27.

⁶This sentence appears in *AM*, but not in the Bosanquet transcript.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 3, 1758]

The Tenth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, sent to publish the beginning reign of Truth, her triumph over her and our enemies (Luke 1:71–74, 77–79; Acts 8:23, 30).

The three people in the world, true believers, Jews, and Christians, acknowledge at this moment that Truth herself spoke to Moses, consequently that Truth herself said, 'I am who am', or who is, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exod. 3:14–16; 1 Esdras 4:33–41). Not at all, no more than the sun, saith the dumb speaker, enemy of Truth our God in Jesus Christ, and of her living Church, to which he opposes a chimerical church of his own making. He dissents equally from Truth, and the three people in the world, not willing to trust in the name of Jesus Christ, nor loving him in the Truth which is himself and his only substantial incommunicable name. Methodists, this is the most noted chief of your apostasy (Matt. 7:15–23; 2 Cor. 11:13–14).

A fuller refutation of Mr. John Wesley's and George Whitefield's doctrine, and morals, and practices, may be had (Price 6d., and 3d.) at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard. See the observations of 30, 20, 7 of last [month], etc.

Source: Public Advertiser (Feb. 3, 1758), p. 4.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
February 8, 1758

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

I did not think of writing so soon, but I cannot help letting you know the goodness of God to our souls. But where shall I find words to express his mercy to such poor, helpless worms as we are? How does my heart burn with love to him who is my God and my all? I find him faithful to his promises—it is but ask, and have! O for faith! All his promises are ‘yea’ and ‘amen’ to the believing soul.

On Saturday night brother [Clayton] Carthy, sister [Mary (Gardiner)] Clarke, and I were met together as usual, when the Lord poured out his Spirit upon us in such a manner that we were all speechless. On Sunday he met us again at his table, and made us drink of the wine of the kingdom. At night I was desired to meet a class, and God was there also. On Monday my body was very weak with the power of God, but my soul was all on fire. I find the name of Jesus written on my heart with the finger of God. It is as ointment poured forth. I seem to taste it on my lips. He doubled the blessing in the evening as soon as I began to meet my dear class. ‘Dear’ I call them because they are dear to my soul, and I never meet them without a peculiar blessing. I spake to about half of them, but I could speak no more. We then began to sing,

Come let us join our cheerful songs,
With angels round the throne, ...¹

But we could sing only two verses. So great was the power of the Lord, we went to prayer. But O the power of God we felt! I did not know what to say or what to do. Such a night I have not seen since I have been in Bristol.

O sir, what shall I say of such a God? And to whom is this grace given? What shall I do that I may work the works of God? O my dear sir, help me by your prayers. God will hear *you* for me. Labour with the Lord that I may stand perfect in all the will of God and grow in every heavenly and holy temper. I am as much athirst as if I had not one grain of grace.

As to my body, it seems medicines are lost upon me. For I am as bad again when I walk, pray, sing, or write. I might be better if I laid them aside. But can I do this? No, God being my helper, while I am in the body and he gives me power, I will use it. I cannot spend my life for a better master. Prayer only will help me.

Pray, dear sir, advise or reprove or instruct me as the Lord shall enable you. May the Lord give you your heart's desire upon me and all your children! I am,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. Ryan

Source: MARC, a copy in hand of Mary Bosanquet, in uncatalogued portion of the ‘Fletcher-Tooth’ collection; compared to JW’s published transcription in *AM* 5 (1782): 380–81.

¹Isaac Watts; included by JW in *CPH* (1738), 34.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 10, 1758]

The Eleventh Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

This observation concerns a seductorious pamphlet in the style of Mr. John Wesley, entitled, *Serious Address to the Christian World* (1 John 2:18–19).¹

The author of this pamphlet hides himself, as it is convenient to every enemy of Truth our God, and sovereign Master in Jesus Christ, and of her living Church. He covers likewise a spirit of hatred, of dissension, and division, under the very words of Truth, even under those by which she recommends to us an universal love, and union of heart and spirit (John 13:35). Let him learn from me, her disciple, that the love due to a false minister and seducer like him does not consist in admitting him, as he pretends, to the choir of Truth, of which he proves to be an enemy, but in warning him privately first, and then publicly, that he may return to Truth, and acknowledge Truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and thus Jesus Christ as he is in the Truth, and be no more unfaithful, blind and incredulous (Matt. 18:15–18). We ought to love a thief, a false friend, as such, and as such to beware of them, neither to admit them in our house, lest the one robs us and the other corrupts our wives and children, and servants (Matt. 7:15–23; 1 Cor. 5:9–11; Ps. 50:6–22). See the observation of the 3rd instant, etc.

Source: Public Advertiser (Feb. 10, 1758), p. 4.

¹An anonymous pamphlet with this title does not appear to survive; though WorldCat does include an anonymous *Remarks upon a Late Pamphlet, entitled 'Serious Address to the Christian World'* (London: T. Field, 1757).

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 17, 1758]

The Twelfth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, upon Mr. John Wesley my friend and disciple (1 Cor. 3:10–15).

Mr. John Wesley is my friend, for I love him in the Truth my God. Though he does not love me, because he did choose another God than Truth, declaring Truth not to be his God more than the sun. However I am his master, for I teach him even publicly, and with him all his followers, and all the world, how and what Truth is in Jesus Christ. He is my disciple for he knows Truth by me, as well as I know her, though by himself he is not willing to acknowledge her for his sovereign Master, to make her his God, that is, the chief object of his love, and hope, and confidence, the Principle of his doctrine, and morals, and practice. Let him continue being dumb upon the Truth, for better is it not to speak of Truth than not to speak of her as of one's God and sovereign Master more than the sun (Ps. 32:1–11). Read in the last observation of the 10th instant, line 19, 'Lest be one robs us'.

Source: Public Advertiser (Feb. 17, 1758), p. 3.

From John Johnson

Bradford
February 19, 1758

Reverend Sir,

The following case being something remarkable, I thought proper to collect all the circumstances of it and to send it you.

On the 5th of last month George Harris of Seend,² with three other men, went out a shooting. They came to a ditch of water, which George and some of his companions leaped over. But one man, being timorous, requested George to take hold of his gun and help him over. He did so, but unfortunately the piece went off and the contents lodged in George's right arm, which was almost shattered to pieces. He walked about half a mile, but being in great pain and losing much blood, his companions were obliged to carry him home. A surgeon being sent for, and examining the wound, declared, 'It is as impossible for him to recover, as it is for me to carry Salisbury church-steeple to Seend.' He dressed the wound and left him for that night. Next morning the wound seemed a little better. But at night it was a great deal worse, attended with excruciating pain. In the midst of his agony he prayed to the Lord to take him out of his misery, but at other times cried out, 'Lord, deliver me from the bitter pains of eternal death!'

It is necessary to observe that, although he is only about 20 years of age, yet he has been remarkably addicted to cursing, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and the common vices which the degenerate youth of these days are in the habit of committing. Sometimes he had thoughts of forsaking his sins and turning to the Lord. And at those seasons when the Holy Spirit was striving with him, he attended our preaching and appeared serious. But alas, too often he resisted the grace of God and turned again like the dog to his vomit, till he was suddenly arrested in the middle of his folly by this awful and unexpected judgment.

The same evening Thomas Twinney, a member of our society, had a strong impression upon his mind to visit the afflicted young man. He immediately went to the house. But recollecting that George's father and two of his brothers were bitter persecutors of the Methodists, he was so much discouraged that he returned home without seeing him. In the night, George began to cry earnestly to the Lord for mercy. This surprised all his friends. Some of them said, 'It is a pity but he had some one to pray with him'; and they asked, 'Shall we call the parson?' He replied, 'No'; and added, 'I wonder if Thomas Twinney would come to me? But I am such a wicked fellow, that I think none that can pray will come near me.' Upon which they instantly sent for brother Twinney, who gave me the following account:

As soon as I entered the room where George Harris lay I asked him, 'What shall I pray for?' He answered, 'That God would take me out of this pain and trouble.' 'Nay', I replied, 'if the Lord should take you to heaven in your sins, what would you do there? You are not a fit companion for saints and angels unless you are born of God, so I think it will be best to pray for sparing mercy, and that the Lord may work in you a thorough change of heart.' I therefore entreated the Almighty to show him his lost state by nature and practice, and give him a godly sorrow for his sins. While we were at prayer, the poor man found some ease both in body and soul, and as I returned home I found an increase of love and pity for him.

Next morning I found him employed in praying fervently. When the surgeon examined his wound, he said, 'He cannot live many hours, for a mortification has taken place.' The young man cried out, 'O what a mercy that I was not shot dead, for then I would have been in hell!' Two hours after, the mortification extended to his right breast, and to all appearance he was very near his end, but quite sensible. He requested me again to pray for him, and told his friends that he would not for a million of money but have sent for me. I tarried with him that night to see him die, and to afford him all the help in my power. In the night he said to me, 'O Thomas, what a wicked fellow have I been! But Christ died for such sinners as I am, and I desire to be saved

²Seend, Wiltshire; 4 miles west of Devizes; spelled 'Seen' in *AM*.

through him. He promises me, if I will sin no more, he will pardon my past sins. I am very willing to die. I feel death hovering over this side, but it cannot touch me yet.'

Soon after his eyes were fixed, his limbs stretched out, he ceased to breathe, and we thought he was dead. But it pleased the Lord to revive him again. When able to speak he told us, 'It seemed to my apprehension that I was carried up in the clouds to a gate. I went in—but it was the wrong one. I went into another and there I found rest. It was a very beautiful place.' Towards morning the mortification extended to his right ear and part of his throat, so that he could not swallow without great difficulty. Sometimes he slept as easy as if nothing was the matter with him. He desired his father to get a coffin made as soon as possible, and said, 'I have been a wicked fellow, but I know God loves me still, and promises me pardon, if I sin no more.'

On Sunday morning I left him, being obliged to preach about seven miles off. When I returned home George was much better. His throat and breast were restored to their natural colour. His arm had not been opened. Neither did the surgeon see him from Saturday to Sunday evening—but being informed that George was still alive, he came immediately. When the surgeon examined his patient, he exclaimed, 'I never saw the like before! If I had thought he had been alive, I would not have neglected him for a hundred pounds.' George said to me, 'I find more pleasure now than I have in all my life. Though I am in much pain, yet God gives me patience.'

On Monday the surgeon took off his arm and the parts that were mortified, and he continues in a mending way. He is now full of faith and divine comfort, although in very poor circumstances. When his friends say to him, 'What will you do now, George? Your bread is gone!' He answers, 'I am contented. The Lord will incline the heart of one or another to send me fresh supplies. I depend upon him for both body and soul.'

Reverend sir, I have related the bare fact, as I had it from brother Twinney, as brief as I possibly could. I remain,

Your unworthy son in the gospel,

John Johnson

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 21 (1798): 529–31.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 24, 1758]

The Thirteenth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, to Mr. John Wesley the most remarkable of my stiff-necked disciples (Acts 7:51).

Don't you see, Mr. John Wesley, that I make you the footstool of Truth the universal Principle, and sovereign Master my God in Jesus Christ, this day in which she puts forth her powerful rod to sway in the middle of her enemies (Ps. 110:1–2). You are dumb truly like a footstool, while I make you to serve to her triumph as a vanquished enemy, not willing to participate of it, and thus reign with her as a friend. The reign of the universal Illusion (signified by the great Babylon) is past for ever, even she is no more, being transmuted in the personal unfaithfulness of the black angels, ministers of the Old Serpent, who fought for her. Except your abused followers, you find no more admirers, but answerable and therefore unanswered contradictors, as I told you already in my likewise unanswered public letter to you of last July 15, page 14. Nor shall you dare to answer the author of the *Remarks* on your last pamphlet,³ more than you dare to answer Truth, and me her disciple. Truth is great, and prevails, and lives, and reigns for ever (1 Esdras 4:33–41; Rev. 12:9–13).

The said letter to Mr. John Wesley is sold (price 6d.) at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard, with a letter to Mr. George Whitefield (price 3d.) and all public writings concerning the triumph of Truth, and the present beginning of her reign.

Source: Public Advertiser (Feb. 24, 1758), p. 3.

³John Dove, *Remarks on the Reverend Mr. John Wesley's 'Sufficient answer to the author of the letters of Theron and Aspasio', with a letter addressed to him relating to his extraordinary treatment of that author* (London: M. Lewis, 1758).

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[March 4, 1758]

The Fourteenth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, to Mr. John Wesley, who declares that Truth is not (his) God at all, no more than the sun, in his *Sufficient Answer* of Nov. 1, 1757, p. 9.⁴

I spur you hard, Mr. John Wesley, for you are hard to the spur, nor do you stir more than a wooden horse. I agree with you that Truth is not (your) God at all, no more than the sun, for it appears sufficiently that you don't love her. Agree with me that she is your master in all senses of this word, for it appears sufficiently that you fear her, and me her disciple, who repeats only what she saith. I repeat it as the echo in a desert, since in these populous⁵ cities there is not one man who answers what the spirit of Truth our God saith to the world, when there is so many who answer even to the most stupid productions of the Old Serpent, the spirit of illusion our enemy (1 John 4:18; John 1:23; Rev. 3:6–13).

A sufficient refutation of Mr. John Wesley and Mr. George Whitefield's apostleship is sold, price 6d. and 3d., at J. Marshal's in St. Clement's Church-Yard, with all public writings concerning the triumph of Truth, the universal Principle, and sovereign Master our God in Jesus Christ, and the present beginning of her reign (1 Esdras 4:33–41; Rev. 12:9–13; 2 Cor. 11:13–15).

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Mar. 4, 1758), p. 3.

⁴I.e., JW, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"'*, IV.2, *Works*, 13:353.

⁵Orig., 'popular'; corrected in the next Observation.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[March 10, 1758]

The Fifteenth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, to Mr. John Wesley the first who dared to declare publicly that Truth is not (his) God at all, no more than the sun, in his very *Sufficient Answer* of the first of Nov. 1757, page 9, lines 32–34.⁶

True charity was the love of Truth in those who suffered all kinds of persecutions for the love of Jesus-Christ their God unknown even now in the Truth (John 14:7–9). True charity was the love of Truth in those who persecuted them for the love of Truth their God unknown even now in Jesus-Christ. These believed to serve Truth with persecuting men whom they supposed her most dangerous enemies; the other believed to serve Jesus Christ, with suffering from those whom they supposed likewise his most cruel enemies; because none of both sides knew that Truth was Jesus-Christ the same God, and Father, and Brother, and sovereign Master of all, all men in all, and to all (John 16:1–4; Acts 9:1–5; 1 Tim. 1:12–14; Col. 3:10–11). Truth was this God equally unknown, equally beloved by the two opposite parts of men our forefathers (1 Esdras 4:33–41; Acts 7:23–31). You know Truth, since I taught the world and you what Truth is. And you don't love Truth; she is your sovereign master in Jesus Christ, not your God at all, no more than the sun (John 15:22; Acts 13:10; Heb. 10:26–27). Read in the last observation of the 4th instant, line 11 'populous cities'.

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Mar. 10, 1758), p. 3.

⁶I.e., JW, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"'*, IV.2, *Works*, 13:353.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
March 11, 1758

Reverend and Dear Sir,

God is wise in all his dealings. He bringeth down to the grave and raiseth up again. His dealing with me is all love and mercy. O that I did but know how to praise him? The night Mr. [Thomas] Walsh came I took my bed, and for near two days I did not know whether I should die or live. The third day God said to me, 'Thou shalt not die but live, and show forth the glory of the Lord.' I then grew better. But a week ago I was suddenly taken so ill that I could only lie on my face and groan to God. It came into my mind, if they prayed with me I might be healed. Brother [Clayton] Carthy did pray with me. Presently my pain began to abate, and by the time he had done, it was all gone. When I was alone I said, 'O God, art thou not the God of my body, as well as of my soul?' Immediately I found strength go through my whole body, so that I was able to meet my band. I have mended ever since. O sir, pray for me that I may choose nothing for myself, but be as clay in his hand!

I wondered I did not hear from you before. But I left it to God, for his will is best. I thank the Lord and you, I want for nothing but more of God. O sir, you need all the power of God to stand by you where you are going. O that his Spirit, as a flaming sword, may turn to guard you every way! Nothing can hurt you if you keep at the feet of Jesus. Do not forget to pray that in nothing I may bring a reproach upon his glorious gospel, but in all things may be kept a bush in the fire, burning yet unconsumed. I am,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 493–94.

From Sarah Crosby

London
March 14, 1758

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

I still experience the goodness of God, and am thankful for all things. He hath delivered, he doth deliver, and I know he will deliver to the end. Many times I wish myself unknown to all. Yet at others, I cannot help saying (in effect) 'Come all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.' I shall endeavour simply to describe to you my present state, that you may reprove or instruct, as the case requires.

I find a rest in the centre of my soul, which nothing doth or can interrupt. I feel no pride, no anger, no unbelief, no desire of any thing evil. I have but one desire, which nothing can satisfy but the full fruition of God. And what kind of rest this gives, they only that find it know. The light of faith shines clear. The love of God does melt and meeken my soul, and reduces me to nothing. So that I live not, but Christ liveth in me. I know not that I need any thing more but to increase herein. But my ideas are beyond any expressions I can find. I see a fullness in him, which angels cannot fathom.

Knowing my own demerits, I cannot think hard of any trial I meet with. And I find, as faith makes all things possible, so love makes all things easy. I feel my present trial, but Almighty strength is perfected in my weakness.

May the Lord bless you with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus! May he more than supply all your wants, and give you length of days, and life for ever more! I still say, May I see you again, if we may magnify the Lord together. Till then, dear sir, cease not to instruct, advise, or reprove,

Your affectionate child,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 614–15.

From an Unidentified Young Woman

London
c. March 19, 1758

‘Mr. Wesley read a letter to the like purport from a very different quarter, a plain countryman near Leeds.¹ And lastly, a letter he received but yesterday from London, giving an account of the words of a young woman who has been for some time in an extraordinary way.² The purport of her message is that the woe is beginning, or in a manner begun. There are many papists in England who are contriving a massacre but will not be able to effect anything till after the king’s death. She farther said that the time of Mr. Wesley’s removal to heaven is at hand, that it will be by suffering and that very probably he will return to London no more. But of this she is not positive.’

Source: secondary summary; John Newton diary, March 23, 1758 (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Archives, MA 731, p. 146).³

¹This letter has not been identified.

²While this description *might* fit Sarah Ryan (34 years of age at the time), the details of the content in the letter Newton gives are missing from the letter Ryan sent JW dated Mar. 20, 1758 (even the draft in her own hand). The writer appears to be another woman, and her letter not known to survive.

³See transcription in Grant Gordon, *An Instrument of Divine Grace: John Newton Encounters John Wesley* (forthcoming).

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
March 20, 1758

[Draft 1¹]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received yours, dated March the 19th.²

From the ground of my heart, I thank God and you for all your tender, fatherly care of my soul and body. I take it as an instance of God's love to me. What could God do more for me than he has done? Lord grant I may bring forth much fruit to his honour and glory!

I find he is good to me. The things which would of old have made me have flown from him now make me cleave to him. At present, through the tender mercy of my Saviour Jesus Christ, I find my soul loose to every thing here below. And the constant cry of my soul [is], 'Father, thy only will be done.' This is a point I often examine myself, whether my affections don't start aside to this creature or that thing. But to this hour (the Lord be praised!) I can say, [to] no creature or thing do I give that love that belongs to Jesus Christ. As that was my besetting sin, and ever understanding the nature of it, I watch [for] the least occasion. If I were to find any thing like that, I think I should give up all pretense to be saved from sin, and my abode could not be long here. For if there is a grain, there is a root. The short time I have been here I have been tried in this, as *well you know*.

I can answer you³ as before the throne of God. By his power, I do know how to steer between the two extremes—neither to lean upon you nor to despise you. As a minister of Christ, and my father and master, I do reverence you and love you. Yet if God were to alter things and to say 'Don't write no more nor converse no more', or if by any means he should make it plain to you that I should not; or if he should call me away somewhere else, I find I am this moment ready to obey. His will is my meat and drink. I think if I were not thus free from every creature, I could not converse with you [or] no man under heaven.

Now I tell you plainly and sincerely the state of my soul. But oh have I not [??⁴] or fears for you. Sir, I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. I know where there is a propensity to love upon the creature, we do it when we don't know of it, and how shall it be otherwise unless the rule is clear. Permit me to ask you a question. Would you do as much for any child of God as me? In this are you not partial in my favour? Concerning the affair of S. C.,⁵ does not the fear for me proceed from nature? Has not your mind been made unhappy for fear I should love B. W. better than you? Or if you have felt any thing like it, has⁶ it been the grievous burden of soul? If you don't [??⁷] if that was *the will of God* never to see me more, or write to me more, or that I shall love any soul better than you, it appears there is some thing to be done away. It is a little thing to give up a friend, to die. But it is far greater to in this point love our neighbour as ourselves, that my friend may love another as well as me or better. This lesson God only can

¹We have this letter in two versions. The first is a manuscript in Ryan's hand, which was either a preliminary draft or copy of the letter she sent. The second is the version published by JW in *AM*, where he not only improved upon Ryan's grammar and style, but omitted several portions. We present both versions in order. Like JW, we have corrected Ryan's numerous spelling deviations (for the aid of present readers), but have retained the full content and grammatical order of her draft.

²This letter does not survive, but the questions it raises can be reconstructed from Ryan's replies.

³I.e., the questions JW asked in his letter.

⁴Two words here could not be deciphered.

⁵Likely Sarah Crosby.

⁶Orig., 'have'.

⁷One or two words were illegible.

teach us. O it is a greater thing to be Christ over men[?]. O sir, pray much in this. For the Lord's sake, look on every creature as pipes that convey the water, to use no longer than the Lord use[s] me to you. I shall do you good, if you would. Or I would it shall come to heart [that] hitherto it has appeared I have been the Lord's instrument. If it is his will, let it be so still. If not, his will be done. But sir, I find no difference in my heart concerning you; no, never, and what man or woman says [??⁸]. In my heart I do believe it is of God and this should confirm it by you more abundantly being given up to God as well in heart and work. I believe you pray for me as I for you and have need of yours. Sir, shall I ever take[?] my soul out of the hands of God? I shudder at the thought 'If I can, I shall'. But stands my house on Jesus my rock, [it] can never be moved[?].

I trust I shall be able to obey you concerning my body. You know the sense is gone in that I [?]. As for the account you heard of me censuring you, I don't know that such a thought passed my mind, much less to speak it. But that is about as awful to be quite justifying of while I was sick. I found the Lord call me to resignation. At first when I thought I should die, I longed to be gone. But when I found I should live, I resigned to his will. He would often break me to pieces, showing me his *free* mercy and my own unworthiness. He has left me without excuse before God. I have been much tried and tempted by the devil, but all things shall work for my good.

O how do I thirst for more holiness! I believe we shall have need of all the grace that God will give us, if he shall send his judgments shortly, which I do expect. O how thankful I am I am free. O sir, eternity, eternity! What is any thing worth but a single eye and a pure heart—which may God give you and me, and all that love our Lord Jesus.

Source: MARC, MAW FL/6/9/20 (Ryan's draft or copy in her own hand).

[Draft 2]

Reverend and Dear Sir,

From the ground of my heart, I thank God and you for all your tender, fatherly care of my soul and body. I take it as an instance of the love of God to me. What could he do more for me than he has done? The Lord grant I may bring forth much fruit to his glory!

The things which formerly would have made me fly from him now make me cleave to him. At present, through the tender mercy of my God, I find my soul loose from all below. And the constant cry of my heart is, 'Father, thy will be done.' I often examine whether my affections do not start a side to any person or thing. But to this hour (the Lord be praised!) I can say, to no creature do I give the love that belongs to Christ. As that was my besetting sin, I well understand the nature of it. I watch the least occasion, and were I to find any thing like it, I should give up all pretense of being saved from sin. For if there is a grain, there is a root. And then my abode could not be long here.

I can answer the questions you put to me, as before the throne of God. By his power, I do know how to steer between extremes of regarding you too little or too much. As a minister of Christ, and my father and master, I do reverence and love you. Yet if God should say, Do not write or converse any more; if he should show *you* it is not right; I am this moment ready to do his will—it is my meat and drink. If I was not thus free from every creature, I could not enjoy uninterrupted communion with God. I hope my will is brought into entire subjection to Christ. I find it a great thing to be his freeman, to be entirely disengaged from all things here below. With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible, seeing he has all power in heaven and earth. My heart's desire and prayer to God is that I, and all his servants, may keep ourselves from idols. May we always remember that while we are here below we are in an enemy's country, that our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. If we keep this always in view, and look to the Lord for help, we shall doubtless be more

⁸At least three words here are illegible.

than conquerors through him who hath loved us.⁹

When I thought I should die, I longed to be gone. But when I found I should live, I was resigned. I had no power to choose any thing. But I was often ashamed before God, for his goodness to me. Most of the time I was much tempted, which showed me the freeness of his mercy and my own unworthiness.

O how do I thirst for more holiness! I believe we shall need all the grace that God will give, if he send his judgments upon the land. How thankful am I that I am free. O eternity, eternity! What is anything worth, but a single and a pure heart—which may God give you and me, and all that seek him! This is the prayer of,

Yours, etc.

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 548–50.

⁹Only the first four sentences of this paragraph can be clearly traced to Ryan's manuscript. It is unclear whether the manuscript is a preliminary draft, to which she added this material in the final letter (and perhaps omitted much in the draft as well). It is possible that JW has brought in material from another letter, or is quite freely summarizing and elaborating on Ryan's emphasis on subjection to Christ.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[March 24, 1758]

The Sixteenth Observation of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher

This is upon a new epitaph in Mr. George Whitefield's garden, next to his chapel, or Tabernacle, in Tottenham-Court Road, the right hand: 'Stop giddy world, and consider this place, where lies a man redeemed by grace, etc.'

It may be, that Mr. George Whitefield is not the giddy author of this inscription, but certain it is that he does approve of it, and consequently that he participates of this monkish scorn and insult of no less than all the world, of this enmity of no less than all mankind, for the love of which Jesus Christ our God, the Father, and Brother, and sovereign Master of all men died. He died for all the world, with dying for all a nation of the world, in order to give them the greatest proof and example of love which could be proposed and understood. And not only for this man who is said redeemed by grace, empty and senseless words which I know Mr. George Whitefield nor Mr. John Wesley himself cannot give an explication of, if not as from an abyss, to an abyss of a voluntary absurdity and darkness. Jesus-Christ died to prove his love even for the most unjust and unthankful of mankind, even for hypocrites and traitors, who, like Judas, give the most apparent signs of love for him, to betray him the better, with betraying the living Church of their nation (1 Cor. 12:26–27; John 3:16–20, 17:23; Luke 6:35, 10:16; Rev. 12:9–11; Matt. 7:15–23).

Source: Public Advertiser (Mar. 24, 1758), p. 3.

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
March 30, 1758

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

May all the blessings of the new covenant rest upon you! O that the high praises of God may for ever be in our heart and mouth. The time is lost that is not spent in prayer or praise.

My heart is enlarged in love to all. I know not a soul for whom I would not part with any thing, but the favour of God, to do them any real service. But how much more for my father whom I still love as my own soul, and whose salvation as nearly concerns me as my own?

I cannot rest satisfied with what I have. Indeed I have the greatest encouragement to press forward, well knowing that there is room to grow in time and in eternity. What a blessing it is that we are taught of God not to plead for *the remains of sin* in order to our growing in grace, nor yet to think that all the work is done when we are saved from sin, but still to look for farther growth in the knowledge and love of God?

My soul is happy in his love, but still grasping after all, though unworthy of any thing. By this window you may look into my breast. You know my strength and you know my weakness. And I trust you will give all the help you can, to increase the one and lessen the other.

Cease not to pray for *me*, that my prayers may be the more effectual for *you*. This union the world knows not of, nor many of the children of God. May the choicest of his blessings rest upon you, and as your day is, so may your strength be! So prays,

Your very affectionate child,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 615–16.

From the Rev. John Newton¹

Liverpool
April 3, 1758

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your enclosed letter from Bolton,² which came to my care, has furnished me with an excuse for writing sooner than I intended. Your vessel was followed with many a wishful look, and I believe, with many a secret prayer that you might have been sent back to have stayed yet a little longer amongst us. And I must own that when I saw the wind change about an hour after you left us I was myself willing to hope that your work here was not quite finished. But the next morning put a cheque to my fond short-sighted desires. It was indeed a short opportunity, but while it lasted it was sweet and profitable to me and I trust to many. Yet it is with grief I observe that the word of the Lord is a burden to this place in general. Eating, drinking, building, planting, buying, felling—these divide or engross the greater part, and they have no leisure to attend to the ‘one thing needful’.³ My heart forebodes something—I know not what. It did before my late conversations with you, but more since. I fear for the nation. And I fear particularly for this Liverpool, which though but of mushroom growth, is for its size the most noted place in England for commerce, riches, and increase—and proportionably (I believe) for luxury, pride, and security. But blessed be God, I neither sorrow or fear as those who have no hope. Everything is under the direction of him to whom I have committed my all. And when the pilot of the ship is master of the storm, those who can trust his care may dismiss their own. This is my present sentiment. What impression a time of trouble, if it should actually come, would make on me, I dare not say. But I live on that promise, ‘As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.’⁴ Let the power of faith, and the spirit of prayer, be given suitable to the occasion, and then let difficulties and straits be ever so great or pressing. Though we are shut up on all sides we may say,

*Nec tellus nostrae, nec patet unda fugae.
Restat iter caeli, caelo tentabimus iter.*⁵

This is indeed a path which the vulture’s piercing eye hath not seen, and where the lion’s whelps cannot pursue, equally secure from the attempts of force and fraud. But I consider to whom I am writing and

¹This is John Newton’s first surviving letter to JW. The two had been acquainted since at least Apr. 22, 1757, when JW arrived in Liverpool for a week-long stay, preaching twice daily. Newton attended all of JW’s sermons (20 in total), and transcribed summaries of each in a manuscript notebook (now held at New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Archives, MA 731), pp. 60–76. Newton commented at the end of this section: ‘I desire to bless God on his behalf that I have seen him and heard him. The word has, I hope, done me good by his ministry and the remaining power of bigotry in me has received a blow which (I would hope) will keep me low hereafter. I would hope that since the Lord has taken so gracious and favourable a way to correct my ignorance and presumption I shall no more venture to censure and judge without hearing, or dare confine the Spirit of the Lord to those only who tally in all things with my sentiments.’ This letter comes shortly after a return visit by JW to Liverpool (Mar. 18–28, 1758), where Newton again attended his preaching and transcribed summaries (see his notebook, pp. 138–51). See transcripts in Grant Gordon, *An Instrument of Divine Grace: John Newton Encounters John Wesley* (forthcoming).

²I.e., a letter from an unidentified correspondent in Bolton, Lancashire, sent to JW via Newton.

³Luke 10:42.

⁴Deut. 33:25.

⁵Cf. Ovid, *Artis Amatoriae* (‘The Art of Love’), ii.36–37 (which ends ‘*temptabimus ire*’). A loose translation is provided interlinear in the letter: ‘Neither earth nor sea afford me any way to escape; the road to heaven only is open, let us try the road to heaven.’

forbear. Yet I am sure you will not rebuke me so severely as Hannibal did the philosopher who presumed to declaim on war in his presence.

The Lord has provided us a sweet retreat in the country, whither we propose soon to remove in the summer season. At present all is bloom and harmony there, and we promise ourselves much of that deep heart-felt satisfaction which arises from a grateful sense of the divine goodness in the common comforts of life. If it please the Lord to lengthen out the public tranquillity this year also, we cannot be more happily situated in externals. But I am thinking of Jonah 4:3–8. When the gourd is most flourishing the next hour may bring the destroying worm, the scorching sun, and the searching wind all at once. I would willingly prepare myself not only to part with the things I am apt to over-rate but to part them (perhaps) just at the time when they seem most necessary.

I hope what I said to Mr. [Francis] Okeley⁶ will not prevent me of a letter from you *propria manu*.⁷ If I had engaged you in a point of controversy, you would judge it your duty to reply something at large, to set me to rights (this I gather from your having said you wrote one of your longest letters to Mr. Whitefield). It is my happiness to love disputing as little as yourself, but I need every help in practical and experimental religion. I hope I still retain some traces both of your preaching and converse, but your letters would have the advantage of being always at hand. I am sensible in some measure of the value of your time, and my own small importance, therefore shall not expect line for line, or letter for letter. If you give me leave to write when I will, and let me hear from you when you can, the terms of our correspondence are settled.

I should be glad to be favoured with an account of any farther remarkable intelligence you may receive from the young woman at London.⁸ I am something sceptical in such cases, yet not so much as to slight the warning. Whatever has a tendency to stir me up to watchfulness and prayer is so far good to me. And as when an invasion is expected any person who should cry out 'The enemy! the enemy is coming!' would draw the attention (at least) of those who heard him, so it is with me. I have so fixed an apprehension of the judgments of God being just ready to break forth upon us that I am ready (perhaps too ready) to believe every thing that seems to forebode them. Our Lord reproves the Pharisees that they did not understand the signs of the times. The prophecies had limited the appearance of Messiah, by the words of Jacob and the weeks of Daniel, so precisely that it seems strange those who had these writings continually in their hands and their mouths could possibly mistake them. Yet so it was and so it may be now. The Scripture prophecies I believe can only be understood in their accomplishment, or by a manifestation⁹ from on high—and perhaps succeeding ages may wonder as much at our blindness as we do now at that of the Jews. If your friend Mr. [Imrie]¹⁰ is permitted to publish the ground of his very extraordinary discoveries, it is possible he may command our assent. Till then, or till some farther scene

⁶Newton spells 'Ockley'.

⁷'In your own hand'.

⁸See letter dated c. Mar. 19, 1758 above.

⁹A small segment of the letter is now missing where the preceding word would appear. 'Manifestation' has been written in on the letter; but *AM* uses the word 'revelation' instead.

¹⁰Newton wrote the last name, but it has been marked out, rendering it illegible. But his notebook diary (see fn. 1 above), in its entry for Mar. 23, 1758 (pp. 145–46), describes JW reading to Newton and others 'some letters from the Rev. Mr. Imrie of St. Mungo's near Dumfries, who has in hand a book on the explanation of scripture prophecies'. This would have included David Imrie, *A Letter from the Reverend Mr. David Imrie, Minister of the Gospel at St Mungo, in Annandale; To a Gentleman in the City of Edinburgh. Predicting the speedy Accomplishment of the great, awful and glorious Events which the Scriptures say are to be brought to pass in the Latter Times* (Edinburgh, 1755). A manuscript copy of this published letter, made by CW, survives in MARC, DDCW 1/51. In the *Letter* Imrie promises a longer study would be forthcoming soon (it never appeared). Newton's comment here suggests JW had met Imrie; JW never records such a meeting, but he had passed through Dumfries—about 10 mi from St. Mungo parish—on May 31, 1757 (see *Journal, Works*, 21:105).

appears, I must suspend my judgment. Yet I am far from rejecting him. For before the great and awful events we expect shall take place, I do believe the Lord will reveal to some or others of his servants what he is about to do.

Mrs. Newton¹¹ sends her cordial respects. We beg a place in your prayers that we may be enabled to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. For our parts, we cease not to make mention of you daily, entreating the Lord to multiply your gifts, graces, and usefulness, to maintain you against all his enemies, to make your last days your best days, that thousands may yet be added as seals to your ministry, to the increase of your joy and crown at the day of his appearing. *Sic optat vovetque*,¹²

Yours in the Lord,

J. Newton

Endorsement: by JW, 'ad. 21'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/236.¹³

¹¹Mary (née Catlett) Newton.

¹²'So wishes and desires.'

¹³Cf. previous published transcription in *AM* 20 (1797): 355–57.

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
April 25, 1758

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

I can excuse *you*, but shall never forgive myself for speaking to any what I thought amiss in you. After all, I still bless God for the trial on my own account, and have learned thus much at least, to pray for a right head, as well as a right heart.

The greatest means of increasing Christian affection is close conversation concerning the work of God on our own souls—speaking without reserve our trials, temptations, comforts, and accordingly pleading with God for each other. But this means I have not had with *you*, which makes me wonder at the nearness I have always found to you. But why should we remain on the surface of things, and not come close to the heart?

I am still 'free from design, or selfish aim'.¹ I do nothing, small or great, to please myself, in opposition to God or man. Nor does that self remain in me that could be pleased by so doing. Yet in a sound sense I please myself in all I do, for when God accepts, I am pleased. And I have always a *general* witness from God that my person and works are approved; at most times, a *particular* witness that all I feel and do pleases God. All I speak is not unreplicable; yet he condemns me not, but applies the sprinkled blood. I often speak foolishly (though never wickedly). But as I have forgiven everyone that trespasses against *me*, so God has forgiven my trespasses against him, and he doth not lay folly to my charge. O my God, let not *my* perfections conflict in those little particularities for which many are so strenuous, while they have that lion-like spirit which was not in the Lamb of God! But let my 'love, with softer pity joined, endure all things'; and at length,

Stand before the host of heaven confest,
For ever blessing, and for ever blest.²

By all my researches I cannot find that either pleasure or pain deaden my intercourse with God. But I have always found contention to have this effect, and am now pretty well cured of it. I can and will be trampled under foot of all, rather than contend.

I believe you will return in safety. However,

May we each hour improve,
To mourn for error past!
And live this short revolving day,
As if it were our last!³

And permit even *me* to entreat you, by all that is sacred, Give your whole heart to God. You well know private prayer, and frequent meditation on the greatness of eternal things, and the insignificance of all earthly enjoyments are the greatest helps thereto. O how I long for your full salvation! I can hardly be happy alone. Excuse whatever is amiss, and believe me to be,

Your child with much affection,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 667–68.

¹CW, 'Psalm 32', st. 2, *CPH* (1743), 70.

²Matthew Prior, 'Charity', included by JW in *MSP* (1744), 89.

³Cf. [CW?], 'A Morning Hymn', st. 5, *CPH* (1741), 51.

From the Rev. Martin Madan

Southampton-Row [London]

April 29, 1758

My Dear Sir,

I had your kind favour from Liverpool, and do heartily return you thanks for your very friendly advice. But I am quite at a loss to guess at the very officious person who fills your ears with strange, and I my add, untrue reports about your nearest and dearest friends. As to predestination and antinomianism, I don't know that any thing I ever preached, since I had the honour of being a minister, tended in the least that way. In regard to the first of these, I hold no other predestination than that eternal decree that 'all that believe shall be saved, and all that believe not shall be damned'. But how it comes to pass that some do believe, and others reject the counsel of God against themselves, are things too mighty and wonderful for me. I cannot attain unto them. But still, I by no means find any coldness towards those who are of a different judgment from myself. Blessed be God, I can love an holy Calvinist as well as an holy Lutheran. I can find nothing in the Bible by which I can be led to think they are not equally dear to the Lord Jesus; and if so, God forbid but that they should be equally dear to us. As to antinomianism, I abhor, detest, and abjure it from the bottom of my soul; and have made it my business in the most public manner to declare against it, and to warn all to fly from the preachers of it as from the doctrine of devils.

As to the advice you give me concerning levity, I thank you for it, and hope the Lord will enable me to lay it deeply to heart, and evermore give me to rejoice in him alone. But rejoice I must, for I have a dear Saviour that has loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood; yea, has honoured me with his commission to call other poor sinners to repentance. O sir, how glorious is this! Think you I can be sad while I experience this? O no—though at the same time my soul is humbled to the very dust before him that such a vile worm, unworthy even to name his blessed name, should be thus visited with his great salvation! Lord Jesus, make us all truly thankful!

By a letter from Everton to Mr. Daw, from Mr. [John] Berridge, rector of that place, we receive the blessed news of another gospel minister's being raised up in that dry desert. His words are these:

God has been pleased to bless and prosper my labours, in a very extraordinary manner, for these last three months. Since I preached the real gospel of Christ, seven people in my own parish have now received the gospel in the appointed way of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Nine or ten from Patton are in a very hopeful way, two at Gamlingay, and two at Eaton. There is now such a storm arising that I know not how it will end, or when. I bless God, my mind is easy and quiet. Thou, O God, wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. The tempest is now whistling about my ears, but it does not ruffle or discompose my heart. Some time ago I was told by several hands that twelve clergymen had combined together in order to oppose and prosecute me, if they could. My squire [Richard Astell (1717–77)] swears he will do my business; and last Lord's-day evening, when I came from church, he stopped me and called me the usual names of 'enthusiast', etc. Today I hear the squire has sent for such of his tenants as are disposed to hear the word of God, and has given them warning to leave their farms directly. He tells all what things he will do against me and, to show he is in earnest, swears by his Maker, *he will do it*.

Thus far are Mr. Berridge's own words. He adds a desire of being remembered at the throne of grace by all our Christian friends. And I trust, dear sir, that you amongst the rest won't forget him. I have read *Predestination Calmly Considered*, and think it unanswerable. I am, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate servant and son in the gospel of our blessed Jesus,

M. Madan

From Sarah Crosby

[London]
May 17, 1758

Very Dear and Much Honoured Sir,

Your propositions concerning Christian perfection are exactly agreeable to the sentiments of my heart.¹ Ever since God has wrought this work in me, I have daily prayed for pardon. I dare not deny the work of God in my soul. But O how thankful should I be (provided it were his will) that everyone should forget I had ever said or thought such a thing! That I might henceforward only love and serve his blessed will, till I silently breathed my soul into his hands! O pray for me that I may be ‘without any part *weak, earthly, or human!*’² I many times fear to speak what I feel, because there is so little discerned in me by others. My life is indeed hid with Christ in God. O that I may grow up in all things into him who is my head! I find it impossible to be displeased with any one for not believing me—and could I help it, I would not believe myself.

For some years past God has been showing me clearer and clearer how small the difference is between us and some of those who deny the attainableness of perfection. And it is because I have endeavoured to explain this to others that many have counted me a predestinarian. Indeed those predestinarians who are alive to God do not desire more than they³ have attained.

A few days ago, while by faith I entered into the Holiest through the blood of Jesus, and while in his light I saw light, how was I humbled before him that liveth forever and ever! But (all glory be unto his unmerited mercy!) I found innocence and a spark of real holiness. Will you not pray him to increase them? With tears of love I ask this favour of you. I acknowledge indeed, I am unworthy. And O that I was more deeply conscious of it! O how did my soul then fear and tremble at the thought of being known or esteemed by men! I was constrained to say, ‘O that I was clad with sackcloth and ashes, and hid in a den or cave of the earth! But thy will be done!’ This keeps my soul at rest in the midst of hurry.

I am, with all respect, dear sir,

Your affectionate child and servant,

S. C.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 668–69.

¹This may have been a draft of propositions that JW was preparing for the 1758 Conference with his preachers.

²Quoting JW’s letter to Sarah Ryan, Apr. 4, 1758 (Ryan and Crosby apparently shared with each other their letters from Wesley).

³Orig., ‘you’; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

From John Walsh

Knightsbridge
June 21, 1758

My Very Dear Father in Christ,

Since the more than Egyptian darkness was removed from my soul, I have not once written to you; supposing the many thousands of Israel would write more than well suits your leisure to peruse. But now I have some hopes of making you glad in a small degree by what I have to relate.

I was convinced about half a year ago that I had been too retentive of money. Bedford rose first in my thoughts, and when I had concluded what to offer there the Lord visited me with gladness, as at the sacrament or other means of grace, so that I doubted not it was his will I should proceed. Wherefore, May 24, I went to Bedford and found many had left off hearing because hogs were kept under the room. And Alderman [William] Parker's own nephew took care to have them fed (that the noise as well as the stench might interrupt his uncle) at the stated hour of preaching. I quickly proposed building a chapel by subscription (supposing none had mentioned it before me). Mr. Pearson, of Bedford, was glad to hear my proposal and said he should endeavour to help it forward. Alderman [Francis] Walker was very glad and no doubt will assist.¹ But as the society in Bedford is poor in general, little can be expected from it. For my own part, I intend to give thirty guineas.

While I was here, brother Parker told me of the Rev. Mr. [John] Berridge, who preaches the gospel at Everton, ten miles east of Bedford, to whom I went with brother Tansley on Friday, June 2. He rejoiced to find us of your society. He has read several of your works and greatly longs to see you.

He informed us his education was more pious than usual, wherefore he had never fell into gross sin of any kind, but studied to please the Lord from his infancy. He was early made curate and laboured, as he worded it, for twenty years to build a ladder up to heaven. But the Lord would not let this innocent man go down to the pit in his own righteousness. He read a hymn of your brother's and was convinced; but again sought to justify himself by works, till his trouble of soul increased and he asked knowledge of the Most High. Then he sat meditating and a solemn reverence fell upon him, while the Lord uttered these words, 'Cease from thine own works'. The Scriptures were at this instant laid open to his² understanding, and I believe his³ soul set at liberty. Though⁴ he counts himself not fully justified. But he rejoiced in God soon after, and being, like Mr. Pocock, to preach for another to a great congregation, he then first found, and with distrust and trembling employed, the talent of preaching the gospel extempore. What followed was much the same as in Mr. Pocock's case. He had many great friends and admirers before, who now turned enemies and persecutors. They attempted to deprive him of his living, but failed. They have nicknamed him the 'apostle of Clare-Hall', of which he is fellow. He meets little companies of his converts from several towns and villages, at his own house. He was once ashamed of the word 'Methodist', but takes it to himself now as freely as I do. The country seems to kindle round him.

O sir, your prayers have often been heard for me. Let me be remembered still. I trust that nothing but death shall cause me to discontinue the daily prayers offered up to God for you, by your

Unworthy son in the gospel,

J. W—h

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 103–05.

¹On William Parker and Francis Walker, see *Works*, 20:476 n. 23.

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

³Orig., 'his own'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

⁴Orig., 'But'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

From Ebenezer Blackwell

London
June 30, 1758

Dear Sir,

I have received your favour of the 5th instant. I have been much at Lewisham, so that I have had but little opportunity of hearing anything about Mrs. [Mary] Wesley¹ since she left London. But upon the receipt of your I went to enquire about your letters being opened, when Mr. G. told me that he had opened them, having a general order from you for the purpose, but that he read none that was particularly addressed to you.

Two or three days after you left London,² Mrs. Wesley brought me a letter of Sarah Crosby, which she gave you (if I remember right) on Sunday evening before you set out and which you left upon a chair in one of your rooms. The content of your letter I thought were very improper for any woman to write to you about Mrs. Wesley. I went to see Sarah Crosby, but she not being at home came to my house. I spoke my mind very freely. She at last owned she had done very wrong in writing such a letter and promised she would ask Mrs. Wesley's pardon, and solemnly declared she would never speak or write of Mrs. Wesley again to you. How far she has kept her promise you can best tell, for indeed I have not that high opinion of her which I know you have. She has, I know, wrote to you since and has received one or more letters from you. She is very imprudent. She shows your letters about and thereby gives great offence to many belonging to you. But whether this may be through jealousy or no, I won't determine. But yet I really think you should be very cautious in your writing to her, in not totally to avoid it.

Mrs. Wesley showed me your letter you sent her from Bedford.³ And the answer she returned you I had some hand in the framing, from which you will know my sentiments of your letter. She is now come to town full of grief and anger. I went to her and asked her about writing to you. She said she was now determined to more, and said she had by a letter to Mr. [Thomas] Walsh acquainted him with the reasons of it. What I can understand of them is that you generally send your letters to her under covers to other people, and she is particularly offended at your sending a letter to Sarah Ryan by Captain Dansey with direction to give it into her own hands and to inquire particularly after her health—and at the same [time] taking no notice of her [i.e., Wesley's wife] either by letter or the Captain's enquiry after her. Whether this is true in every particular, I shall take upon me to determine. But this I am likewise persuaded of, that you are not cautious enough in your writing to Sarah Ryan as well as Sarah Crosby. And I am afraid that you will sooner than you are aware of see the ill effects of it. For the letter to Sarah Ryan has, I am afraid, broke all hopes of a reconciliation between you. Mr. Jones and myself are most grieved. I showed him your letter to me. His answer, agreeable to my own sentiments, were that Mrs. Wesley had acted in many things exceeding wrong and was very much to blame on that account, and that you had not been so cautious as you ought to have been to avoid laying a stumbling block in her way, or in removing one once laid. So that you see, dear sir, we cannot quite agree with what you say of yourself therein.

O sir, I entreat you at all times to deal as freely with me as I have done with you, and indeed I will receive as I would have your receive mine—viz., as a mark of true friendship and esteem.

I heartily rejoice at the willingness of the Irish to hear the word and your success therein. I hope that many, very many, will have reason to bless God for his sending you among them.

I have spoke to your brother, who says he has wrote to you promising to do what he can in England for as long time as you shall think proper to stay in Ireland. He purposes setting out for Bristol on Monday morning by the stage coach.

¹In this and almost all following cases in this letter, person's names are giving only by initials. Since the identities of most are quite clear, they have been expanded in this transcript.

²JW left London for his regular preaching tour on Monday, Mar. 6, 1758.

³JW was in Bedford Mar. 9–10, 1758.

As to public affairs, God has done great things for us. He has stemmed the torrent of the proud and has given strength unto the weak. May we ever ascribe the glory to him, and think the king of Prussia is in a fair way of making peace on his own terms. When any is concluded on, I hope it will be a good and lasting one, that the Kingdom of our Lord may yet flourish more and more, though we have often seen that the blood of the martyrs have been to the growth of the church as rain to the new mown grass.

When the time comes, I shall be very glad to see you. But where ever you are, I pray God by his grace to strengthen you yet more and more, and bless you with an abundant success.

My wife and Mrs. [Hannah] Dewal desire to be most kindly remembered to you.

I am, dear sir,

Your very affectionate and most obedient servant.

I do not sign my name and wish that you had omitted putting yours, because your letter was by mistake at the post office sent to one whose name is pretty much like mine, who opened it and read it. Farewell.

Address: To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, / at Mr. Beauchamps / in Limerick / Ireland.

Source: Blackwell's copy for records, privately held (MARC, PLP 9/23/4, photocopy).⁴

⁴Transcription published previously in *WHS* 36 (1967): 77–79.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall¹

[Woolley]
c. August 1758

I was born at Woolley, near Barnsley, in Yorkshire, in the year 1732. I thought that I lived to the best of my knowledge till I was about eighteen, having always some measure of the fear of God, which kept me from outward sins and from being undutiful to my parents. But I had no great concern about heaven or hell. I then lived with a popish gentlewoman, who told me I was a heretic, and that no heretic could be saved. This threw me into much trouble and perplexity; which was afterwards increased by a Quaker, with whom I lived at Leeds, who was continually talking against the sacrament, against going to church, and against the ministers, whom I had always revered as the best of men. When I was about twenty, Mr. Murgatroyd began to read the *Homilies* in the church.² He read them every night that winter. I was deeply affected by some of them, particularly that on Good Friday! What is said there concerning the sufferings of our Saviour cut me to the heart. From that time my convictions grew deeper and deeper, till I was scarce fit for any business. I had hardly any natural understanding left, and no memory at all; so that if I went out to fetch anything, I had forgot it before I was halfway down the street. I then, by the advice of my parents, who were afraid I should be quite distracted, removed to York. Here I left off reading religious books, and used all means to make myself gay and easy. But I could not. For whenever I went to church, the Scriptures were as an arrow piercing my heart. So that I grew more and more uneasy, in spite of all that I could do. Finding no help in anything, I one day asked one of my neighbours what those people called Methodists were? And by a little persuasion was inclined to hear some of them preach. I went twice. The second time, William Shent was the preacher. When I looked at him, I was unusually affected. I thought, 'I wish that man would speak to me! I could tell him all that is in my heart.' Soon after, he did speak to me and I told him how I had been, and how I was. He said, 'Young woman, you have been stifling conviction. You have been resisting the Spirit of God. If you die as you are now, you will certainly go to hell.' I said, 'O Sir, do not say so! for I cannot bear it.' He added, 'But I have one word of comfort for you. God will not suffer you to die as you are. Continue to seek him in good earnest, and you will surely find him.' This was made a wonderful blessing to me, and shortly after I joined the society.

Yet I found no lasting comfort, but felt the burden of sin increase more and more, till I had no hope left. I fully expected to go to hell, and knew it was just; yet I continued constantly in prayer. Many strove to comfort me, but it was in vain. I could receive no comfort. Thus I remained for two or three months, till March 1752. Then, for two or three days, I was as in hell, full of anguish and bitterness of soul. On March 20th, being in a great agony, I was crying to God to have mercy upon me when I heard a voice (inwardly or outwardly I cannot tell), 'Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.'³ I could not believe it. I cried out, 'Me, Lord! It cannot be me!' But it was repeated again and again, it may be twenty times, till I could not but believe it. I was quite overwhelmed with peace and love, and was unspeakably happy. From that moment I never could doubt at all, nor did I ever lose the love I then received. In March 1753 I married. Worldly troubles followed, which damped me a little, and inclined me to peevishness, so that sometimes for one, sometimes for two days, I was under a kind of cloud, not having so free and open an intercourse with God as I usually had. This concerned me much, and I never could rest, till the clear light

¹Ruth Crowther (1728–78) was born and baptized in Woolley, Yorkshire in 1728 (contra her memory of 1732). She was converted in York in 1752, and married John Hall there in 1753. In 1757 she claimed the experience of entire sanctification. Ruth and JW carried on extensive correspondence between 1759 and 1762. In 1783 JW would correspond with her daughter Ruth. See Lyth, *Methodism in York*, 64, 69–71.

²Rev. John Murgatroyd (c. 1703–68) was curate of St. John's Chapel in Leeds, Old Ainstie.

³Acts 9:34.

returned. I was likewise concerned that there should be any peevishness or any sin in me, and longed to have it all taken away.

I had heard a great deal about Nicholas Manners, some believing what he said, and some disbelieving. In December 1756 I found means of talking with him. I asked if he was not troubled by sin, or the temptations of the devil? He said, 'No, not at all. I live as if there was no sin and no devil in the world.' He then gave me a particular account how God had dealt with his soul, which much increased my hope of perfect love, and my hunger and thirst after it.

In June last I went to Leeds, and in the way called upon Samuel Massey, at Seacroft.⁴ He wept over me, and said, 'O sister Hall, God has a great work to do in *you*!' His words pierced my heart, and melted me into tears, so that I could hardly speak. At the same time I was so filled with the love of God as I never had been before. And I felt no sin of any kind, so that I began to think I was fully delivered from it. I went and asked William Shent, 'Can anyone be thoroughly sanctified, and not know it?' He said 'Certainly none can. For if the change at justification be glorious, that of full sanctification must be much more glorious.' Then I resolved never to rest till I had as clear a witness of it as of my justification.

When I returned to York, John Fenwick came and preached entire sanctification clearly. This was food to my soul, which God applied to my exceeding comfort. All the summer I was continually happy, and full of the love of God. Yet I had not that witness in myself, which I longed for and expected daily.

One morning in July, John Johnson, in preaching said, 'Before you can be entirely holy, it is absolutely needful that you should be convinced of your unholiness.' Immediately I felt an unspeakable conviction of the holiness of God, and the unholiness of my heart. For about eight days I felt eternal things still nearer and nearer to me. I was full of hope and fear and strong desire, and of uncommon, violent temptations. Then I read over the latter part of the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, and saw the vast height and depth of the promise, which strengthened me exceedingly.

On Thursday, July 28, I was musing by myself and saying in my heart, 'Lord Jesus! what is it I would not part with for thy sake?' I thought, one by one, of my husband, my child, and all things I loved best. And I found they were so little! They were nothing! I said, 'Lord, I give thee all!' Immediately I heard as it were a voice, saying in my inmost soul, 'Stand thou fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made thee free.'⁵ I felt all evil, all fear, all darkness removed, and only fulness of light and love. I felt, and have done from that hour, an inexpressible oneness with God—such an union of nature with him as it is impossible to describe. At the same time I felt violent pain in my body, as if it would burst asunder. But the joy overpowered it, for I found God making his abode in me. I have never found any decay since, but a continual increase in the knowledge and love of God. Three months after, I felt those words applied to my soul in a manner I cannot express, 'They that trust in the Lord, shall be even as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but standeth fast forever.'⁶ From that time I have been assured I shall not be removed. I stand fast in the Lord. I know he will never depart from me, nor shall I ever depart from him. Many times I know not what to ask for more, for I want nothing. I have Christ; I have all. But yet I do ask. I am always praying or giving thanks, for the Lord is always before me.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 477–80.

⁴See the account of Massey in the letter of J. J. to JW of Oct. 31, 1761.

⁵Cf. Gal. 5:1.

⁶Ps. 125:1 (BCP).

From James Deaves¹

Castlebar
August 25, 1758

My Very Dear and Reverend Sir,

When your letter came to Limerick I was dangerously ill, but the Lord suddenly restored me. When I was able I set forward for this place, according to your direction. In my way I stayed a few days at Aughrim,² where I was well employed in reconciling the brethren who were at odds and in danger of tearing the society to pieces. Here are some things which I hope will be removed. I fear there is a want of discipline in the whole rounds. There are some precious souls here, and some tares.

There is a revival of the work at Birr. Some few have lately joined, and some have tasted of the love of God.

When I left brother [Thomas] Walsh he was but very poorly, having been for a few days worse than usual. He had some thoughts of going to Athlone, or brother Charles³ and I of staying in the round, to have an opportunity of being often with him. He has been a blessing to me. I want to be a new creature, to love God with all my heart. I can't be happy I find without it. Pray for me dear sir. I hope you are thoroughly recovered, and that God has blessed the meeting of the preachers.

I am, most respected and dear sir,

Your greatly obliged and obedient son,

James Deaves

P. S. As I know it will cause you to rejoice at the good tidings, I will just send you a copy of a letter from a clergyman in Loughrea⁴ (seven miles from Aughrim).⁵ He is but lately come from England, and has parted with his race horses, hounds, etc., and has made much noise in this province.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 105–06.

¹James Deaves appears in the *Minutes* as a travelling preacher first in 1753 (*Works*, 10:267), and remains listed through 1767 (10:344). He served mainly in Ireland.

²Spelled 'Aghrim' in *AM*; is Aughrim, Co. Galway.

³Joseph Charles of Drumcree was converted by JW's preaching in 1749, and served as a local preacher in later years. See JW, *Journal*, May 7, 1749, *Works*, 20:271; and July 17, 1756, 21:69.

⁴Spelled 'Longrea' in *AM*, but in his letter to JW on Aug. 21 the following year Walter Shirley spells it correctly.

⁵The letter is from the Rev. Walter Shirley (apparently to Deaves), and is reproduced in *AM* 3 (1780), 106–07. This letter led to correspondence between JW and Shirley, beginning at least by Aug. 1759.

‘John Wesley’ to the Printer of the *Leedes Intelligencer*¹

c. August 27, 1758

Sir,

I desire you'll please to insert the following lines in your *Intelligencer*, and you'll oblige
Your humble servant,

J. W.

The *Expostulatory Letter*² with remarks on my *Address to the Clergy*, which I received a few days since, savours more of impertinent curiosity than of the ardent desire all true Christians have to be rightly instructed. But to remove all stumbling blocks as much as possible, I take this opportunity to inform, first my own hearers and next the adversaries to truth and godliness, that my *Address* was directed to my brethren, the clergy who were sent according to the primitive, uninterrupted constitution (which I take to be an episcopal ordination, as by law established in England), and that it no way concerns those itinerant preachers, or rather exhorters, that travel by my directions. This explanation did not seem necessary to me till now that I find doubts arise, for I could not imagine that any man could think that I am so grossly ignorant as to suppose that ignorant, illiterate, uninspired laymen are the clergy. No, these men were never farther commissioned by me but to remember the doctrines I preached and repeat the same to their brethren when occasion offered, as the father of a family reminds his household of the sermon he heard preached at church—and I never knew one deemed a clergyman for doing so. I own, with grief, that I have been often imposed on by wolves in sheep's clothing, but I have always meant well. The many enormities committed by these hypocrites gave me great trouble, but how could I avoid it? I had no power to punish, and for fear of scandal I concealed (though with an aching heart) their crimes and absurdities, hoping that time may reclaim them. Whenever I acted otherwise, they flew in my face, set up for themselves, and led numbers into greater errors. I have been so ill used by false brethren that, notwithstanding the great sums computed by some to be received by me from the contribution of the charitable and generous, and by my own labour in composing, translating, etc., I am often hard set to live, so much does the extravagance and deceit of these impostors draw from me. And what makes my case more deplorable is that I must still support them, or let a building tumble down I took so much pains to raise. And if I entirely withdrew, instead of one schism, of which I am accused to be the author, an hundred would immediately ensue. And I think if my very enemies consider my case in this light, they must own [that] in my present situation I cannot do better than continue for some time to act as I have done hitherto. But for my own part, my most earnest desire is to see Christ's church so united that no other distinction should be between us but to endeavour to outdo one another in faith, hope, and charity; and that our utmost care should be to fulfill our part of the Old and New Covenant, as much as in our power, by that portion of grace bestowed on us by God, through the merit of the passion of Jesus Christ our Redeemer. And on these terms, we can't doubt the full accomplishment of the many promises made by him that can't deceive, nor be deceived, to all those that love him and keep his commandments.

Source: published transcription; *Leedes Intelligencer* (Aug. 29, 1758), p. 1.

¹This letter is printed as if from John Wesley (and apparently assumed as genuine by the publisher), but JW replied in a letter dated Sept. 13, 1758 disavowing it.

²[Richard Fawcett], *An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wesley, occasioned by his 'Address to the Clergy'* (London: J. Wilkie, 1757). This *Letter* was also sold by Griffith Wright, the printer of the *Leedes Intelligencer*.

From the Rev. John Newton

Liverpool
August 29, 1758

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I saw yesterday a letter from you to the late Mr. Whitfield,¹ which came to the hands of another person of that name who, I believe, could hardly understand or relish it. I was sorry to find you were indisposed at the time of writing it. But as we have heard nothing to the contrary, I would hope this may find you in health and at Bristol.

With us, through mercy, all is well and easy, as when you left us, and every thing about us in much the same situation. The most remarkable occurrence is the death of our good friend Mr. Peter Whitfield. He was taken suddenly in the street about the beginning of June, and died after three weeks illness. The last fortnight he was quite exhausted, could not bear company, nor speak much to be understood. When he had been ill a week he sent for me, rallied his strength and spirits, and conversed for near two hours in a way much to my satisfaction. Upon the whole though, he complained of a cloud upon his mind, and that he did not find those consolations which, he said, he had long thought highly desirable. But I was told that this seemed to be removed, and he expressed a comfortable hope, and an entire resignation and willingness to be gone. I hope the death-bed proved a hot-bed to him—as I doubt not it has to many, who have ripened more in an hour near the verge of life than in years before.

I am now informed of your arrival at Bristol, which I much rejoice in, and desire to praise the Lord for. I hope he has yet much service for you to do. And till your work is done, I know your life is secured. When it is fully accomplished, I think I can give my consent that you should be released from hence and removed to that kingdom of love, and joy, and peace, where none of the evils of mortality can find admittance. And there I trust in the Lord to meet you, when my little sphere of life is also filled up. Though now we groan earnestly, being burdened, but when we once arrive at the haven of rest we shall not think we suffered too much, or waited too long, for the accomplishment of the glorious promises, in the prospect of which we are already enabled to rejoice with unspeakable joy. If it were possible for repentance to enter into heaven, it would surely be not so much for our actual sins in the body (since in our deliverance from these, and their consequences, the power of divine grace, and the rich efficacy of redeeming blood is more remarkably displayed) but rather to think of the poor, low views we formed of our salvation while in this lower world, and the little we did for our gracious God to show our gratitude for his wonderful love. And if such a laborious life as yours may leave room for this reflection, what must be said of mine? If those who have been most faithful, and been made most useful, will then see cause to be ashamed of their best services, how striking must my disingenuity appear—who, though I experienced an awakening and conversion almost as singular as the apostle Paul, yet have been and still continue a mere cumberer of the ground. It is some consolation to me to think that, though I am indeed one of the meanest and most insignificant of the servants of the Lord here, when once I arrive at the heavenly Jerusalem not one among the general assembly of the redeemed will more illustrate the riches of the divine forbearance and mercy than myself. I shall for ever be a striking and peculiar proof of that faithful saying, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners.'² I have read that when the Doge of Genoa was constrained to make a submission to Louis the XIV in the name of the republic, when he had been shown all the splendour and pageantry of that Nebuchadnezzar at Versailles he was asked what he thought the most extraordinary thing he had taken notice of. He replied, '*To see myself here.*' In a far different sense I may then use his words. Surely (except the immediate beholding the glories of God and the Lamb) nothing will appear more wonderful in the court of heaven than that such a one as I should find

¹Spelled 'Whitefield' in *AM*. This was Peter Whitfield, author of *A Dissertation on the Hebrew Vowel-Points* (Liverpool, 1748). JW visited Whitfield when he was in Liverpool on Apr. 25, 1757 (see *JW, Journal, Works*, 21:94).

²Cf. 1 Tim. 1:15.

admittance!

I wait your directions where to send you that paper you left with me, and hope it will not be long, for it will give me a double satisfaction to hear of your welfare *propria manu*.³ Mrs. [Mary] Newton concurs with me in tendering our sincerest respects, and requesting a remembrance in your prayers and a share in your correspondence. I pray the great Lord of the harvest to manifest himself to you and for you, till the important hour when mortality shall be swallowed up in life. I am, with respect and affection, reverend sir,

Your obliged friend and servant,

J. Newton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 457–58.

³'In your own hand'.

From the Rev. John Hodges

Wenvoe
September 4, 1758

Dear Sir,

I had not time while I was with you at Cardiff to read over the *Answer* which you put into my hands.¹ But in what I read of it there appeared to be somewhat of a harsh spirit, which I think I have observed in some of your other controversial writings.

Whenever any one brings a false or railing accusation against me, if I can but possess my soul in patience and continue to love him not a whit less for it, whatever harm he may have done himself, he hath done me none at all. For I count that nothing harms me but what disturbs the peace of my mind, or causeth me to lose love, or some way or other dispossesses me of myself.

If on the occasion I find wrath or bitterness stirring in me, as soon as I can recollect and recover myself, I see that which happened was good to prove and show me what I have in my heart. And I cannot think that I am in a temper or disposition either to speak or write to the man that hath done me this service, till all the gall of bitterness subsides and a better spirit can have room to arise.

If a man be angry at me without a cause, and asperses or treats me ill, should I in order to justify myself say or do anything to provoke him more? Is this a likely way to win my brother? And ought not that to be the great end one should aim at? Will saying or writing anything that may grate upon and gall him be a likely means to accomplish it? Rather than *burn his fingers*, would it not be much better to heap coals of fire upon his head and to pull him down (if possible) with kindness and love? Would not such a spirit and such treatment be the most likely way to gain his heart and bring him to a better mind, and at the same time recommend Methodism in the best manner to the world?

I shall be glad to hear from you whenever you can find leisure to write to
Your affectionate friend,

John Hodges

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 107–08.

¹JW was in Cardiff in late Aug. 1758, and apparently left Hodges a copy of *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"'* (*Works*, 13:345–56).

From Augustus Montague Toplady¹

Dublin
September 13, 1758

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your satisfactory letter, particularly for your kind caution against trifling company.² I do not visit three persons in the whole college, except one or two of the fellows. It is indeed Sodom epitomized—for I do not believe there is one that fears God in it, from top to bottom.

Your remarks on Mr. [James] Hervey's style are too just. And I think a writer would be much to blame for imitating it, or indeed the style of any other. For if he has abilities of his own, he ought to use them; if he has not, he would be inexcusable for writing at all. I believe Mr. Hervey's mentioning the active (exclusive from the passive) obedience of Christ is rather a casual than intentional omission. But an author cannot be careful enough how he expresses himself on a point of so much importance. I have long been convinced that self-righteousness and antinomianism are equally pernicious, and that to insist on the imputation of Christ's righteousness, as alone requisite to salvation, is only strewing the way to hell with flowers. I have myself known some make shipwreck of faith, and love, and a good conscience on this specious quicksand. The doctrine seems to set the crown so entirely on Christ's head, and is at the same time so very agreeable to corrupt nature, that it would make universal havoc in the church, if the almighty power of God did not preserve his children from the infection and keep many from ever thinking about it. My heart's desire and prayer is that Christ would grant me to keep close to him, with meek, simple, steady, love. And though I have not at all times an equal feeling of his presence, he has nevertheless, hitherto, enabled me always, even in the darkest hour (of which I have had many), to retain my hope and reliance on him.

I think of late the studies I am unavoidably engaged in have done me some harm—I mean, have abated that fervency with which I used to approach the throne of grace, and this by insensible degrees. My chariot wheels have drove heavily for a month past, but I have reason to hope that I am recovering my usual joy. I can attribute its declension to nothing else but assiduous application to my college business, which prevents my attending the preaching so often as I would. I depend on your candour to excuse this trouble given you, by reverend sir,

Your most dutiful, humble servant,

Augustus Toplady

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 54–55.

¹Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady (1740–78) was converted in 1755 by a sermon preached at Coolmain by James Morris, one of JW's preachers. A couple of years later he and JW began to correspond. Toplady soon aligned with the Calvinist Methodists, pursued his BA at Trinity College Dublin (BA, 1760), and become a strong critic of JW's Arminianism.

²This letter is apparently not extant.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
September 26, 1758

Reverend and Dear Sir,

It is true, sir, I do stand on slippery ground, and have done ever since I have been here.¹ But the mighty power of God hath kept me, and will keep me. Nothing but believing it is his will could make me content to stay. But I have and will give my soul, body, and spirit a sacrifice to God. I desire to live for no other end. O help me by your prayers! I am,

Your affectionate child,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 603.

From Sarah Ryan

Bristol
September 28, 1758

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As to my conduct, I doubt not but there is room to mend. I shall know better when you tell me the particulars. Surely I will use no disguise or reserve to *you*. I make a conscience of this to all.

At present the way appears clear. The Lord give me the matter that will be profitable! All my fear is that I shall not bring you nearer to God. Dear sir, deal plainly with me. If my writing is of no profit, will you let me know?

Tried faith is the best faith! Since I have been here, what have I gone through by men and devils? Truly I am a spark in the ocean. And what am I likely to go through! But I am not careful concerning this. I stand now. It is enough! I am,

Your affectionate child,

S. R.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 665–66.

¹JW was currently in Bristol, so this and the next note may be responses to oral comments.

From Sarah Ryan

[Bristol]
November 12, [1758]

Reverend Sir,

I will answer your questions with plainness and uprightness of heart.¹ 1. God *did* testify that he had saved me from *all* sin when he said, 'I will sweep away thy sin with the bosom of destruction.' I *felt* and *believed*, and the evidence remained and is more clear than ever. God did also testify to me that I should *never offend him more* when he said, 'Neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor to come shall ever separate thy soul from me *for one moment* in time or to all eternity.'² 2. I have felt temptations to pride, anger, etc., from without, but my heart never gave way to them. When I am tempted, sometimes I rejoice exceedingly, sometimes bear it with resignation, and say, 'Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but thine be done.'³ I find it a great cross to do nothing but be waited on when my heart is enlarged to do and wait upon others. But in this also I say, 'Thy will be done.' 3. I do live by faith *every moment*. I am so united to him that he is the *life of my life*, and the *soul* of my soul. Christ *does* tell me and I feel, and I feel it every moment, beyond the possibility of a doubt. 4. Some times my thoughts are employed on outward things, but when I reflect, I *always see God* without a cloud; and however employed, I have always an uninterrupted communion with him. *I do pray without ceasing*, for my soul is always in a spirit of sacrifice and desire. I do in everything give thanks, though sometimes more joyfully; but

All's alike to me, for I
In my Lord do live and die.⁴

I find no possibility of choosing or refusing anything but what my Lord doth choose or refuse. Nothing gives me pleasure or pain but what leads to or from God.

This is the state of my soul now, and has been ever since God changed my heart. I will not use any disguise before my God, in whose presence I now am. But O, the many weaknesses I find! There is no day that I am not ashamed before the Lord, for this word or look, or that action. But shall 'not the little leaven leaven the whole lump'?⁵ It surely shall, if God is true!

Often have I thought of those words, 'without spot or wrinkle'.⁶ And in a moment God showed me he *would* not behold any spot in *me*, but as a tender father looks at the intention of his child to please, so doth he look on my soul. But (as you said one night) there is greater grace than to be emptied of sin. O God, *my soul for all thy image cries*.

O sir, I do (and ever did) consider when I am writing, I am in the presence of God. I do not consider the consequence, for when I did I left off writing. O eternity, eternity! Could we live in a constant sense of it, and allow ourselves in any desire but to be holy? The Lord bring it nearer and nearer to us! O that we may be workers together with God! I find mighty faith will do what prayers, watchings, fastings will not do. But surely we must pray for that, or we shall not have it.

By this shall I know it right to write to you, by your being free and trusting me as *before*. O sir, what are all creatures, all comforts, all means, but as they bring us near to God? There is coming shortly a dying hour. Then all these will feel nothing! Lord, let me despise all things that do not answer this end!

¹Replying to JW's letter of Nov. 4.

²Cf. Rom. 8:38–39.

³Matt. 26:42 and parallels.

⁴A personalized adaptation of CW, Hymn 94, st. 8, *HSP* (1749), 2:162.

⁵Cf. 1 Cor. 5:6.

⁶Eph. 5:27.

I believe God intended you should think as the hymn speaks: 'But we may frustrate his design.'
May your Father and my Father keep us to that day! O pray for and bear with
[No signature appears on the page]

Source: MARC, MAM JW 4/63, pp. 9–10 (JW's transcribed copy).

From Michael Fenwick¹

Bristol
November 28, 1758

Reverend Sir,

I wrote my last of this day sennight. I cannot say what letters she got.² But those are her own words: 'But to say in one word, I have seen all the letters.' Nevertheless I remain Thomas-like as with regards to her assertion. She hath Sarah Ryan's letter, and I told Sarah Ryan, for it was easy enough for me to spell it out. She was then satisfied that it was even so. Pray, sir, send your poor thing the copy. I told her that still it appeared to me that God had chosen her as a blessing to you in writing to you. She then told [me] that she will continue to answer your every letter that comes.

I can venture my life in that of sister Maxfield's case. She sends mine to Sarah Ryan or sister [Mary] Clarke immediately with prudent care, and none are to have them but they only. So [send it] to Mr. Wigginton's in Baldwin Street. There are two Wiggintons on the back. I had like to have lost a frank by it.

It will be for the glory of God your moving the person mentioned in my last. Your talking with honest Francis three or four times will do it I know. Our women here will brace up his drooping spirits.

I look upon it to be my indispensable duty not only to love, honour, and respect you, but to fear you to. It appears in that of God's having joined them together. Therefore fear they should M[ichael] F[enwick] whenever your rules are broken. If the work of God be genuine in the soul of your servant in some little degree, you may hope for his ceasing in that of his being a coxcomb. Last Saturday Mrs. Authers appointed me to spend the evening with her, at which time she assured me that she would speak with Mr. Authers, namely to let our mare run all the winter in their ground. On Thursday Sarah Ryan and Michael are to dine with them. Then we have our answer. I have been much with them both. I got him last time to pray with us. May I not still hope for him?

Sir, for God's sake send us one of the best immediately of those three you mention, for poor brother Baynes is not cut out for a school master but for a bookbinder.³ He browbeats but does not inform the judgment of the boys in things. The parents have now waited a reasonable time. Brother [William] Hitchens is here. J. Jones⁴ is a good preacher, but should (I think) never be entrusted with any thing of importance. Only look in his face and you may see in that God has not chosen him as a person of judgment. His misconduct, therefore, should be an eternal warning never more to lay matters of moment on him. James Morgan has more sense a good deal.

I said in my own mind that the letters had been left in the bookroom, by which means she had got them, and told Sarah Ryan so. I shall take your hint sir. I wish she would show you mine wrote last Saturday. Since I wrote you last, by an unforeseen providence, I was kept four night in Bristol. If you require to know the cause, I will let you know. But I shall I believe never wait or do so again in haste.

Will you, sir, permit me to go through with John Haughton? Or connive at me? I wait your judgment. I am stating the case of Billy and Betty for you. We may be of great use to you and yours in the way of the books. Soon I shall inform you of those offices in which I am employed in this present

¹In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, in another hand, is written: 'A copy of a letter to Mr. Wesley, wrote by M[ichael] F[enwick] to Thomas Maxfield'; that is, the letter is from Fenwick to JW, but sent to Maxfield for him to deliver to JW. This description fits the content of the letter. A later hand (not Wesley!), apparently misunderstanding the notation, endorsed the back page as 'Rev'd. Mr. Maxfield / to John Wesley.'

²Likely referring to JW's wife Mary.

³William Baynes (d. 1778) served as a master at Kingswood School for several years (see JW, *Journal*, Oct. 25, 1757, *Works*, 21:129). He obtained ordination in 1771–72 and moved to assist JW as a curate at the chapels in London (see JW, *Journal*, Dec. 27, 1777, *Works*, 23:73).

⁴Likely Joseph Jones, who would soon leave the itinerant ministry.

generation. I know you will come soon to see us here. John Nelson hath been a great blessing in those parts. A house is kept for J. Jones, eating every day his head off here and absolutely is to do nothing. Pray sir, show your authority.

My blessing be with you. I beg, sir, you will order sister MacDonald⁵ to send my things. I am weary of asking for them. I hope to send all yours this week. I hear Mr. [Francis] Okeley speaks against you. If so please let me know, and fear not, Michael Fenwick will make him smoke.

NOTE: On the bottom margin of page 2 is written in a different hand: 'May the Lord direct my dear friend Mr. O[keley?] to make the best use of these unhappy affairs that may be most for the glory of God and our peace.'

On page 3, in the same hand is written as an address: 'To Mr O[keley?]. Directed to the Revd. Mr. Maxfield, because it should not fall into my hands, but as Mr. Wesley put it into a drawer that had no lock I took it.'

Frank Baker identified the hand responsible for both of these additions as that of Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/43.

⁵Elizabeth MacDonald appears as a married woman throughout the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). She was a servant at the Foundery for several years and was buried June 30, 1778 in Bunhill Fields cemetery.

From Sarah Ryan

[Bristol]
c. December 1758¹

Reverend Sir,

I received your profitable letter. It came open to me. I suppose you intended *it* as teaching the accusation. I will simply and uprightly write to you.

I believe *you* will be glad to find me without faults and blameless now sir. And as touching pride, I am not conscious of any in my heart as to my looks. I do labour against it where I think it may appear.

As to my behaviour, I make it my study if I could please everyone I have to do with. But I find I cannot when one hath told me 'here you did not speak right' or 'there you did not look right', etc. I would simply acknowledge it and go to God, and labour with him in prayer that he would give me so to believe as I should give no offense to them. But I found it was impossible. I gave the fruitless contest over and turned my eye to *God*. Then, as often before, he would say in my inmost soul 'I will believe no lies'. In thee *there[fore]* I rest.

As to hearing of myself praised, or prais[ing] myself, I can say I do not delight in it. For when any one doth do it, my soul naturally gives it to my God, from whom all good gifts come. As an instance, I do not like the honour that comes from men on high; and when your brother told me that I had lost many friends by —,² and I had gotten many, my soul was struck in an instant with the insufficiency of all creature comfort to make me happy, and I was ready to die before the Lord. *Could* only say, 'no human comfort, Lord, I want. O let them leave me to my God alone.' I found a desire in my heart that not only Charles, the servants[?], but all shall think of me as Mrs. Wesley doth.³

Next, as to defending of *myself*, it has been my constant care to avoid it. Lately one or two friends hath bid me take up the *cross*, and do it for the honour of Christ. But else I never should. O my Lord, sufficiently press me as to my want of love to my neighbour. I do feel I love all as my own soul. When I have seen or heard Mrs. Wesley and others[?] speaking things of me what was not true, I then said 'now Lord do I love them as my own soul'. I found I did and only wished to have an opportunity to let them see it.

I think I can say I have not reacted[?] over him for evil, but had a desire to convince him that he was deceived. I did not mean I had no hope for his soul, but he would not see things in a proper light, because we could not speak things to him without greater evil[?].⁴

As to sister Rigby, I do love her and have loved her as my own soul. And to try myself have more prayed for her than ever, and often said to God, 'O that I might be found at her feet in the day of God'; likewise, *all*. I did tell your brother that sisters Rigby and Spring was often w—. But *my* end was this, I thought he had so much influence over them that a kind conversation would keep their mind from being hurt. That was all my end. And as to my being caste down or dispirited, *I* think I had not the appearance of it, but I do not see with other's eyes.

Without disguise, my soul was borne on eagle's wings for most part of the time. A little time before you went away I considered⁵ all God's dealings with me since I have been here. Often did I say 'thy judgments are a great deep'. God hath same ends to answer in all this, and I know he did all things right, and will. But I soon did say, 'My God, if thou hath no other end to answer than to punish me for my former sins, it is enough.' Often I have thought, can I go to heaven with no more outward punishment then I have had. Surely by no other trial than those could I see the *justice* of God, for I read all my sins in

¹The manuscript copy of the letter is not dated, but the events described would fit late 1758 or early 1759.

²Ryan draws the line in the manuscript, not specifying the cause.

³I.e., that all would despise her.

⁴The reference is likely to CW.

⁵Orig., 'considering'.

my punishment, and my soul adores his justice, purity, and holiness. Though he hath *for ever* forgave me my sins, he doth punish them by ———. Lord, thy blessed will be done. Why should a living man complain for the punishment of his sins?

Here, sir, I acknowledge I have sometimes spoken useless words or impertinent ones. Sometimes I do not appear to have a deep sense of God. Neither have I bore[?] always as him whom my soul loveth. This I wonder at, that these things should remain, and often have acknowledged that God might justly send me to hell for them. But [I] can say at all times

Still, O God, the blood is warm,
Cover'd with the blood I am;
Find a part it doth not arm,
And strike the sinner there!⁶

As to any believer in company, I do labour to be all of a piece. Wherever I go I know the end of my going into company at all is to get good and do good. I find more freedom some places than others. For instance, I can speak more free to you than [to] your brother. There is something in him that holds me at a distance. Many a time my heart is all on fire to speak, but [I] do not. I would not affect nothing, but be ever all of a piece. O Lord, when shall I be without spot or wrinkle?

These lessons are of great use to me. I would be glad you will let me know the rest, if maybe I shall have an opportunity of mending; which if I don't know them all, I cannot. I do not wonder if the reports shall make you almost stare at me. O sir, God is on my right hand, and *I have not moved*.⁷ I will be honest to you [?]. Eternity is at hand, the judge is at the door. I soon shall give an account to HIM.

As to the change I thought I had, I find I have and dare not doubt for one moment. But by all am more sure and more blessed. Ah my dear [?] free grace, free grace alone. O if my God had not encompassed me with the walls of salvation, I have had enough to sink me to the depths of despair.

And if you will bear with my [?] letter, as my duty I must obey you, but I have no desire of justifying myself. You are on mind, blessed be the Lord, and have power to pray through all. Will it be amiss to write how you have found your soul in all this prayer? After you experience[?], O remember in a check[?]. We have many blessings, O sir. Let us pray much. The prize is before you. God will remove the hindrances out of the way, if *you* will let *him*. Pray, don't forget

Your unworthy child and servant

[Sarah Ryan]

My body grows weaker and weaker. I find a pleasing thought I shall shortly go to the God I love.

Source: MARC, MAW FL/6/9/22a; apparently Ryan's copy of the letter that was sent.

⁶Cf. CW, Hymn 122, st. 3, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745), 104.

⁷Cf. Ps. 16:8.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 29, 1758]

Two Johns are now remarkable to the world in regard of truth. On the side of truth, John, whose surname Baptist signifies the renewer, being the only man who teaches and publishes that Truth is the only true God universal Principle, and sovereign Master, who made himself personally visible to the world, under the name and figure of Jesus Christ in order to give them the greatest proof and example of love, which could be proposed and understood (John 17:23, 3:16–18). On the side contrary to truth, another John, whose surname Wesley has no signification, being the only man who dared to publish that truth is not God at all, no more than the sun; thus building upon another God and principle than Truth, and upon misapplied and misunderstood words, the ruinous edifice of all his learning and doctrines and practices. Now let the three people in the world—true believers, Jews, and Christians—healed at last of their universal blindness (Isa. 60:1–2; John 9:4) judge, and choose between the God of John Baptist and the God of John Wesley.

Source: Public Advertiser (Dec. 29, 1758), p. 2.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

c. 1758–59

[[I am glad you f[ai]l in an hurry as I do. There is nothing I more dread, or take more pains to avoid; neither am I in an hurry three times in a year. Perhaps I have judged you according to appearance as you have me. The innumerable errata in our writings look as if you did not allow them in view for correction. Your busyness would hurry me to death.

[[Now we are on this subject, I will tell you some of my ways to avoid an hurry. And first, I watch against anger (which is hurry all afire) and therefore keep out of the way of every person who would urge me to it. I shun all boasters, forbearing as well as poss[ible] contested people, and study to be quiet. Second, I very seldom take notice of an injury, finding it so much easier and safer]] *dissimulare injurias*,¹ and *sinere mundum vadere ut vult vadere*.² [[Where I cannot be innocently silent, I expostulate and even vindicate myself. Third, I take so much of the worries as I can do easily and thoroughly, and utterly give up the hope of human approbation. Fourth, I spend much time at home, lest that should be my case, 'Other vineyards have I kept, but my own vineyard have I not kept.'³]]

[... some partial letters at top of reverse side show part of sheet is torn away, some text missing]
[[two evils the least, mainly to offend you by my hurry, of seeming rudeness, rather than by refusing anything which you should ask.]]

Endorsement: 'No 10'.

Source: CW shorthand transcription; MARC, DDCW 7/112, no. 10.

¹'Concealing injuries'.

²'Letting the world go as it wills to go'.

³See Song of Sol. 1:6.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

c. 1758–59

[[Your second instance of my hurrying is 'setting out at an hour or two warning for a questionable journey'. I do not remember to have done this except in case of absolute necessity, such as my famous journey to put your wife in a madhouse; and twice or thrice to meet you by appointment; and once to see you before you died. But your mistake arises from hence, you judge of me by yourself. You usually give many days warning of your intended journey. I purposely decline doing so. But I know myself many days before, when I design to set out. And very often]] *ego solas meorum sum meus*.¹ Here you mistake by judging according to appearance.

[[‘Reading prayers too fast’. Maybe, but owing to other causes. I was straitened for them by grasping at too much; and to avoid an hurry, or the appearance of it, shall make it a rule to give the sacrament only at one chapel. But for this last year I have endeavoured to read better.]]

Endorsement: ‘No 11’.

Source: CW shorthand transcription; MARC, DDCW 7/112, no. 11.

¹‘I am by myself’ or ‘I am my only company.’

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 6, 1759]

In one man, whose name is John-Baptist (John 1:6–8), the world acknowledge now and confess Truth to be the only true universal Principle, and sovereign Master their God, that is the object of their love and hope, and confidence, the gift and the giver of their life (1 Esdras 4:33–41; 1 John 1:1–6). The spirit enemy of Truth, and of the world, accuser day and night of our brethren (Rev. 12:9–10) is struck dumb, and vanquished in another man, whose name is John Wesley, famous till now for his readiness to publish, even to a penny, answers to any propositions or reasonings against his doctrines and practices but those objected by John-Baptist. The almighty word Truth is the only absolute substantive incommunicable name of Jesus-Christ, the God of John-Baptist; the two words Jesus Christ are adjunctive figurative names of Truth, the same God of the same John-Baptist (Ps. 72:17–19).

Source: Public Advertiser (Jan. 6, 1759), p. 2.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]
January 10, 1759

Dear Sir,

The kind hand of providence has graciously brought us to the beginning of another year. O how precious is time! How carefully ought we to spend the present moment! You are one of the best friends I have in the world. I know you desire my soul's welfare. You would have me without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. I am far from it. But I will never cease to pray till I am made perfect, and entire, lacking nothing.

With regard to your first question, the witness of sanctification was quite clear the moment it was given. And I think I may say it is as clear still, though I try myself often, particularly when temptation besets me close, when sin approaches near. But at all times I find there is no condemnation to me, but free access to the throne of grace. And secondly, this witness does fully testify that I shall never perish, but have everlasting life.

I do not so clearly see whether I shall ever offend God or not. Indeed, if by offending you mean any coming short of the holy will and law of God, I offend him too often. But if you mean committing sin, in this sense I cannot offend while he is pleased to continue the grace I have. My desires and affections are always clear and free as air. It is true I have felt some things since I believed the change was wrought that I could not account for, but never any thing contrary to it.

May the Lord bless you with all the riches of his love here, and with eternal glory in the world to come! I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and loving sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 497–98.

From R. H.

January 10, 1759

Reverend Sir,

Let me first beg your pardon for my long silence, though a great part of the time I have been unable to write. Besides, I do not know why, I have found an unwillingness to answer all your questions. I cannot see the profitableness of writing thus. But as it is *you* that desire, I submit to tell *you*, as well as I can, and in the plainest manner.

At times I have felt the body, as it were, weigh down the soul; and it required all the grace I had to say 'Thy will be done.' But I am always thankful that I am in the Lord's hands. I am as clay in the hands of the potter, to use me as he will. I know he sitteth on the throne, and ruleth, and doth all things well.

God did testify to me in that hour that I was saved from the inbeing of sin. But how can I describe the manner? Though it was more evident to me than if an angel from heaven had told me so. The same evidence has not only continued ever since, but increased. I have been more strengthened, comforted, and settled in the truth. A little time after, God applied to my soul the two first verses of the 125th Psalm, which was such a confirmation of my faith that I can neither doubt of his present nor his everlasting favour. Consequently my love, or his love in me, will not grow cold.

I have felt temptations to pride and anger. But they did not enter the soul. I am a stranger to evil desires, if I know what you mean. I never was convinced which was my constitutional sin.

I am exercised with temptations of various kinds, from the world and from the devil. I am very sensible of the power and subtlety of evil spirits. Then particularly my employment is watching and prayer. Sometimes temptations feel only like a blast of wind about my ears. At other times they feel like darts, yea fiery darts, pointed directly at my heart. But having on the armour of God, I take care to use my sword and shield well. And the Lord is good, who never suffereth me to be tempted above what I am able to bear.

I think the effect of these things is to make me more humble and more thankful. All glory to him who in all these things makes me more than conqueror. I am perfectly happy in his pure love and resigned to his blessed will. I desire to do it on earth (a monument of his mercy and grace) as it is done in heaven.

O dear sir, may the Lord direct your heart into his perfect love! May the Spirit of judgment and burning¹ take place in your heart, will, and affections! Give them up freely to the Lord. Then shall he do the work. Then shall *you* enter into that rest. May this be the happy state of your soul, and mine, and all that look for his appearing! This is the earnest desire of

Your affectionate servant in Christ,

R. H.²

Source: MARC, MA 1977/157, JW III.7, item numbered '109' (JW's transcribed copy).

¹Cf. Isa. 4:4.

²These initials are written in shorthand. This does not appear to be Ruth Hall, as can be seen by comparing the previous letter, dated the same day.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 18, 1759]

Some low anti-Truths (1 John 2:18–19) of the school or flock of John Wesley, or of such others, say John-Baptist is mad (Acts 17:30, 34; 26:24).¹ For what? Because we don't understand what he says. Is not that as foolish a reasoning as to say the sun is dark because we are blind who can't, or won't open our eyes and see its light (Luke 11:34–35; John 18:37, 8:47). John Wesley is the head of all the anti-Truths, as being the only man in the world who dared to publish that Truth is not God at all, no more than the sun. And this head of them is bruised by Truth, prophetically represented by a first woman the mother of mankind; he attempts only to her heel (Gen. 3:15), daring not appear in face, that is publicly and in his own name, against John-Baptist the head of all those who make Truth their God, as being the only man in the world who teaches and publishes that Truth is the only true universal Principle and sovereign Master, the God only of those who love her (1 Esdras 4:33–41).

Source: Public Advertiser (Jan. 18, 1759), p. 2.

¹No published attacks in this vein have been located.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[January 19, 1759]

The touch-stone of Truth, or argument universal, that is to the reach even of those who are not able or willing to give attention to any other kind of argument, in order to distinguish the false prophet or teacher (Matt. 7:15, 23) from the true and faithful one. John-Baptist, the only man in the world who teaches and publishes that Truth is the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master in Jesus Christ, lays fifty guineas for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital against John Wesley, the only man in the world who dared to publish that Truth is not God at all, etc., if he does not convince him of being absurdly false in the chief points, terms, and articles of his learning, and doctrines, and practices as grounded upon the universal counter-sense of Truth; upon conditions that the said John Wesley engages likewise and publicly, within this fortnight, to pay the same sum to the same hospital, in case of his being convinced of [being] false, finding no more any sufficient answer against Truth the God of John-Baptist.

Source: Public Advertiser (Jan. 19, 1759), p. 2.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
c. February 1759²

[[You find we cannot converse here without interruption. Where shall we get an hour tomorrow? You know where I breakfast; will you meet me at Mrs. Boulton's by 10:00?³ If your friend so urges me again, I cannot answer for myself that I shall not speak out, and deliver my own soul, whatever b[ad] consequences may be. I could scarcely forbear telling her the proof of her unbelief was her impenitence, or persisting to wrong you, etc., by keeping your letters, etc.

[[As I find full power over my natural temper, I could have stayed longer, had not her evil put me to flight. The Lord endue your soul with much strength and patience! And give her repentance unto love!

[[I must have out my talk, before your journey.

Adieu]]

Endorsement: 'No 9'.

Source: CW shorthand transcription; MARC, DDCW 7/112, no. 9.

²While undated, the allusion to Mary (Goldhawk/Vazeille) Wesley keeping some of JW's letters suggests a date in late 1758 or early 1759. Both JW and CW were in London in Feb. 1759, with JW leaving in early March on an extended preaching tour.

³Susanna (Davis) Boulton (d. 1774) and her husband John Boulton (d. 1771) resided in Christopher's Alley in Upper Moorfields. Susanna appears in the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46) as a married woman, with her surname spelled "Bolt" (JW and others also use this spelling; but Boulton is the spelling she and her husband use in their wills).

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 3, 1759]

After the weighty argument universal of fifty guineas publicly proposed to John Wesley, and to be seen in the news paragraph of this paper of Friday last month 19, John-Baptist proposes again to him, and to all the prophets (Matt. 7:15–23), that is teachers, of his kind another argument called a living one, and likewise universal, without any more alternative condition. By this he consents and requires to be imprisoned for the rest of his life, even to forfeit his life, as it is due to a most noxious impostor and seducer, to a most scandalous blasphemer and defamer, if the said John Wesley, or any of those who say with him that Truth is not God at all, never willing to acknowledge and tell us what she is, convinces him of falsity (2 Tim. 2:15) within this fortnight, in any chief point, term, or article of whatever public or private lesson they may find of his, since above seven years he teaches England, and the world, the super-eminent science of Truth the only true God universal Principle, and sovereign Master, universally unknown before his days (Rom. 3:9, 12; Acts 17:23, 31; John 8:32–36; Matt. 11:11, 19).

Source: Public Advertiser (Feb. 3, 1759), p. 2.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[February 24, 1759]

According to the *Plain Account of the Methodists* published in 1755, by John Wesley (5th edn., p. 34), it appears that he receives money out of the contributions he lays upon his followers. 'If I want anything', saith he, 'I am relieved (out of them) even as another poor man.'¹ This poor man wants very likely more than fifty guineas a year, which he supposes, in the same place, to receive as the bishops and priests did originally. The difference is that these bishops and priests were always ready to seal their doctrines and practices, not only by the loss of their living but of their life (Rev. 13:9–10), which good faith justifies them of the greatest faults, which were the bitter fruits of the universal ignorance of Truth till the days of John-Baptist (2 Tim. 1:13–14; Rom. 3:9–12; Eph. 5:8–15; Matt. 11:11–19). On the contrary, John Wesley, for all answers to the arguments of the same John-Baptist to be seen in this paper of the 19th of last month, and of the 3rd instant in the same paragraph, dares publish subscriptions for printing *Sermons* of his (Ps. 50:15–23);² in the doctrines of which he began to perceive such wrongs, as not to dare seal them only by the proposed price of fifty guineas; which bad faith changes the deeds, even the best in themselves, in such crimes as those of the revolted angels and of the traitor apostle (Rom. 14:23; 1 Cor. 13:1–6; Matt. 7:22; Luke 13:25–30): This last died out of sorrow for his crime. John Wesley lives, and insults the long forbearance of the government, and of the Church of his nation, consequently of the Master of all nations (Rom. 9:22).

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Feb. 24, 1759), p. 2.

¹JW, *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*, XV.6, *Works*, 9:280.

²This would be for volume 4 of *Sermons on Several Occasions*, published later in 1759.

From Ebenezer Blackwell

[London]
c. March 6, 1759

Dear Sir,

I this day received your favour of the 2nd instant. I am sensible of my incapacity either to speak or write in that lively, concise manner you do. But as well as I can I will, paragraph by paragraph, give a direct answer to your letter.

And first, I desire never to interfere between you and Mrs. [Mary] Wesley, without there is at least a probability of my being of service to one or (what I would much rather wish) to both of you. And I declare I have seldom if ever spoken of one to the other without being first desired either by yourself or Mrs. Wesley. Therefore you may be assured I will not in the least hinder your maintaining the authority of the husband in the *greatest latitude* that either myself or any man of common sense would wish.

I likewise say that I do not think myself a match for Mrs. Wesley or any one that studies to deceive me. But I deny that by any exquisite art she has made me think ill of two 'very deserving' women. I suppose you mean Mrs. [Sarah] Ryan and Mrs. [Sarah] Crosby. The first I know nothing of, having never seen her in my life and hardly ever (for I won't say never) spoken of her to anybody but yourself. The latter I only know from the letter wrote to yourself, which she owned to me was her handwriting, and which I think will plainly prove to everyone of common sense that she is not that 'very deserving' woman you think her—and permit me to add, I am afraid she has too much art for my dear friend.

I think my behaviour must fully convince you what my thoughts have been of yourself. When I have spoken to you it has been without reserve. And if at any time I have expressed myself a little freer than many others would dare to do, do not think the harder of me, for indeed it has constantly been with a view if possible to have established peace between yourself and Mrs. Wesley. And I seldom if ever see Mrs. Wesley from the time you leave London until you return, and would even then be glad to be excused that honour if it was not out of civility to yourself. Therefore she has no opportunity, or if she had I dare not give encouragement to her or any one, to entertain me with the faults of any either in your society or not. Indeed sir, I am sensible, if I did, it would very much hurt my soul.

And yet alas! I have been often much hurt. Though I dare not blame my dear friend on that account, and yet must declare what you have said, and what I have seen of your brother, has very often much grieved and stumbled my poor soul.

I feel I have an evil heart. I know I am not renewed, and I earnestly wish that my own faults were more and more engraven on my mind. That so I may never rest until I am born again and have the image of God stamped on my soul.

I earnestly wish you all happiness, and pray that the peace and love of God may continually attend you. I am, dear sir,

Your very affectionate and much obliged servant,

[Ebenezer Blackwell]¹

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/11.

¹See Blackwell's letter of June 30, 1758, for why he does not sign his name.

From Mrs. M. G.¹

[Otley]
March 11, 1759

I was born at Menston, near Otley, on Feb. 16, in the year 1722. From nine or ten years old I had checks for sin, and was afraid of it. But religion never took hold upon me till Christmas 1755. As I was then hearing Mr. Paul Greenwood preach, I was quite astonished and begged of God to lighten my darkness. And I was sorely afflicted for my sins, though with glimpses of comfort and strong hopes, till eight days before Whitsunday, as I was at prayer, God took away all my sins, and I wanted nothing but to go to him, being filled with joy unspeakable. For near a twelve month I was quite borne up with love. But then I found something in my heart which I knew was wrong. This made me quite miserable at times, though I never, that I know, committed any outward sin. Seven weeks after, while I was at church, I was deeply convinced what a sinner I was, and caused to lie very low and filled with humility. But I had much love withal till the Sunday after. Yet the week after that I was thrown down as if I had lost all, and so continued for about ten days. I was then one Thursday morning at home, poor and helpless and distressed, till I went to prayer with my husband and children, and roared aloud for help, crying to God with streams of tears, to be washed from all my corruptions. Then I went by myself and said, 'Lord, thou hast promised to give me a new heart. Take away this old heart, I am weary of it. Take whatever I have, and give me a new heart.' Immediately there ran through me a voice, 'I beheld a wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet.'² I trembled, ready to drop down. Toward evening a young woman came to our house, who had received the blessing. She prayed with me, and quickly after several promises came to me so strong that my bodily strength was gone, and I fell down and shrieked out, till I had no breath left. Presently it came to me, 'Thou art mine, and I am thine for ever.' I was all faith, and peace, and love. I called upon all in heaven to praise God with me. Since then I have been established in the Lord. My heart is like a piece of solid gold. And I daily grow in the knowledge of God. All his ways are ways of pleasantness to me, and all his ordinances my delight. Nothing stirs me now. Whatever comes is right. God is always with me. He lives in me and walks in me. He has cleaned my heart and sits as king there. I am always as happy as if I were in heaven, and I feel more and more happiness³ every day.

M. G.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 273–74.

¹This may be Mercy (Curtis) Grunwell, who was baptized in Menston on Mar. 8, 1722.

²Rev. 12:1.

³Orig. omits 'happiness'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

From the Rev. Thomas Jones¹

Castle-Street, Southwark
March 21, 1759

Dear and Honoured Sir,

I wish I knew how to express the sense I have of your kind and obliging notice of me. I can hardly expect a greater blessing, as to this world, than the offer you make me of your acquaintance. Believe me, sir, I shall esteem it a blessing. And I desire to be thankful to God for putting such a thought into your heart. I hope the same gracious Father of all who has induced you to make the proposal, will also enable you from time to time to give me such instructions as my youth, inexperience, and small stature in grace so greatly stand in need of. If I know anything of my own heart, I can say that I am 'athirst for God'. I desire to increase in holiness, real vital holiness, and to 'grow in grace'. You complain of the want of a faithful friend to advise you. Alas sir! You have pitched upon one who is very unequal to the task. Advice and instruction from you, sir, I shall always most thankfully receive; at least, I hope I shall. And if ever I should have opportunity, you may depend on my striving to be faithful, at least in doing you any friendly office in my power.

Let me beg all friendly admonition, all brotherly, yea fatherly, freedoms from you. Blessed be God, I have been some time convinced that religion consists not in opinions but in the union of the soul with God. I hope I shall never preach any Christianity but what tends to make its votaries happier and holier. 'The Kingdom of God in the heart', 'the Faith that worketh by love', as you express it, is the main point I desire to insist on in public and to know and practice in my own heart and life.

I shall often trouble you (if God permit) for your kind advice, and shall plead the privilege of that friendship you so generously make me an offer of. Oh may it be cemented by the love of Jesus! Dear sir, adieu! May the God of peace and love replenish your soul with every *Christian* blessing, adorn your life with every gospel grace, and succeed your labours wherever you go with abundance of success! 'As your day is, may your strength be!'² I beg your fervent prayers that I may be daily more humble, *unaffectedly humble*, dead to the world and self, and alive unto our dear redeeming God.

I am, with many thanks, and great respect, dear and honoured sir,

Your affectionate, and obliged brother in Christ Jesus,

T. Jones

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 164–65.

¹Thomas Jones (1729–62), vicar of St. Saviour's, Southwark; a leading Evangelical/ Calvinist clergyman in the Church of England.

²Cf. Deut. 33:25.

Revival of Chancery Suit by Vazeille Children

May 30, 1759 Mitford by G. Bowley

**To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Henley, Knight,
Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of Great Britain**

Humbly complaining show unto your Lordship your orators and oratrix, John Matthews of the parish of Saint Giles in the County of Middlesex, gentleman, and Jane his wife, and John Anthony Vazeille, an infant under the age of twenty-one years, by Cyprian Rondeau of Warnford Court, Throgmorton Street, London, merchant, his next friend, that on or about Easter term which was in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, your orator the said John Anthony Vazeille, together with James Vazeille (since deceased) and your oratrix Jane by her then name and description of Jane Vazeille, all infants under the age of twenty-one years, by the said Cyprian Rondeau their next friend exhibited their bill in this honourable court against Noah Vazeille their brother, an infant, John Westley and Mary his wife, and Noah Blisson, thereby setting forth amongst other things the will of the father Anthony Vazeille, late of London, merchant, deceased, whereby the said Anthony Vazeille by his said will dated the twenty-second day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, after giving several pecuniary legacies gave and bequeathed unto the said defendant Noah Blisson and Joseph Lieutand his partner, and to the survivor of them, and to the executors and administrators of such survivor the sum of one thousand and five hundred pounds to be placed out and vested in the public funds upon trust to permit and suffer his wife Mary Vazeille to receive and take to her own use and benefit the dividends, interest, and profits thereof for and during the term of her natural life. And from and after her decease the said testator gave and bequeathed the same unto his two sons, your orator the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille (since deceased), and then to his daughter your oratrix Jane Matthews, to be equally divided between them, share and share alike; to be paid unto them when they should attain the respective age of twenty-one years, and in case any of them should happen to die before they should attain their respective age of twenty-one years, then he gave the prart and share of him or them so dying unto the survivor or survivors of them, and all the rest and residue of the said testator's estate in whatsoever the same might consist, the said testator gave and bequeathed the same to his said two sons, your orator the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille (since deceased) and unto his daughter your oratrix the said Jane Matthews, to be paid them equally, share and share alike, when they should attain their respective ages of twenty[-one] years. That is to say with regard to your orators the said John Anthony and the said James Vazeille (since deceased); but with regard to your oratrix, his daughter, her share or portion, though equal to theirs, the said testator willed that the same might be disposed of in the manner following: to wit, one thousand and five hundred pounds to be paid to here when she attained the age of twenty-one years or on the day of marriage when it should first happen, and the overplus to be paced out and invested in the public funds in trust, in order that it might be settled upon her when she married; and in case either of his sons or his daughter should happen to die before they attained their respective age of twenty-one years, or his daughter the day of marriage, then he gave the part of share of each of them so dying unto the survivor or survivors of his sons. And in case his children above mentioned should all die before they attained the age of twenty-one years, the said testator gave and bequeath[ed] one thousand pounds to the said Noah Blisson and five hundred pounds to the said Joseph Lieutand, both which jointly with his said wife Mary Vazeille he constituted, made, and appointed executors of his will and committed the care and guardianship of his said children to his said executors, who he nominated and appointed to be guardians and trustees for his said children until they should attain their respective age of twenty-one years and his daughter the day of marriage. And the said testator gave the residue of his estate and effects, in case his children should all die before the age of twenty-one to his nearest relations, excepting his uncle John Jullian and his son Peter Bartholomew Jullian and his aunt Lewis Jullian.

And the said bill further stated that upon the death of the said testator the said Noah Blisson and Mary Vazeille the testator's widow duly proved the same in the proper ecclesiastical court, and that the said Joseph Lieutand did then and for several years last past had resided at Petersburg in Russia, where he proposed to stay, and had not proved the said will or renounced the execution thereof, and that your said oratrix and orator,¹ the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille were all the children of the said Anthony Vazeille that were living at the time of his death, and that at the death of the said Anthony the said Mary Vazeille his wife was ensient, and within the space of ____ after his death, viz., on or about the ____ day of ____ in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven, the said Mary Vazeille was delivered of a son, who is the defendant Noah Vazeille. And that the said Mary Vazeille did since, viz., about the month of March or April then last intermarry with the defendant John Westly. And by their said bill prayed that the said John Westly and Mary his wife and Noah Blisson might come to an account for the personal estate and effects of the said testator which had come to their hands and use, and if it should appear that they or either of them had used or employed the same or any part thereof in trade or otherwise for their benefit, that they might be charged with the interest for the same, and that they might lay out and invest the said one thousand five hundred pounds in the funds in trust for the uses, intents, and purposes mentioned and declared in the said testator's² will of and concerning the same, and that the rest and residue of the said testator's estate which, as your oratrix and your orator the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille insisted or right belonged to them might be placed out and invested in such of the public funds or parliamentary securities for the use and benefit of your oratrix and orator, John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille pursuant to the said testator's will in such manner as this honourable court should think fit and that one of more trustee or trustees should be appointed by this honourable court to ace in the execution of the trusts of the said will and to be further relieved.

To which bill the said John Westley and Mary Wesley, Noah Blisson and Noah Vazeille put in their several answers and the said Noah Vazeille, by the said Mary Westley his mother and guardian, by his answer submitted to the judgment of this honourable court whether he as the posthumous son of the said Anthony Vazeille deceased had any and what right to the personal estate and effects of the said Anthony Vazeille, his said late father, by or under the said will or otherwise, howsoever and humbly prayed the protection of this honourable court that he might not suffer by reason of his infancy. And having replied to all the said defendants' answers this cause came on to be heard before his honour the Master of the Rolls on the twelfth day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, when his honour was pleased to order and decree that it should be referred to Mr. [William] Spicer, one of the Masters of this honourable court to take an account of the personal estate of the said testator Anthony Vazeille come to the hands of the said defendants John Westley and Mary his wife, and Noah Blisson, or any of them or any other person or persons by their and any of their order, or for their or any of their use. And the said master was also to enquire whether the said defendants, or either of them, have made any and what interest or profit of the said testator's personal estate. And in case they had, then they were to be charged with the same in the said account of his personal estate. And the said master was also to take an account of the debts, funeral expenses, and legacies of the said testator. And it was ordered that the personal estate of the said testator should be applied in payment of his debts, funeral expenses, and legacies in a course of administration. And it was ordered that the said legacy of one thousand five hundred pounds, the interest whereof was by the said will given to the said Mary Westley for her life, should be placed out in consolidated three percent annuities transferrable at the bank in the name of the defendant Noah Blisson and two new trustees to be approved of by the said Master in the room of the said Joseph Lieutand, who was beyond sea and the said defendant Mrs. Westley, who was will a new trustee should be appointed in her room, and the said defendant Blisson and such new trustees were to declare the trust thereof subject to the further order of this honourable court. And it was further

¹Note in this and the following cases 'orator' is singular. Likely the second name that follows in each case should be 'Jane Vazeille' instead of 'James Vazeille'; focussing on the two remaining children.

²Orig., 'testatrix's'; and error.

ordered that the interest of such bank annuities should be paid to the said defendant Mrs. Westley during her life, and on the death of the said defendant the plaintiffs were to be at liberty to apply to the court to have the said bank annuities divided amongst them according to the will of the said testator. And it was further ordered that the clear residue of the personal estate of the said testator after payment of his debts, legacies, and funeral expenses be laid out in the purchase of consolidated three percent bank annuities in the manes of the said defendant Noah Blisson and the two new trustees to be approved by the Master as aforesaid upon the trusts mentioned in the will of the said testator and they were to declare the trusts thereof accordingly subject to the further order of this honourable court and the plaintiffs were to be at liberty to apply to this honourable court for the shares of the said bank annuities when they should become entitled thereto under the will of the said testator. And it was further ordered that it should be referred to the said Master to consider of what was proper to be allowed for the maintenance and education of the plaintiffs the infants for the time then past and to come, regard being had to the circumstances of their brother Noah the defendant Noah Vazeille. And the said master was to state the same to this honourable court. And thereupon such further order was to be made as should be just. And it was ordered that what the said Master should allow for such maintenance and education be paid to such person as had and should maintain the said plaintiffs out of the interest of the said bank annuities to be purchased with the clear residue of the said testator's personal estate as aforesaid. And in case your orator[s] the said John Anthony and James Vazeille should die before they attained the age of twenty-one years, and also your oratrix the said Jane Matthews should attain her age or marriage, his Honour did reserve any directions touching the clear residue of the said testator's personal estate. And it was ordered that the said Master should tax all parties their costs of the said suit thitherto, which were to be paid out of the said testator's personal estate. And his Honour did reserve the consideration of the subsequent costs and of all further directions until after the said Master should have made his report, and any of the parties were to be at liberty to apply to this honourable court as there should be occasion and for the better taking the said accounts and discovering the matters aforesaid, the parties were to be examined on interrogatories and were to produce on oath before the said Master all books, papers, and writings in their custody and power relating thereto as the said Master should direct, who in stating the said amount was to make unto all parties just allowances. And your orators and oratrix further show unto your Lordship that after the said decree [was] pronounced the said Master began to make the several inquiries directed by the said decree for the better taking the said accounts thereby directed your oratrix and orator, the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille deceased the plaintiffs exhibited interrogatories before the said Master for the examination of the said John Westly and Mary his wife, and Noah Blisson, in pursuance of the said decree and to which said interrogatories the said Noah Blisson hath put in his examination. But before the said defendants John Westley and Mary his wife, or either of them, put in their examination to the said interrogatories, and before any further proceedings were had in the said cause, the said James Vazeille died; viz., about the ____ day of ____ one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, being then an infant about the age of twelve years; and your orator the said John Matthews intermarried with your oratrix the said Jane his wife, viz., about the twenty-sixth day of July, which was in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, she have attained her age of twenty-one years on the twenty-fourth day of June the last past. Whereby the said suit and proceedings became abated and your orator John Matthews and oratrix Jane are entitled to the same relief as your oratrix was entitled unto before her intermarriage, and for that purpose the said suit and proceedings which so became abated ought to be revived. To the end, therefore, that the said suit and proceedings so abated as aforesaid may stand and be revived and be in the same plight and condition as they were in at the time of the intermarriage of your orator John Matthews and Jane his wife, and that your orators and oratrix may have such relief as is prayed by the said original bill on the behalf of your oratrix and you orator the said John Anthony Vazeille and the said James Vazeille deceased, or that your orators and oratrix may have such further and other relief in the matters contained in the said original bill as is agreeable to equity and good conscience, may it please your Lordship to grant unto your orator and oratrix his Majesty's most gracious writ or writs of subpoena revive to be directed to the said John Westly and Mary his wife, Noah Blisson, and Noah Vazeille, thereby commanding them and every of them at a certain day and under a certain pain

therein to be limited personally to be and appear in this honourable court to show cause why the said suit and proceedings so abated as aforesaid should not be revived and to stand to and abide such order, directions, and decree in the premisses as shall be agreeable to equity and to you Lordship shall seem meet, etc.

Ar. Jones

Source: British National Archives, C 12/1910/31.

From John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
c. June 1, 1759

Preliminary Observations [pp. 3–4]¹

There is none more deaf than those who are not willing to hear, and more blind than those who are not willing to see; such persons having no greater objection to oppose our present publications of the beginning reign, and glory, and triumph of Truth our God^a than their not understanding a word, as they say, of what we publish. Let them be asked to point out any of the essential articles, propositions, or expressions which they don't understand. If they are not ashamed to do it, it will be easy to perceive and decide if such article, proposition, or expression is senseless or obscure, of if [they] themselves are false learned, unfaithfully blind and deaf, shutting their eyes not to see the living light of Truth our God, and stopping their ears not to hear her lessons.^b Another kind of enemies of Truth is those who, in contradiction of the first,^c do not deny to understand our publications in any essential article, proposition, or expression, but oppose them in their private darkness; such wrong unfaithful objections as not to dare to let them appear in public light.^d Let these last be asked likewise by any of their private hearers if they would be ready to lay from one guinea to fifty, to whatever destination, upon what they affirm or deny by these objections of theirs against this John-Baptist, who laid already even his life against another John surnamed 'Wesley' that he could not convince him of falsity in any chief point, term, or article of his private or public writings concerning the reign of Truth above seven years since.^e He had laid before fifty guineas, to the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, against the said John Wesley, that he could convince him of being false in all essential points, terms, and articles of his doctrines and practices, which he calls himself a Christian system; truly a system, as which can't be farther from a demonstration grounded upon the only immoveable, universal Principle. *Whosoever* refuses to seal his private or public affirmations or negations by any price deserves not to be believed upon any account, being convinced by himself, and in the moment of his infidelity and unfaithfulness in what he affirms or denies. John Wesley, being more afraid to lose fifty guineas than to abuse the blind confidence of his over numerous contributors, fled away suddenly,^f no doubt upon the pretence of greater business,² than to answer the victorious arguments of Truth, which he dared affirm publicly not to be God all, no more than the sun, in his *Sufficient Answer*, of the first November 1757, page 9;³ this answer being sufficient to prove only that Truth is not his God

^a 'Now is come our deliverance by the reign, and strength, and power of Truth, which is Jesus Christ our God; for the enemy of the world accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, is cast down to the earth, and his angels, his ministers with him' (Rev. 12:10, 9).

^b Matt. 13:13–15.

^c Mark 3:24.

^d John 3:18–21.

^e 2 Tim. 2:15; John 8:45–47.

^f Ps. 68:1–12; John 10:12–13.

¹ *A Letter of John-Baptist, the Arch-Teacher to the Most Reverend Doctor Thomas Secker* (London: J. Marshall & T. Jones, 1759).

² JW departed London in late February on his annual (long planned) preaching tour, headed to northern England.

³ I.e., JW, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"', IV.2, Works*, 13:353.

at all, no more than the sun, as he says, for being the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master,^g she is the God only of those who love her, who make her their God in and by their love of her.^h

Since John-Wesley's flight, many of the flock of his contributors, or of such like, have been stopped already in their blaspheming, that is, boasting and ill speaking against Truth, our God and sovereign Master, having been struck dumbⁱ by the same argument, rightly called the golden one, unanswered by this John Wesley, who has never, or seldom, been found without answer but to the arguments of Truth published by John-Baptist. For this is the will of the sovereign Master our God,^j that we put to silence the imprudence and unfaithfulness of proud false learned, and thus worse than ignorant, men,^k who unwilling to acknowledge him the universal Principle and sovereign Master in the Truth, which they have begun to know once for ever,^l pretend to resist him in the days of his beginning reign, and glory, and power, and of his triumph over his and our enemies.^m

[Concluding Comments, pp. 44–48]

The very words of the positive, though sophistical and indirect, *negation* of Truth, being the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master, by John Wesley in his half penny pamphlet entitled *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letters sent to the Author of Theron and Aspasio, etc.,* Bristol, November 1, 1757. Consequently since the unconfutable letter sent to him by John-Baptist the Arch-Teacher^a on Friday July 15, the same year, concerning the doctrine and present knowledge of Truth our God in Jesus-Christ;^b this letter being published under the title of *A Short Examination, etc.* sold by J. Marshal in St. Clement's Church-Yard.

Thus speaks John Wesley, page 9. “You say 2) charity is the love of truth” (p. 456). Not at all: No more than it is the love of the sun. It is the love of God, and of man for God's sake; no more no less.”⁴

It is too clear that if the love of Truth is not at all the love of the God of this John Wesley, no more than it is the love of the sun, then Truth is not his God at all, no more than the sun; that consequently he is not a disciple, neither a minister of Truth. Likewise that Truth is not the principle, and substance, and object of all his doctrines and practices at all, no more than the sun, but another god than Truth,^c this dark spirit of pride, and infidelity, and unfaithfulness, and ungratefulness, and seduction, and revolt, who blinds the eyes of the heart of her obscure enemies,^d that seeing and understanding, they see

^g 1 Esdras 4:22–41.

^h Eph. 2:12, 4:15.

ⁱ Ps. 31:17–18.

^j 1 Esdras 4:22–41.

^k 1 Pet. 2:15.

^l Heb. 10:26, 6:4–6.

^m Luke 1:32–33, 72–74; 2 Tim. 3:7–9, 4:3–4.

^a Tim. 2:15.

^b John 15:22.

^c *London Advertiser* of Friday, Dec. 22, 1758.⁵

^d 2 Cor. 5:1–7; 2 Tim. 2:5–9.

⁴JW, *A Sufficient Answer to 'Letter to the Author of "Theron and Aspasio"'* (Bristol: Farley, 1757), IV.2, *Works*, 13:353.

⁵No surviving copy of this issue could be located to determine the purpose of this reference.

not the light and understand not^e the meaning of our publication universal of the beginning reign and glory and power of Truth our God, of her triumph over her and our enemies, the enemies of the world and of the God of the world.^f

If John-Wesley, who pretends to be a teacher in Israel, a reformer of the Reformation,^g as he is one of the two patriarchs of a new sect and institution of their own making, goes once to the school of Truth the God of John-Baptist, he will begin to learn the nature of the very word 'God', and know that all applications he has made till now of this word contrary to its true sense and nature, such as in the above citation from his *Sufficient Answer*, signify less than its inverse the word 'dog'. Consequently that he takes even this adjective name worse than in vain^h whenever he takes it otherwise than an adjective signifying a personal quality, such as the word 'king' and all such like, his diction being as foolish and senseless as this of an over drunken manⁱ who would say, 'It is the love of king, and of such a man for king's sake.' He will learn from John-Baptist the disciple of Truth this rule, one of the first elements of any grammatical, and logical learning, and reasoning, and right speaking,^j and see the dreamful Coloss[us]^k of all his doctrines, and institutions, and practice, standing upon misunderstood and misapplied words in the universal counter-sense of the words of Truth, fall and disappear with them at the stroke of that stone,^l which abstracted by itself from the mountain which is itself, becomes this very mountain which fills the whole earth.^m

The following advertisement of Saturday, February 24, 1759, in the *Public Advertiser*, is a conjunctive conclusion, and consequence, and proof of two precedent ones. In the *first* of which, being on Friday, January 19, John-Baptist lays fifty guineas against John-Wesley, and to the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, that he will convince him of falsity in all chief points, terms, and articles of his learning, and doctrines, and practices, as being all grounded upon the universal counter-sense of the words of Truth; that he will convince him of it, even by his own words,ⁿ and in such a manner that he will find no more any *Sufficient Answer* against Truth the only true God Principle, and sovereign Master of all, the God only of those who love her. In the *second*, being on Saturday, February 3, in the same paper, the same John-Baptist consents and requires to forfeit even his life, as it is due to a most noxious impostor and seducer, to a most scandalous blasphemmer and defamer, if the said John-Wesley, or any of those who say with him that Truth is not God at all, never willing to tell us what she is, convinces him of falsity^o in any chief point, term, or article of whatever public or private lesson they may find of his, since

^e Rom. 11:8–10; Isa. 6:9–13; Matt. 13:12–17; Acts 28:28; Ps. 69: 23.

^f 1 Esdras 4:33–41; John 3:16–21; Rev. 12:1–11.

^g Matt. 7:15–23, 24:4–5; Luke 13:25–27; 1 John 2:18–19; 2 Cor. 11:13–15. *The Two Letters to Mr. George Whitefield*, pp. 5–6; *The Fall of the Old Serpent*, pp. 9–10.

^h Exod. 20:7.

ⁱ Isa. 28:1–29; Joel 1:5–6.

^j Heb. 5:11–14.

^k Dan. 2:34–35, 44.

^l 1 Cor. 10:4; 1 Pet. 2:4–8; Eph. 2:19–22; the *Public Advertiser* of Friday, Dec. 29, 1758.

^m John 6:18; Rom. 9:4–13; Gal. 4:4–5; Eph. 1:5; 1 John 3:1–3; Rom. 8:15–17, 20–23; *The Apology of the Jewish People* (1752), pp. 10–11, 19, 21.⁶

ⁿ Luke 19:22.

^o 2 Tim. 2:15; John 8:46–47.

⁶No surviving copy of this publication appears in WorldCat or the English Short Title Catalogue. There is an advertisement of a reprinting in *Public Advertiser* (Nov. 20, 1753), p. 3.

above these seven years he hath taught England and the world the supereminent science of Truth, the God universally unknown before his days.

According to the *Plain Account of the Methodists* published in 1755, by John Wesley (5th edn., p. 34⁷), it appears that he receives money out of the contributions he lays upon his followers. 'If I want anything', saith he, 'I am relieved (out of them) even as another poor man.' This poor man wants very likely more than fifty guineas a year, which he supposes, in the same place, to receive as the bishops and priests did originally. The difference is that these bishops and priests were always ready to seal their doctrines and practices, not only by the loss of their living but of their life,^p which good faith justifies them of the greatest faults, which were the bitter fruits of the universal ignorance of Truth till the days of John-Baptist.^q On the contrary, John Wesley, for all answers to the arguments of the same John-Baptist to be seen in this paper of the 19th of last month, and of the 3rd instant, in the same paragraph dares publish subscriptions for printing *Sermons* of his;^r in the doctrines of which he began to perceive such wrongs as not to dare seal them only by the proposed price of fifty guineas; which bad faith changes the deeds, even the best in themselves, in such crimes as those of the revolted angels and of the traitor apostle:^s This last died out of sorrow for his crime. John Wesley lives, and insults the long forbearance of the government, and of the Church of his nation, consequently of the Master of all nations.^t

This advertisement has been sent to John-Wesley the very day of its publication, and the next day, being Sunday, February 25, he took leave of his followers and contributors and subscribers,⁸ as a proud revolted slave who flies from the face of his offended but not angry,^u vanquisher^v but merciful,^w great and powerful but humble and patient master, rather than to come to him,^x and participate of his reign, and glory, and triumph as a friend,^y to which he serves as a dumb, vanquished, and flying enemy.^z

The same John-Wesley publishing his sinful *Doctrine of Original Sin*, against Doctor Taylor, who did not speak to him, saith in the *Whitehall Evening Post* of Saturday, December⁹ 3, 1757, consequently above five months since the *Short Examination* of this work of his published by John-

^p Rev. 13:9–10.

^q 2 Tim. 1:13–14; Rom. 3:9–12; Eph. 5:8–15; Matt. 11:11–19.

^r Ps. 50:15–23.

^s Rom. 14:23; 1 Cor. 13:1–6; Matt. 7:22; Luke 13:25–30.

^t Rom. 9:22.

^u Jer. 3:12–15.

^v Isa. 1:24.

^w Neh. 9:16–19.

^x Matt. 11:27–29, 21:5.

^y John 15:14–15; Rev. 5:9–10, 21:3–6.

^z Ps. 68:1–4. 'Preliminary Observations', pp. 3–4 [see above].

⁷JW, *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*, XV.6, *Works*, 9:280.

⁸JW would have preached his last Sunday sermon in London on Feb. 25, but he did not depart London on his annual preaching tour, headed to northern England, until Wednesday, Feb. 28, 1759 (see *Journal*, *Works*, 21:178).

⁹Orig., 'February'; a mistake.

Baptist on Friday, July 15, and by way of a double pretermission:^a ‘Whatever reply Dr. Taylor himself makes hereto will be carefully and thoroughly considered. But I do not promise to pay the same regard to remarks made by the Monthly Reviewers, or any writer of that class’, signed ‘John-Wesley’.¹⁰ Of whatever class the Monthly Reviewers may be, it is no doubt but John-Wesley is of the first class of her enemies, even that he is the head of *all* of them, *all* falling with the old serpent principle of the original sin, and of its sinful doctrine, which this John-Wesley its minister, and doctor, and preacher pretends in vain to resuscitate and oppose to the doctrine of Truth accomplishing literally in this book of his all what is said of the monastical spirit enemy of the world, accuser day and night of our brethren, in the presence of our God, who justifies, or excuses, or pardons them.^b This only proud, and very *insufficient answer* of his unto very just and short objections against his wrathful doctrine has given occasion to the following observation, of John-Baptist, in the *Public Advertiser* of Friday, December 30, 1757.

The Monthly Reviewers, nor any of the writers whom Mr. John Wesley calls of that class, care nor want any regard from any man of the class of false ministers who don’t pay any regard even to the Truth as it is in Jesus Christ, that is as the universal Principle and sovereign Master, the God only of those who love her.^c Till Mr. John Taylor judges fit to reply to the low sophisms and paralogisms, and counter senses which compound the whole book of John-Wesley, we think fit to publish and prove that he is as false a writer in every point, sense, article, and page, as he is a false minister of Jesus-Christ, whom he attacks and ridicules even in his quality of God of armies, that is of those who sacrifice their life for their nation, and thus for the world, according to his precept and example.^d

Truth, the God of John-Baptist, is this God whose property, that is, whose essential character is to love always all men, all his sons and brethren, to be always merciful, always excusing, or forgiving,^e desiring not the death of the ungrateful, unfaithful, and wicked, but that he lives, and returns unto him.^f

Any teaching and correcting for the present seemeth not to be pleasant, but hard, and tedious; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the fruits of a perfect peace unto them who are exercised by it to justness and righteousness. Wherefore lift up your falling hands, and stretch your bowed knees, leading your feet in right paths, lest some of you halt in the wrong way, but rather let him be healed.^g

^a John 15:22; Rom. 2:8–9; 1 Tim. 6:3–5; 2 Tim. 3:5–9.

^b Rev. 12:10–11; Rom. 8:33–34; Matt. 7:15–23, 24:4–5; Luke 13:25–27; 1 John 2:18–19; 2 Cor. 11:13–15. *The Two Letters to Mr. George Whitefield*, pp. 5–6; *The Fall of the Old Serpent*, pp. 9–10.

^c 1 Esdras 4:33–41; John 3:16–21; Rev. 12:1–11.

^d Ps. 18:34–43; Mal. 2:6–8; John 15:13.

^e Pages 23–24.

^f Matt. 5:45; Luke 6:35–36; 1 Esdras 4:38–39; The Anglican liturgy.

^g Heb. 13:11–15.

Source: A Letter of John-Baptist, the Arch-Teacher to the Most Reverend Doctor Thomas Secker
(London: J. Marshall & T. Jones, 1759).

¹⁰JW added this short message to an advertisement of *The Doctrine of Original Sin*, after a negative review of it was published in the *Monthly Review* (Nov. 1757, pp. 445–46). The advertisement appears in the Dec. 3–5, 1757 issue of the *Whitehall Evening Post*, p. 4.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[June 8, 1759]

This day is published, Price 6d.

A Letter to his grace, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, upon the present beginning of the reign of Truth, acknowledged in our days to be the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master in Jesus Christ; likewise upon the universal baptism, the love supper, the everlasting sacrifice, the two parts of ecclesiastical order or ministry universal, and other important matters, by this John Baptist, who laid fifty guineas against John Wesley in the *Public Advertiser* of Friday, January 19, as it appears in the additions to this Letter, Page 46.

Sold by J. Marshal, in St. Clement Church-yard; and T. Jones, in May's buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: Public Advertiser (June 8, 1759), p. 4.

From John Manners

June 9, 1759

Reverend Sir,

I was born in the year 1731 at Sledmore near Malton, in Yorkshire. I found the fear of God from a child, which restrained me from most outward sins. At eight years old, my father removed to a village near Pocklington. Here I led a harmless life, till the harvest-time 1753. I then¹ went to Wilberfoss to seek labourers. There I heard Thomas Slaton preach.² I thought what he said was true, but it made no impression upon me. In the spring 1754, I heard Benjamin Beanland³ at Stanford-Briggs, and was pricked to the heart. I then began to attend the preaching constantly, as well as every other ordinance of God, and found much comfort therein. But after⁴ harvest I began to be sore troubled, and mourned after Christ day and night for about three months. In the beginning of January 1755 my conviction grew still deeper and deeper. January 15, as I was going with a wagon, I seemingly felt the blood of Christ applied to my conscience, and in a few minutes after a clear, full peace, arising from the witness that my sins were forgiven. This I never lost afterwards for one hour, though the overpowering joy lasted but a short time. Nine weeks and four days after, I was walking alone, when I heard an inward voice saying, 'The Lord calleth thee to pass over Jordan.' Immediately I found a great change. I was made strong in the Lord. The kingdom of heaven was more largely brought into my soul, and I knew that I was a young man in Christ. I went on, daily growing in the grace of God, and finding more and more light shining on my heart. It was my continual endeavour to walk in this light, and keep close to God in all my thoughts. In the end of July, as I was mowing grass, I felt suddenly a greater change than ever. I was filled with light and love, and saw the face of the Lord, the Trinity in Unity. From this moment I saw him at all times and in all places, and found the whole kingdom of God within me. A few days after, I heard an inward voice saying, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'⁵ I desired the Lord not to let me deceive myself, but give me a witness if I was saved from sin? And in about a week he gave me my desire, the full, clear witness of his Spirit. It has not left me one moment since. I am now always happy in God. I always feel his love, and all my tempers, and desires, and words, and actions flow from it.

I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate servant,

J. Manners

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 275–76.

¹Orig. omits 'then'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²Thomas Slaton was a class leader and local preacher in York.

³Benjamin Beanland was an early itinerant preacher, listed in the Minutes for 1753 (see *Works*, 10:260), who left the ranks soon after. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 44–46.

⁴Orig., 'about'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

⁵Matt. 5:8.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[June 19, 1759]

This day is published, Price 6d.

The triumph of Truth the God of John-Baptist, only name under heaven whereby we must be saved, which appears in a Letter to his grace, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, upon the present beginnings of her reign, upon the universal baptism, the love supper, the everlasting sacrifice, the two parts of the ecclesiastical order or ministry universal, and other important matters, with preliminary and conclusive addition concerning especially the deadly silence of the enemies of Truth, and the flight of John Wesley. The stiff-necked and of uncircumcised heart and ears do always resist the spirit of Truth, as your fathers did, not guiltless as they were. John 15:22; Heb. 10:20.

Sold by J. Marshal, in St. Clement Church-yard; and T. Jones, in May's buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: Public Advertiser (June 19, 1759), p. 4.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[June 29, 1759]

This day is published, Price 6d.

The Letter of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, to his grace, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning chiefly the present beginning of the reign of Truth, and second coming of Jesus Christ, our God (Rev. 22:7–12). The enemies of truth pretend in vain to darken her living light, which begins to enlighten the world, when shutting again their eyes, they affirm that they can't see it. What shall men see, or understand, who are not willing to understand this proposition, the most clear of all (John 8:47): Truth is the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master, the God only of those who love her? Or who daring to contradict it, as John Wesley did, shall dare to lay for him fifty guineas, against that John Baptist who affirms it in the face of all England, and thus of all the world? John Wesley had certainly better business than to do it.

Sold by J. Marshal, in St. Clement Church-yard; and T. Jones, in May's buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: Public Advertiser (June 29, 1759), p. 4.

From an Unidentified Gentleman¹

Newcastle upon Tyne
c. July 1759

Last week a poor man in Sandgate,² that had been blind twenty-four years, was led to the machine. I set him upon the electrical board, and drew sparks for about twenty minutes from the pupil of his eye. After he had rested himself a little, and was able to look up, he told us he could see Sidgate,³ which he had not seen for many years before. He could also distinguish objects in the room, and was able to walk home without a guide. He came a second time, and was so much better that I imagine he did not think it necessary to come any more.

About the time I wrote last, a young woman was cured of a fourteen years' blindness. She was able, before she went home, to distinguish one letter from another.

[a few days later⁴]

The cure of the blind man of Newcastle has spread through all the country; in consequence of which I am, much against my will, become an oculist.

I have had several in hand, and among the rest a girl about seventeen has been with me about three weeks. Her case is owing to a film, or skin, grown over her eyes. It came by the smallpox about twelve years ago. Her friends have had all the advice, and used all the means in their power, but to no purpose. Except that she has lost her left eye irrecoverably by one of the persons they applied to.

When she came to me, the iris of the right eye also was very near covered with a very thick skin, so that she could do very little more than distinguish day from night. It was grown much worse this winter, and was so bloodshot and angry that I told her mother I could do nothing for her. However she made such a lamentable complaint that I consented to try.

The method I have taken is drawing sparks from her eye. And sometimes giving shocks from her head or neck, down her arm, to carry off the frequent complaints of pain and dizziness in her head; which never fails of succeeding in about ten minutes. We have electrified her about half an hour, twice every day. The skin wastes gradually, and grows thinner and less every day. So that now the colour of the eye appears through it, except in the middle and towards the nose, where the film at first seemed twice as thick as the rest. The other day, as I had her under hand, she saw the buttons of my shirt sleeve and of my coat. And yesterday [she] saw the teeth of one of her companions that was laughing at her. But her eye is so weak that I advise her to make very little use of it yet.

Source: published transcription; JW, *The Desideratum*, II.6–8.

¹JW's account in *Desideratum* begins: 'From a gentleman in Newcastle upon Tyne I have the following account'. This gentleman likely oversaw an electrical machine made available at the Orphan House, center of Methodist activity in Newcastle.

²A suburb (consisting of one long street) which had grown up on the banks of the Tyne, outside the medieval walls, and taking its name from Newcastle's south-easterly gate. It was the home of the keel men, a poor labouring class.

³I.e., the 'side gate'; a street proceeding straight from Newgate to Barras Bridge, now called 'Percy Street'.

⁴JW, 'From the same person, a few days afterwards, I received the following lines.'

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 7, 1759]

On the 8th,¹ 19th, and 29th of last month has been,
And is this day published, Price 6d.

The Letter of John Baptist the Arch-Teacher, to his grace, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning chiefly the present beginning of the reign of Truth. Can any subject be more important, not only unto all England but even unto all the world, to stir up the attention of all mankind, especially those writers rightly anonymous under the names of *Monthly*, and *Critical Review*, who gives themselves as teachers, and judges of any kind of learning, meanwhile one of them contradicting himself in the 488[th] and following pages, speaks of Truth as a drunken, or an ignorant, or an unfaithful man,² not willing to know the first elements of the doctrine of Truth. Truly such mercenary writers are not animated by a due zeal for the glory of Truth, and a warm concern for the good of mankind, nor deserve more credit than John Wesley, if they dare, no more than he, to lay from five to fifty guineas, upon whatever they affirm or deny, in whatever sense, against Truth the God of John Baptist. (*Monthly Rev[iew]*, page 488, line 31, etc.).

The said Letter is sold at J. Marshal, in St. Clement Church-yard; and T. Jones, in May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: *Public Advertiser* (July 7, 1759), p. 4.

¹Orig., '18th'; a misprint.

²This is a review article (covering pp. 488–92) on Archibald Campbell's *The Authenticity of the Gospel History Justified* (1759). The reviewer briefly summarizes sceptics like David Hume and Lord Bolingbroke, in showing how Campbell refutes their arguments and defends the truth of Christianity. Perhaps John-Baptist assumed that the reviewer agreed with both sides.

From the Rev. Dr. Richard Conyers¹

Helmsley
July 9, 1759

Reverend Sir,

I received your obliging letter yesterday,² and sincerely thank you for your affectionate prayers to God for me. I am not altogether a stranger to the difficulties and discouragements which attend the faithful discharge of the duties of the ministry. God has very graciously delivered me, and I trust will deliver me to the end. Opposition and trouble from wicked and gainsaying men cannot but be the portion of every faithful dispenser of the glorious blessings of the gospel of Christ. I thank God, I have long since learned to admire his wisdom and goodness in such dispensations as these; and of consequence, earnestly to pray for an entire resignation to his best and blessed will. In a very little time, sir, the storm will be blown over, and then an amends will be made for all, far beyond what our most inflamed imaginations are able now to conceive. I hope I always, in all my labours, had an eye to God's glory, and the good of my poor fellow-creatures. Though I saw not so clearly as I do now the inestimable treasure that was committed to me, neither was I so well acquainted with the glad tidings I was sent with to a sinful world. As to time and means, sir, 'tis no matter. God had mercy on me, the blessing is sufficient for me, that so it is. However, this I assure you sir, that the work was all his own. And glory to his blessed name, he has been pleased, I believe, to make you a noble instrument of promoting his glory. And great, I doubt not, will be your reward in heaven. May he guide you by his unerring wisdom in all your endeavours to promote it. Still may he enable you to spread through all your societies the true and uncorrupted spirit of the gospel of the blessed Jesus. May they all, like their great master, be meek and lowly, humble, inoffensive; laying aside all warm disputation, which gender strife; all railings, bitterness, and false accusations. O sir, these rank weeds grow very fast, even in religious hearts. We have a cunning enemy to contend with, and sometimes when we think we are pulling his kingdom down he is *secretly* employing us to build it up. Let us watch and be sober. Let us in no wise depend upon ourselves, upon our own foresight or wisdom, or goodness, or any thing we have, or are. But by a steady faith in Christ, let us look to our Father in heaven, and I make no doubt but we shall be preserved from all his wiles. The fruits of God's blessed Spirit will grow apace in a heart thus guarded by watchfulness and prayer. Humility and love, peace and joy, will be its constant visitants. It will be preserved from the power of sin, from the author of sin, from the consequences of sin, and will be carried on, under the protection of an ALMIGHTY ARM, step by step, through all difficulties and dangers, into the possession of an eternal life. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and fellow servant,

Richard Conyers

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 353–54.

¹Richard Conyers (1725–86), graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge, was vicar of Helmsley (1756–75), then vicar of St. Paul's, Deptford (1775–86). He had an evangelical conversion in 1758 and initially embraced JW's ministry, but soon aligned more strongly with the Calvinist wing of evangelical Anglicanism (cf. JW, *Journal*, Apr. 17, 1764, *Works*, 21:452–53).

²JW was passing within 10–15 miles of Helmsley at the time. This appears to be his first contact with Conyers, perhaps having heard that he would be sympathetic.

Response to Revival of Chancery Suit by Vazeille Children

By original bill and bill of revival.
Sworn at my house in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury Square,
the 10th day of July 1759, before me,
William Spicer

**Between John Anthony Vazeille, an infant, by Cyprian Rondeau his next friend,
and John Matthews and Jane his wife; plaintiffs
John Wesley and Mary his wife, Noah Blisson, and Noah Vazeille, an infant,
by the said Mary Wesley, his guardian; defendants.**

The answer and examination of the defendant Mary Wesley, the wife of the said John Wesley, to certain interrogatories exhibited by the plaintiff, the said Anthony Vazeille (James Vazeille since deceased) and the said Jane, by the name of Jane Vazeille,¹ before William Spicer Esq., one of the Masters of the High Court of Chancery, for the examination of the said defendants John Wesley and Mary his wife, and Noah Blisson, in pursuance of an order made in this cause bearing the date the twelfth day of December one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three.

To the first interrogatory this examinant for herself saith that since the time of the putting in this defendant's answer to the complainants' bill filed in this cause,² this examinant hath received for and on account of the personal estate of Anthony Vazeille the testator in the pleadings in this cause named the several sums of money mentioned contained in the third schedule of this defendant's examination—which this defendant craves may be taken as part of this her said examination.

And this defendant saith that those sums are all and every the sum and sums of money which this examinant or any other person or persons by or with her order, privity, consent, or direction, or for her use hath or have received since her putting in her said answer for or upon account of any debt or debts, sum or sums of money, security or securities, or other the personal estate or effects whatsoever which belonged to the said testator Anthony Vazeille, or wherein or whereto he was anyways interested in or entitled to at the time of his death (other than and except what were specifically bequeathed to this examinant by the said testator).

And this examinant further saith that she hath set forth in the first schedule to this her examination—and which she also prays may be taken as part of this her examination—an account of the errors, mistakes, and omission in the account set forth in the second schedule of this defendant's said answer.

And this defendant hath also set forth in the second schedule to this her examination—which she prays may be also taken as part of this her examination—an account of the errors, mistakes, and omissions in the accounts set forth in the third schedule to this defendant's answer.

And this defendant saith that, to the best of her knowledge, recollection, and belief, there are not any other errors, mistakes, or omissions in the accounts set forth in this examinant's said answer or in the schedule thereunto annexed or under written, or in any of them, save and except what are mentioned in the said first and second schedule to this, this examinant's examination. And this defendant saith that the schedules to her said answer and the schedules to this her examination contain a full account of all the money she hath received and laid out on account of the testator's personal estate, to the best of her knowledge, recollection, and belief.

To the second and third interrogatories, this examinant saith that she hath always, as soon as she hath received any of the monies arising from the said testator's personal estate, laid out the same in the public stocks. And this defendant hath in the fifth schedule [of] this her examination—and which she

¹Jane Vazeille (1736–1820) married John Matthews on July 24, 1757.

²I.e., the first response

prays may be taken as part thereof—set forth an account of such monies as she hath laid out in the public funds, with which she hath purchased the several capital sums of two thousand six hundred and eighty-three pounds and eleven shillings bank annuities, and one thousand four hundred and eighty-two pounds and three shillings South Sea annuities; and which are more particularly mentioned in the said fifth schedule to this her examination. The interest and dividends whereof this defendant hath ever since the respective purchases thereof received and converted to her own use, and which this defendant is ready and willing to account for (save and except for the dividends and interest of the sum of one thousand five hundred pounds first laid out by this examinant towards the purchase of the said several sums of two thousand six hundred eighty-three pounds and eleven shillings bank annuities and one thousand four hundred and eighty-two pounds and three shillings South Sea annuities; for this defendant claims the dividends and interest of much of the said annuities as the said one thousand five hundred pounds purchased for her life by virtue of and under the will of the said testator). And this examinant saith that she never did to the best of her knowledge, remembrance, and belief intermix any of the monies, estate, or effects of the said testator, or the produce thereof, whereby to make use of the same or any part thereof together with this examinant's own for the sake of any advantage or gain. Nor did this examinant ever make any gain or advantage of any of the said testator's personal estate other than by receiving the dividends arising from the said annuities, this examinant having paid and applied the personal estate of the said testator in payment of his debts, funeral expenses, and legacies as fast as she got in and received the same, and in the purchase of the said annuities.

And this examinant further saith that she hath in the fourth schedule to this her examination—and which she prays may be taken as part thereof—set forth an account of the monies she hath disbursed out of the said testator's personal estate since her said answer put in And the monies this defendant hath disbursed for the preferment, support, and maintenance of the plaintiff John Anthony Vazeille from the tenth day of July one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, the time he was put clerk to Mr. I'Anson, an attorney, until this time. And the expenses attending the late plaintiff James Vazeille, who died on or about the eighth of February one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, in his illness and his funeral expenses.

And this examinant saith that she cannot set forth what the balance was in the hands of this examinant of the said testator's personal estate at the end of each year after the death of the said testator otherwise than what may appear by the schedules of this examinant's said answer and the schedules to this her examination. And this examinant saith that the balance of the said testator's personal estate now remaining in her hands is the sum of eighty-three pounds three shillings and two pence, according to this examinant's computation thereof, and as she verily believes; exclusive of the said several capital sums of two thousand six hundred and eighty-three pounds and seven shillings bank annuities, and one thousand four hundred and eighty-two pounds and three shillings South Sea annuities, and the dividends thereof. Which said dividends this defendant is ready to account for, after first deducting thereout the dividends and interest of the said one thousand five hundred pounds first laid out towards the purchase of the said annuities, which dividends this defendant is entitled to for her life.

Out of which said balance in this defendant's hands as aforesaid, and out of the remaining dividends of the said annuities after deducting the dividends for the said one thousand five hundred pounds so received by this defendant and which this defendant has submitted to account for as aforesaid, and out of the said several capital sums of two thousand six hundred and eighty-three pounds eleven shillings bank annuities and one thousand four hundred and eighty-two pounds and three shillings South Sea annuities, this defendant claims an allowance for the maintenance and education of her said children: the said plaintiff John Anthony Vazeille, James Vazeille deceased, and the said Jane Mathews (that is to say, for the maintenance and education of the said plaintiff John Anthony Vazeille from the time of the said testator's death, which happened on or about the thirteenth of June one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven, to the time of his being put clerk to the said Mr. I'Anson, which was on or about the tenth of July one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, being seven year and upwards; and for the maintenance and education of James Vazeille deceased from the said thirteenth of June one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven to his death, which happened on or about the eighth of February one thousand seven

hundred and fifty-four, being six years and a half and upwards; and for the maintenance and education of the plaintiff Mrs. Matthews from the said thirteenth of June one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven to the [twenty-fourth³] day of July one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, being the time of her marriage, being ten years and upwards). For whose several maintenances and educations this defendant hath not charged anything in the schedules, either to her answer or to this her examination.

And this examinant also claims an allowance thereout for what she hath paid Mr. Lucan, an attorney, for his trouble, attendance, and law charges in getting in several of the testator's debts.

And this examinant saith that the sums mentioned in the third schedule to this defendant's said answer and in the fourth schedule to this her examination, to have been paid by this examinant, have been all really and actually paid by this examinant, and what this examinant could not avoid paying.

And this examinant further saith that the defendant John Wesley hath not anyways intermeddled with the estates and effects of the said testator Anthony Vazeille, either in receiving or paying.

Mary Wesley
Ar. Jones

The first schedule to which the Examination above refers to, being an account of the errors, mistakes, and omissions in the accounts in the second schedule to the Answer of this examinant and the said defendant John Wesley to the complainants' bill of complaint filed in this cause. By receipts wherein is charged less than this defendant received. [total 288.2.11]

By receipts wherein is charged more than this defendant received [total 12.5.6]

By this defendant before she put in her said answer, but omitted to be taken an account of there [total 2866.14.0]

The second schedule to which the above examination refers, being an account of the errors, mistakes, and omissions in the account set forth in the third schedule to the Answer of this examinant and the said defendant John Wesley to the complainants' bill filed in this cause.

By payment wherein is charged less than the defendant paid. [total 169.7.0]

By payment wherein is charged more than the defendant paid. [total 64.12.1]

The third schedule to which the examination above refers, being an account of the money received by this defendant since this defendant's said Answer put in [total 1211.12.0]

The fourth schedule to which the Examination above refers, being an account of the money paid by this defendant since this defendant's Answer put in of the testator's personal estate and the monies that this defendant has disbursed for the support, maintenance, and preferment of the said plaintiff John Anthony Vazeille [650] for apprenticeship to I'Anson and then buy commission in army

[1500 for legacy

health care and funeral for James Vazeille [121.11.11]

The fifth schedule to which the above Examination refers, being an account of the several stocks the defendant bought with the monies arising from the said testator's personal estate. [total: 4279.14.4]

Source: British National Archives, C 128/24/2.

³A blank space is left in the document for the date to be supplied. The marriage took place at St. Luke's church, Islington; with Thomas Walsh and Richard Kemp as witnesses.

From the Rev. Thomas Goodday¹

Monkwearmouth²
July 13, 1759

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your kind letter³ reached me at a very critical hour, and another favour of the same nature would be as refreshing to my soul as the dew of heaven to the parched glebe. The seasonable hints which you have been pleased to give me by way of caution are, as I am at present circumstanced, truly judicious and pertinent. And I do assure you, sir, that I will always have a special eye to those admonitions, and shall endeavour (by God's assistance) to be governed by them, and make them the rule of my future conduct with regard to those two particular kinds of men.

Your harmless, inoffensive, and good-natured men are, it is most true, a very dangerous set of creatures; and such were esteemed all, or most of, my former associates. But praised be that God who hath opened mine eyes. I now see clearly that for a long time past we have only been mutually endeavouring the destruction of one another, both in soul and body; and all this, without any settled design one against another or without entertaining the least apprehension of mischief.

I have had enough to do also (more especially of late) with the *prudent children* of this generation, and I wish I could find myself as perfectly proof against their insinuations as I am against all attacks from the former quarter. These are perpetually pestering my ears with the *rational scheme*, so called, and out of the great good will they bear me would fain persuade me that it can no way conduce to the glory of God, the honour, credit, or interest of Christianity, nor to my own interest to be sure, to deviate in the least from the old beaten track I have been so long accustomed to, both in thinking, preaching, and praying. Such is the wisdom of the world, and such the mighty love that some persons have for me. Indeed sir, they are often whispering, the world will call you fool. And I am still a coward, and when will it once be that in the cause of God, and maintenance of his truth, I can set my face as a flint, and steel my heart against the suggestions of those two busy demons—false shame and the fear of man.

But now, dear sir, I come to ask your advice. For though I hold daily communion with God in his word, and endeavour by the light thereof to try and examine myself and search out my own spirit, yet I am often at a loss. And with whom should I then consult but with one who hath so long walked with his Maker, and known his counsel, and declared it as freely unto men? My God has been gracious unto me, and in what he has already done for my soul has not left himself without a witness in my own breast. But I can never be in Christ entirely and effectually, till the devil be totally dead in me. And when will the whole body of sin be destroyed? A sore struggle I have had, and having experienced a woeful conflict within me, and a deal more I fear I have yet to sustain, for I find the corruptions of my nature are still alive. And if I am a moment off my guard, the tempter is sure to seize that opportunity, and I am some times gone too far in an evil thought before I am aware. My passions would be as domineering and my old appetites as importunate as ever, though I wrestle all I can and strive against them in the strength of that grace that God has already given, and I hope that his Holy Spirit has not been at work with me in vain. I have had a sufficient fight of myself, and such a view of my blessed Redeemer, and his fullness, as makes him all I want, and all I would be at. And as such, I have laid hold on him for my present salvation, and have thereby received comfort. But as my faith has neither been accompanied with that extraordinary degree of joy, nor raised my love of God and man to such a pitch as others tell us they have experienced,

¹Thomas Goodday (1705–68) matriculated at Queen's College, Oxford, but never graduated. He was perpetual curate of Monkwearmouth from 1744 to his death. He became a close friend of JW, allowing him to preach in his church and hold services in a building next to his home; cf. JW, *Journal*, May 31, 1761, *Works*, 21:326.

²Spelled 'Monk's-Wearmouth' in *AM*.

³JW to Goodday, July 6, 1765.

and which you make one evidence of our adoption, I know not whether I have yet believed to my justification or not. My soul is therefore still in a great strait, and I am alternately tossed with fears and hopes. The truth is, upon examination of myself, I am as yet I know not what. I would be a Christian, but I am nothing, or rather any thing than a Christian in the proper sense of the word. I know I am a fool, a babe, a mere novice in the faith; and yet, if another should tell me so to my face, I have still so much of the old tinder left in me as to take fire upon it immediately. I would sometimes persuade myself that I fear nothing but sin. But I am often afraid, I know not how; and of, I know not what. So that, in short, I am little better at present than a mere jumble of crude inconsistencies. You see, sir, I have taken great freedom with you, but I am in a very serious mood. And I hope you will believe that I cannot be more serious than when I tell you that is the bounden duty of both my wife and myself, when ever we put up our petitions to the God of all mercy and consolation, never to leave out this—viz., that he would be pleased to preserve the life of Mr. John Wesley long, as a blessing to the nation.

I am, dear sir,

Your sincere and affectionate brother,

Thomas Goodday

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 165–68.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 14, 1759]

Let mercenary writers, established by themselves judges and masters of all learning and doctrine, despise the disciple and teacher of Truth, so far as not to take notice of a letter lately published by him, and of which she is the only principle and substance and object. He esteems them so far as to take notice of the chief article of their last production, asking them in the presence of all England and the world why Jesus Christ has not said that we shall know such, and so many, what they call moral and religious truths (*Monthly Review*, pp. 488ff.), but only one Truth which is himself, the only Son (John 8:31–36), and Father, and Spirit or life of himself; Father and Brother and Life, and sovereign Master of all men, who delivers us from his and our enemies, the dark, deaf, and dumb, and lame enemies of Truth (Heb. 12:13–13; Rev. 21:10–13)? We permit only to John Wesley, George Whitefield, to their black angels, or apostles and ministers, to their stupid contributors, subscribers, and followers or disciples to acknowledge many other truths, of other kinds than Truth which is Jesus Christ, the God only of those who love her.

The said letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury is sold by J. Marshal, in St. Clements Church-yard; and T. Jones in May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane. Price 6d.

Source: Public Advertiser (July 14, 1759), p. 4.

From the Rev. John Berridge

[Everton]
July 16, 1759

Dear Sir,

Mr. H.¹ and myself have been preaching in the fields for this month past, and the power of the Lord is wonderfully present with the word. We have been casting the gospel-net in the neighbourhood. But success at present only, or chiefly attends us in the Eastern parts, and there we now direct the whole of our endeavours. Near twenty towns have received the gospel in a greater or less degree, and we continually receive fresh invitations whenever we go out. The word is everywhere like a hammer, breaking the rock in pieces. People fall down, cry out most bitterly, and struggle so vehemently that five or six men can scarcely hold them. It is wonderful to see how the fear of the Lord falls even upon unawakened sinners. When we enter a new village, the people stare, and laugh, and rail abundantly. But when we have preached night and morning, and they have heard the outcries of wounded sinners, they seem as much alarmed and terrified, as if the French were at their doors. As soon as three or four receive convictions in a village, they are desired to meet together two or three nights in a week, which they readily comply with. At first they only sing, afterwards they join reading and prayer to singing, and the presence of the Lord is greatly with them. Let me mention two instances. At Orwell ten people were broken down in one night, only by hearing a few people sing hymns. At Grandchester, a mile from Cambridge, seventeen people were seized with strong convictions last week, only by hearing hymns sung. When societies get a little strength and courage, they begin to read and pray, and then the Lord magnifies his love as well as power amongst them by releasing souls out of bondage.

Of late there has been a wonderful out-pouring of the spirit of love amongst believers. Insomuch that they have fainted under it, fallen down, and lain upon the ground as dead for some hours. And their bodies have been so weakened by these transports of joy that they were not able to endure hard labour for some days afterwards. Before Mr. H[icks] and myself preached abroad, the enemy was menacing us much for going into houses and barns.

I would not have you publish the account of A[nn] T[horn] which Mr. [John] W[alsh] has sent you.² It might only prejudice people against the Lord's work in this place, and I find our friends in town begin to be in great pain about the work. They are very slow of heart to believe what they do not see with their own eyes. Indeed these things seem only designed for the spot on which they are wrought. What men see or hear they will be brought to credit. Men's attention is raised, and their prejudices against what is called a new doctrine removed by them. And thus the design of God is answered. But where people lie out of the reach of the doctrine, you will find them lie out of the reach of conviction. These signs are not for them, and so are disregarded by them. Give my love to Mr. [William] Grimshaw, and John Nelson, and believe me

Your affectionate servant for Christ's sake.

J. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 611–13.

¹Samuel Hicks (c. 1721–96), a graduate of Clare College, Cambridge, was appointed rector of Wrestlingworth, a village about 4 miles east of Everton, in 1744. His neighbour John Berridge soon drew him into the evangelical camp. See JW, *Journal*, Nov. 9, 1758 (*Works*, 21:171, where this is a correction of the name in fn. 79) and July 29, 1759 (21:213).

²JW incorporated the journal account of John Walsh commenting on Ann Thorn, a young convert of Berridge, in his *Journal*, July 29, 1759 (*Works*, 21:211).

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 20, 1759]

The First Lesson of John-Baptist, the disciple of Truth, teacher of all England and the world,
contained in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The two people in the world called true believers and Jews our brethren, agree with us, called the Christian people, that it is Truth which speaks in the Scriptures; consequently, that it is Truth which saith in Exodus 3:14–16, 'I am who am, or who is ... the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'; and in Leviticus 25:12, 'I will be your God, and you shall be my people.' John Wesley, the most remarkable of those who betray Truth, and thus themselves, their country, and the world, saith 'Truth is not God at all, no more than the sun'. Under him mercenary writers, the Monthly Reviewers, fail to their engagement to the public of giving them a candid account of all new books and pamphlets published in Great Britain, etc.; [they] omit unfaithfully the most important of all and publish many moral and religious truths, in a stupid pretension of drowning in the darkness of a new oblivion, the living light of the essentially one Truth, which begins to enlighten the world.

The said letter published on Friday, June 8, 19, 29, etc., is sold at J. Marshal, in St. Clements Church-yard; and T. Jones in May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: Public Advertiser (July 20, 1759), p. 4.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
[July 24, 1759¹]

[[Mr. Finne, the King of Prussia's chaplain took his leave of me today.² He was extremely desirous to see you. You would have liked him much. He is going to his master, and will bring up a good report of us.

A friend of ours says, 'Mr. Gilbert³ borrows or begs money by handfuls.'

Last week I found whom think you but our most faithful friend Mrs. [Lucia] Gallatin offended, wounded, poisoned! Such horrid stories she had heard of our women, our letters, etc.;⁴ of which more perhaps in my next. For now I am]]

Source: CW shorthand transcription; MARC, DDCW 7/112, unnumbered.

¹Date established by letter of CW to his wife mentioning same matter on July 24, 1759.

²Christian Ludwig Finne (1720–82) was a court chaplain in Crossen and Cottbus (1751–57) and pastor of the Reformed church in Breslau.

³Likely Nathaniel Gilbert (c. 1721–74), or his younger brother Francis (d. 1779).

⁴JW's wife Mary had communicated to Lucia Gallatin her suspicion about letters she intercepted between JW and Sarah Ryan in late 1758. See CW to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley, July 19, 1759.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[July 27, 1759]

The Second Lesson of John Baptist, the disciple of Truth, teacher of all England and the world, contained in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Truth, speaking the Scriptures, saith that she is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Consequently John Baptist, the disciple and teacher of Truth, saith to all England and the world that the word 'Truth' is the name of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob, his only proper, absolute, substantive name, as only Father, Son, and Spirit or life of himself, Father, and Brother, and enlivening Spirit, sovereign Maker of all men. Let John Wesley, the head of all the anti-Truths, deny the principle or the consequence, teaching another God in Jesus Christ than Truth our God, and let the Monthly Reviewers dream still their moral and religious truths, and one Mr. William Romaine, never more justly silenced, substitute unfaithfully to the living universal substantive name of the God of Abraham, the adjective names 'Jehovah', 'Adonai', 'Emmanuel', etc., insignificant in our living languages and dead as the very language in which they were once significant and understood (Rev. 22:10–13).

To be continued.

See pp. 7–16 of the said letter, published on the 8th, 19th, 29th of June, 7, 14, 20 of this instant, and sold by J. Marshal in St. Clement's Lane; and Thomas Jones in May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane. Price 6d.

Source: Public Advertiser (July 27, 1759), p. 4.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

July 29, 1759

I have reason to believe our conversing together so freely was agreeable to the pure eyes of the Most Holy. I have not found the least sully upon my soul, nor hurry upon my spirits since.

Could I but imagine I am conversing with you this hour, it would increase my joy. For though writing is agreeable, it falls far short of the presence of my dear friend. I feel a clearness in my soul, and light and love increase. I shall never forget the subject of my prayer: I received it not from *you*, but from God who spoke in you. Forget not [to] make supplication and to give thanks for this flourishing part of Christ's vineyard, and for some plants in it whom you know and love. I think *you* cannot forget.

Did you feel comfortable and well after you left?¹ Has any storm arisen since, to damp your joy? Nothing but the being diverted of a will could have made your friend part with you without *pain*. But you must preach the gospel to other cities also, for there unto are you sent.² I often think I shall scarce be permitted to commune with *you* in heaven. Yet I know I shall be abundantly satisfied in that eternal day.

Still bad news for England.³ But how is it I cannot fear for myself or the Church? I find such liberty and blessings in prayer on your account. The Lord only knoweth what will be the end. But let us keep close together, and close to God!

I remain,

Yours in the best bonds of divine love,

[no name is shown]

Source: MARC, MA 1977/157, JW III.7, item numbered '110' (transcription in JW's hand).

¹JW had been in the Newcastle area much of June, and around York much of July, so the correspondent may be from one of these settings.

²This sentence is ~~struck out~~ in the manuscript.

³Likely a reference to continuing Seven Years' War.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[Templemacateer, Ireland]
c. August 1759

The evening I visited him, he seemed to be in the last conflict. 'This is the fiery trial', said he. 'O may I,

True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay thee back thy dying love!'¹

One evening I came to see him he said, 'I have been walking the golden streets alone!' 'Well', said I, 'you want company.' 'Yes', said he, 'the saints and angels.' 'Dear', said I, 'do you think I shall ever get there?' He said, with a smile, 'I hope the work of God is going on in your soul. You are young, beware of the snares that beset youth. Watch! Watch! O what joy shall we have when we meet in our Father's kingdom!' The Sabbath-day before he departed, some of his friends being present, he said, 'I shall soon be looking down upon you.

Sure it can't my Lord displease,
That I would die to be his guest.'²

A short time after, bursting into raptures of joy, he said, 'O the joy! the joy!' And lifting up his hand, said, 'Come, see a Christian die, triumphant over death, hell, and the grave!' He seemed to me as if he would fly out of the bed. 'The Christian's soul', said he, 'has wings; yes, and eyes within and without.' Thus died Jonathan Handy, a pattern for all in life and in death.³

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 6 (1783): 190–91.

¹CW, 'Desiring to Love', st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 25.

²Cf. CW, 'Looking unto Jesus', st. 6, *HSP* (1742), 50.

³Titled in *AM*: 'The words of a dying saint, who departed this life July 25, 1759'.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 4, 1759]

A Continuation of the Second Lesson of John Baptist, the disciple of Truth, teacher of all
England and the world, contained in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Truth, which saith to Moses (Exod. 3:14–16), 'I AM ... the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, of Jacob', saith in the 6:3, 'I am the sovereign Master who appeared unto them as God Almighty, but I did not declare unto them my name Jehova'. This dead adjective word 'Jehova', having no signification in any living language, signified only in Hebrew 'almighty'; as 'Adonai', 'sovereign'. As only in Hebrew, in Greek, and Latin, 'amen' signified Truth, the living universal substantive. Thus Truth saith to Moses, 'I did not declare my almighty name, or Adoney, that is my name both as almighty and sovereign Master Universal. The golden calf fabricated by Aaron, then the high priest in the world, to be worshipped as the almighty, was but a figure of the stupidity of these men of our days who don't understand this, and such like lessons of John Baptist. What is said of the traitor apostle, and of the revolted angel is but a shadow of the pride, and infidelity, and unfaithfulness of those who are not willing to understand it, and give glory to Truth, which is Jesus Christ, and his only name, by the knowledge of which the world begin to be saved. John Wesley and Mr. William Romaine deny it more or less deceitfully. The Monthly Reviewers dream still many truths, consequently many Gods of Abraham, and of John Baptist.

See the publication of the 27th of last month, and the said Letter, pp. 7–16, 38, 39, sold by J. Marshal, in St. Clements Church-yard, and T. Jones in May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 4, 1759), p. 3.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[August 10, 1759]

The Third Lesson of John Baptist, the disciple of Truth, before whom even the Monthly Reviewers and critics, are silent. This lesson is contained in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, pp. 7–9, 13–16, 3–4.

Jesus-Christ our God, only Father, and Son, and Spirit of himself, Father, and Brother, and Life of all men, saith in St. John 17:26, speaking as Son unto himself as Father,^a 'I have declared thy name unto men'; he adds, 'and I will declare it'. What occasion to declare it again? If not because men have forgot and misunderstood, till now, this first declaration of his.^b He hath declared by himself his name as Father, and Son, and Spirit of himself^c as many times as he hath begun his discourses by that great word 'Amen', by which on the contrary we have finished ours. He declares it now again by that John Baptist who teaches all England, and the world, that the word 'Amen' has no other true signification in Hebrew, in Greek, and Latin than the words 'truth' and 'verity' have in English, and all the words which answer them in all living languages. 'Amen, ...'; that is, 'I Truth tell you'. 'Amen, Amen, ...'; that is, 'I Truth (principle and production, and life of) Truth, which is myself, tell you'. I, John Baptist the disciple of Truth, attest it plainly and publicly, laying upon my attestation all my living, even my life against John Wesley and William Romaine, the only men in the world who dared to deny it publicly and sophistically, but dare not to lay even five guineas against fifty upon their denial, nor for them any of their stupid disciples and followers.

^a John 8:31–32, 14:7–17, 15:26, 16:13–15.

^b Mark 8:17–18; Ps. 22:27–28.

Source: Public Advertiser (Aug. 10, 1759), p. 3.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley¹

Loughrea
August 21, 1759

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your obliging and truly Christian letter was welcome to my soul ten thousand, thousand times, and brought along with it a warm satisfaction which could only be exceeded by the pleasure of a personal conversation with you. And I am not without hopes that when you shall think fit to visit those blessed seminaries of true vital religion in this kingdom, of your own planting, you will take an opportunity of honouring this place, and more particularly my house, with the presence of one whose labours in the gospel of my dear Master are so eminent.

I thank you greatly for your alarm. Indeed, the devil could not make use of a more subtle specious insinuation to dissuade us from pursuing the attack with vigour than that of *Christian prudence*. I trust he sees himself baffled through your timely caution. But alas! What confidence is there to be put in the weakness of man! It is in the Lord's strength alone that I shall be able to triumph over this, and all other temptations.

I highly honour and love Mr. [John] Berridge, and Mr. [William] Grimshaw. May God bless them with increasing success, that they may see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied. And may he endue me with the same noble courage, that his name may be magnified even in this place.

What will you say, dear sir? Will you not give up every favourable opinion of so unworthy a minister as I am, when I inform you that though there are many under my charge who confess they have been awakened, yet I dare not boast of any confirmed converts (now living) through my preaching and ministry? I bless my God, however, for one dear soul who departed in peace.

I am now about to leave them for two or three months, being in a very bad state of bodily health and advised to go to Bath. Let me entreat your earnest prayers to the God of all grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that I may not be found an unprofitable servant; and that I may return to my dear parishioners under the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace. That you may finish your course with joy, and in God's good season enter into the full possession of the fruit of your labours, is the sincere prayer of,

Your affectionate brother,

W. Shirley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 168–69.

¹Walter Shirley (1725–86), brother of Laurence Shirley, Fourth Earl Ferrers, and first cousin of Lady Huntingdon, became rector of Loughrea, County Galway, Ireland in 1746. About 1758 he experienced an evangelical conversion (possibly through the agency of JW), and was initially quite warm in his letters to JW. However, he turned violently against JW in the controversy over the rejection of Calvinism in the *Minutes* of the 1770 Conference.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

Berlin
August 26, 1759

God has again wrought publicly in this place, in the presence of many thousand people. A soldier of the King's Guard was sentenced to be hanged for desertion and theft. He was a wretch abandoned to all manner of wickedness. General K—— was much concerned for his soul. He earnestly desired me to take charge of it, though we saw no prospect of success. I visited him the day he was condemned, being Thursday. He seemed quite careless and unconcerned. I endeavoured to convince him of sin but did not perceive any effect. I begged of him not to deceive his own soul but to consider the condition he was in. On Friday this began to sink into his heart, and on Saturday much more. Perceiving this, I much insisted on those words: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'¹ The effect was astonishing. He laid hold of them by faith, and not only his burden was gone, but he had such experience of the love of Christ as it is impossible to describe. His peace, triumph, and joy increased every hour till the night before his execution, and indeed were never more observable than when he was brought out of prison. In his way to the place of execution he praised God for dragging him as it were with chains to heaven. 'What', said he, 'will God after all my hellish actions give me eternal life into the bargain?' The efficacy of the blood and death of Christ being made known to him by the Holy Ghost, he spoke of nothing but his wedding-day, which was to be this thirteenth of August. Everyone that looked upon him was struck. Officers and all were moved. Being entered into the ring, I once more prayed with him, and gave him the last blessing. But the very instant he was to be turned off, Colonel H—— called out 'Pardon!' I was thunderstruck, and Mittelstadt protested it was to him like a ball shot through his body. He fainted away for some time. Being recovered, his first words were, 'Why was I not rather hanged, or even crucified, than pardoned? Why am I thus stopped in my course? I should now have been with Christ!' I was myself more afraid of him now than ever. But the grace of God was strong in his soul. And ever since it has continued the same. Yesterday I was informed, by one who went on purpose to inquire, that his whole employ during his confinement (which is to continue six months) is reading, praying, and comforting himself with the blood of Christ.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Sept. 9, 1759 (*Works*, 21:227–28).

¹1 Tim. 1:15.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]
September 9, 1759

Dear Sir,

I neither send nor receive a letter from you without prayer that the Lord may bless it and sanctify it. He does wonderfully bless yours to *me*; and I know he can do all things, so he can make mine, though weak and simple, useful even to you. But I cannot see how it can be, and often wonder at your patience and condescension.

Our little company had a blessed meeting today. The Lord was indeed with us, and our hearts were as wax before the fire. A dear child of God from Leeds met with us, who has found a perfect change in his heart and is swallowed up in the love of God. You are the person to whom all things work together for good. The all-wise God best knows what is truly good for us, and he is pleased to exercise his dearest children with what might seem to us strange things. But there must be ballast in the ship, or it cannot sail.

I will now tell you the state of my own soul, according to the best of my knowledge. I feel no sin, no pride, no anger, no self-will, nothing contrary to pure love. The ever-blessed Spirit makes his continual, and I believe his everlasting abode in me. I feel both the witness and the happy effects of my soul's being all renewed. When I look most narrowly into my soul (as I do on many particular occasions), I cannot find any thing contrary thereto, but all within me is of a piece. I find more and more purity of heart. The work sinks deeper and deeper. I feel a sensible growth in grace, and am farther separate from sin and temptation. I find much more cheerfulness in my temper, with continual peace and joy in believing. But I seldom speak these things, lest it should discourage some sincere, weak soul. To him that hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood, be honour and praise for ever! Yet this treasure we have in earthen vessels, clothed with flesh and blood, and surrounded with a thousand infirmities.

May the Lord Almighty bless you with the fullness of his love! I hope I shall never forget *you*, and may you never forget, before the throne of grace,

Your affectionate and ever loving sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 498–99.

From Cornelius Bastable¹

September 20, 1759

I am lost in wonder, to think of the kindness of the Lord to me. My whole soul is in ecstasy of joy. All within me adores his majesty. But how far out of the way are they who think that when a man is perfect in love he has no need of the mediatorial office of our Lord? This is my glory, that I live through him. O how happy are they who obey him with a pure heart! They serve him without any inward interruption.

Cornelius Bastable

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 5 (1782): 377.

¹JW comments on this and the two later excerpts: 'The following fragments, wrote by one of our preacher's now with God, I doubt not will be acceptable to every pious reader'.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]
October 12, 1759

Dear Sir,

What reason have I to rejoice that I am still favoured with your kind letters, and that the providence of God is over them all? You can scarcely suppose how present in spirit you have been with me for some weeks last past! Who can account for these things? Are you still able to travel, though the season of the year is so far advanced? You have indeed strength according to your day. Go on, thou blessed of the Lord, nothing doubting but in due time thou shalt reap. Though I believe the Lord is nothing in your debt, for his reward is with him. He dwelleth already in every believing, humble, loving heart.

You may see how easily love hopeth all things. However, we will rejoice in what God *has* done for you. And we cannot cease to pray for you, so long as you have any complaint. But let me venture to remind you, when you find the power of God so sensibly upon you again, be sure that prayer has opened heaven—ask for all that God can give, and see that you do not let him go until he bless you indeed.

You shall always have plainness, truth, and love from *me*; but then you must forgive my ignorance, and many other faults.

With regard to the state of my own soul, I am not only preserved but strengthened daily. I find no hurry upon my spirits, nor any thing that darkens my soul. I find more light, and am very sensible of more love. I will tell you freely with respect to the particular you mention. In years past, when I looked upon an agreeable person it affected me much. But now I find not the least shadow of this, no more than a little child. I only desire to love and please God. So far I am redeemed from the Fall, that my desire is not even to my husband, and yet I love him with an endeared affection. I was not quite so clear in this when I first found the blessing. Yet if we consider the Scripture, we must allow, Marriage is lawful and honourable even to persons full of faith and love. And when I remember the first command which God gave to man while in innocence, with the many precepts and examples in Holy Writ, and consider the human frame, I incline to think that two such persons might have children, if the Lord should please. But if there is any uneasy desire, if we have not learnt in whatever state we are to be content, and that in the fullest sense, it is plain there is want of grace, want of purity of heart.

May the Lord teach you his perfect truth! This is the prayer of,

Your unworthy friend and servant,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 500–01.

From the Rev. Robert Martin

Moir
October 12, [1759]

Reverend Sir,

I make free to trouble with these few lines to acquaint you with the departure of our dear brother [Thomas] Seccomb,² who made his exit yesterday morning at 12 o'clock, the 11th day of October. He came to this town about six days ago, rode from Lisburn in a high fever. He was so ill accommodated *there* he was obliged to leave it. He was taken a vast deal of care of in this town. He had a very skilful physician and I took care that he should want for nothing. My Lord Rawdon has been very kind on this occasion.

He had a very severe fever, was not sensible for four days before his departure. But about two hours before it, he gave out a text and began to preach on it. His voice was strong to the last moment, and his last words were, 'Christ is the Author and Finisher of my faith.'³ He gave three puffs and sweetly fell asleep. He was interred this day with great decency. I read the funeral service and ordered a psalm to be sung on the occasion.

I beg, sir, you may give some orders how his things are to be disposed of, such as his watch and clothes, a six pound note he had in his pocket book, and some book he had along with him. He had about four pounds in his pocket, part of which I have expended for the funeral, by the advice and consent of some of the leaders, who came from Lisburn, Lurgan, and Clare. He got off some of the receipts for the volume of sermons that are coming out. But Mr. [Thomas] Kead is to be here tomorrow evening and he and I will look over his papers.

These seems to be but small hopes of the good seed taking root in this town. They are a lifeless, cold, stupid people, almost as incapable of being wrought on as stocks and stones. They come to hear the word because they imagine it fashionable so to do. And whatever the great man of the place leans to, they are resolved to be of the same side, and so they like to be called Methodists. However, I believe there are four or five that desire to know the truth, and they of the poorer sort—the rich having enough, and need of nothing. Mr. Cumming has been here this half year and preaches almost every Sunday. The Bishop of Derry [William Barnard] and Mrs. [Anne] Barnard have been here lately. The bishop desired whenever I had an opportunity I might present his respects to *you*. He often expresses the great regard he has for you. I suppose you have heard that he has ordained Mr. [John] Houghton. I think he is the only Irish bishop we have.

Dear sir, I intend to visit Glasgow in three weeks time at farthest. My situation does not permit me to stay long in that university, so I would be highly obliged to you if you would write to Mr. [John] Gillies concerning me, that I may have a friend to show me some favour *there*. But dear sir, above all, let me entreat you to pray for me that God may direct and preserve me, and that all I do may be according to his good pleasure. Indeed sir, it is my desire to live to Jesus Christ, but I want humility. I want a single eye. If you will condescend to favour me with a line or two when I get to Glasgow, it will give me great satisfaction, if God permits me arrive there. I am, dear sir,

Yours sincerely in the best bonds,

Robert Martin

My Lord [John] Rawdon's family are all well. Mrs. Motte desires I send her respects to you.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Rob. Martin, Oct. 12, 1759 / Ad. Nov. 3 / Acct of Mr. Seccombe's death'.
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/102.

²Spelled 'Seccombe' in *AM*.

³Cf. Heb. 12:2.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[October 13, 1759]

John-Baptist the disciple and teacher of Truth to all England and the world, upon the repeated flights of John Wesley before Truth and me.^a

Truth, considered in her feminine nature,^b the ever-living Mother and Sister, and sovereign Mistress of all men, bruises now the head of the serpent her enemy, which attempts only her heel. The last hope of John Wesley with flying always before Truth and me is to hurt her heel in the pursuit of him, that is to tease me pursuing him in her name and by the power she gives me on all her enemies.^c There is not in all England and the world a man of right sense and understanding, who could persuade himself that this John Wesley has greater business at Bristol,¹ or anywhere else,^d than to answer here so great a summon as in the name of Truth the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master—so public as in the very *Public Advertiser*; so grievous as declaring and proving him the most bold, and stubborn, and insolent^e of all the enemies of truth; likewise such a challenge as of fifty guineas to five, even my life, that challenge many times repeated, if I don't prove him as false a preacher of the religion of Jesus Christ, and as false a minister of the living Church of his own nation as Judas kissing Jesus Christ and calling him master was a false friend, a false disciple and servant, a false apostle of his. Who, if not bereaved of right sense and understanding, will persuade himself that this very man has rather to spare to me the loss of fifty guineas, than to justify his doctrine, and practices, and himself, at no risk if he is certain of being unconfutable,^f at the risk only of five guineas to fifty if he is only uncertain of it.

^a *The Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, at J. Marshal's, and T. Jones, p. 4, line 6ff.; p. 47, line 22ff.
[see June 1, 1759 above].

^b *Ibid.*, p. 17, line 22ff.

^c Matt. 7:29.

^d Matt. 13:13–15.

^e The said *Letter*, p. 47, line 32ff.

^f John 15:22; 2 Tim. 2:15.

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Oct. 13, 1759), p. 3.

¹JW's preaching tour through northern England had covered March through July 1759. He was in and around London in August and September, then spent the first three weeks of October in Bristol, partly to finish publication of the fourth volume of his *Sermons* (see *Journal*).

From John Fisher¹

Dublin
October 15, 1759

Reverend and Dear Sir,

My dear friend and brother [Thomas] Seccomb² is gone triumphant to Jesus. He kept the quarterly-meeting at Lisburn with the fever heavy upon him, and set off the next morning thinking to make his way hither, in order to sail for Cornwall. But by the time he reached Moira his disorder mastered him. All the care possible was taken of him. Nothing that Lord [John] Rawdon could procure was wanting. He had the best physician that could be got, constantly to attend him. But his work was done and his days accomplished. And his Master had a greater blessing, and a more ravishing sight for him than that of his own earthly country, or his friends and relations in the flesh. He lost the use of his senses four days, but the last two hours they were restored to him. He then took a text and preached a sermon. Afterwards he lay quiet for a few moments, and then said with an audible voice, 'Christ is the author and finisher of my faith.'³ These were his last words. He then quietly fell asleep, without a sigh or groan, on Thursday morning about eight o'clock, October the 10th.

I am much afflicted for my brother. I loved him more than with a common love. I fear few such are left behind. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake,

John Fisher

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 279.

¹John Fisher appears in the Minutes as an itinerant preacher in 1752 (*Works*, 10:251), and served through about 1760.

²Spelled 'Seccombe' in *AM*.

³Cf. Heb. 12:2.

From John Walsh

Knightsbridge
October 16, 1759

Dear Sir,

In my letter of April 30th you received a circumstantial account of my sister's¹ departure for Antigua. Wherefore I now transcribe a few passages out of a letter which I received from her, the 9th instant.

... From Portsmouth we weighed anchor about ten o'clock, the day quite clear and pleasant. I spent most part of it upon deck, to take a long leave of land. Our fleet consisted of about seventy sails. After two days we entered the mouth of the Bay of Biscay, and the same evening God was pleased to try us by a storm, which continued twenty four hours. The preparations for it were very alarming, orders being given by the officers to fasten down the hatches, lash more securely the guns, and put up dead lights at the cabin windows. Mrs. Gilbert, the children, and myself went to bed, being very sick; nor did we rise till it was quite over. But Mr. [Nathaniel] Gilbert, who is certainly the tenderest and best of men, spent most of the time with us in prayer, and at other times in looking out, informing us of the situation of our own and other ships. We found great reason to give God thanks for the blowing weather we met with in the river, as it had been a means of our taking in more ballast, without which nothing less than a miracle could have preserved us from perishing. Our ship being still very crank, lay gunnel-to, with the forecastle under water, and the sea running in at the port-holes made a dismal appearance. Before I proceed, I know my brother will be desirous of knowing what state my soul was then in, and may I ever remember it with humility and gratitude! I had my soul filled with such peace, joy, and resignation, as entirely cast out all fear. I was happy beyond expression. Mr. Gilbert often asked me if I fear? Or if I was sorry I came with them? To both which questions I could truly and constantly answer, 'No'. I saw they labored under distress of soul, and hereby the work was also carried on in them. For these mercies, and for deliverance from the danger, help us in praising our good God. I am much delighted with the sea in all its forms, but particularly after a storm, when the waves run up and down in mountains and vales with the white foam that breaks at the top. I have sat an hour or two at a time alone in the gallery, to see the sun setting and the ships sailing, and my meditations have been sweet. How have I then exulted in the thought, 'This awful God is mine; my Father, and my Friend!' I thank God I was not sea-sick three days, put it all together, the whole voyage. But I found my head a little heavy in the hot weather, and was let blood. Mr. Gilbert constantly preached, and the people attended. Some seemed affected. Since our arrival he has only done it in his own family, as there has been no opening to preach in public. On the 13th of June we arrived in English Harbour. Here we met a very alarming circumstance—a ship of war, which lay quite near, taking fire. This made us hasten ashore, as our danger would have been great, had she blown up.

I was much tried upon land, for this only reason, my being a Methodist. ...

All is strange: the place, the produce, the customs and manners. I am as if in a new world! I should have been glad to have wrote a longer, and more correct letter, but must acquaint my dear brother I am but just recovered from a pretty sharp fit of the fever and am very weak.

I find my soul still happy in God, and I trust your soul grows in grace. I am much enlarged in prayer for you, and for the whole church of God. Surely we meet often in spirit at the

¹John Walsh's sister Mary married Robert Leadbetter in June 1750. By Oct. 1758 she had been widowed, and became the governess of the children of Nathaniel Gilbert, who had recently arrived in England from Antigua. She accompanied the family on their return to Antigua in Apr. 1759, then returned with the children a few years later, to live with their uncle Francis Gilbert. Soon after she married Francis Gilbert. Cf. *WHS* 55 (2005): 16–18.

same throne. Here is the Christian's privilege, and this lessens the lengths of distance that lie between us.

May you, if it please God, enjoy health of body. But above all, may you be daily renewed in the spirit of your mind, and more and more enjoy the love and power of God, which is, and shall be, the prayer of

Your truly affectionate sister, in the dear Lord Jesus,

Mary Leadbetter

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 330–32.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[October 25, 1759]

John-Baptist, the disciple and teacher of Truth the universal Principle and sovereign Master his God, the God of armies,^a upon that disciple and apostle of John Wesley, who acts for him upon his stage in Moorfields,¹ in his absence.^b

The boldness of that disciple and apostle of John Wesley does not go so far as to usurp the dress of a true minister of the living Church of his nation, consequently of Jesus Christ only Master, both as sovereign and teacher of all nations. He finds in the most inward recess of his heart that he has received no orders for the functions which he exercises but from a false minister, a traitor servant revolted against the very orders he has himself received, and who by deceitful words and blessings seduces the hearts of the simple to draw them in his revolt.^c What stupidity, if not unfaithfulness, in that man to dare to mimic a true minister of Jesus Christ in his functions, whom he dares not to mimic likewise in his dress? Are then the functions less material than the dress, which is only the mark of those who ought to fill them, only the livery of the servants of Jesus Christ? What more capital ignorance in that disciple, and unfaithfulness in his master, than to speak both as not knowing yet even the nature of the word 'God', neither the difference between the kingdom of Jesus Christ and the reign of Jesus Christ, between the faith which justifies even of the greatest faults and the faith which condemns, changing in crimes, actions even the best considered in themselves; both the disciple and master adulterating still the sacred Scriptures by the corruption of these, and all other essential terms and articles? *Corruptio boni pessima.*^d

^a *The Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, at J. Marshal's and T. Jones's, p. 38, line 21ff.

^b Ps. 4:16–22.

^c Rom. 6:17–18; the said *Letter*, pp. 23–24.

^d *Ibid.*, pp. 32–34; 2 Cor. [?]:17. ['The corruption of the good is the worst of all.']

Source: *Public Advertiser* (Oct. 25, 1759), p. 3.

¹Clearly one of JW's lay preachers, left in charge while JW was in Bristol; possibly Joseph Jones.

From R. H.

October 31, 1759

Reverend Sir,

The depth of your questions surprises my understanding. I could be glad to hear them answered by the proposer. But as you do not expect me to be perfect in knowledge, I will speak freely what occurs to my mind.

Thought is exceeding quick. I find wandering thoughts do beset me, particularly when the soul is speedily pursuing its journey toward the centre of its happiness. The enemy throws something in her way, in order to hinder or direct her from her purpose.

But while that true faith planted in the soul lays hold of its object by prayer, these neither have power to hurt nor hinder the soul that thus prays and thus believes. And having the Spirit of prayer imparted, we commune with him and present matter[s] of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving for ourselves or others. For whatever is, to us is well. So we can thank him for good report and for evil report, honour and dishonour, for riches and poverty, for sickness and for health. We feel that all things work together for good. We see more and more the littleness, the nothingness, of ourselves and all created things—together with the beauty, the loveliness, the excellencies, and the immensity of him who hath called us, who hath redeemed us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests of God.

O sir, this does make us humble, while we feel no sin. We are enabled by pure, spiritual light to see God in all and all in God.

I find the infirmities of nature, but I never find any lowness of spirits. With regard to my own state, I always find pure, solid joy and satisfaction. But a very different exercise for the church: sometimes to rejoice with them that rejoice; sometimes to weep with them that weep; to believe, to hope, to love, to suffer in spirit. I know not how these (like change of raiment) are all on at once, yet not all uppermost at one and the same time.

Dear sir, I beg your charity may excuse this imperfect description of these things. I trust never to forget you before the Lord, as long as I know myself. Let us rejoice in the will of our God. What if our enemies be those of our own household? In this let us rejoice also, and patiently endure, trusting him that is invincible.

The work of the Lord is mighty here. The Lord is doing great things, and the devil opposes much. We have need of all your prayers, that we may be endued with wisdom from on high. They catch at our words. But we commit our cause to him who judgeth righteous judgment.

May the light of his countenance shine upon you forever! Peace be with your spirit!

Farewell!

R. H.¹

Source: MARC, MA 1977/157, JW III.7, following item numbered '109' (transcription in JW's hand).

¹These initials are in shorthand.

Unidentified Reader to the Printer of the *London Chronicle*

c. November 1, 1759

Dear Sir,

I observed in your paper the other day a letter from a remarkable person, who I take to be one of the leaders of the people called Methodists.¹ If I am mistaken, he will forgive me. I have nothing to say that is not to his honour. He mentions the poor and ragged condition of the French prisoners, and hints at some little succour that he has obtained for them. Those who assume an air of greater sanctity than other people ought especially to exert greater charity. And if the Methodists distinguish themselves eminently by good works, they will greatly diminish the exceptions taken against them, or will not deserve them. Either point is worthy their attention. If the sums which they are said (how truly I know not) to draw from simple women and the lower class of people are evidently dispensed in works of charity and in relieving poor and afflicted Christians, and not made the property of their ministers and teachers, they will be the most useful and valuable set of men in the kingdom. If they bestow more in good works than the regular clergy, the latter will only expose their own avarice and selfishness by declaiming against the Methodists—but this is not the intent of my letter.

The case of the French prisoners is truly deplorable, captives to their enemies and abandoned by their friends. I am averse to all national reflections, but how shall we call that policy which has induced the French king to withdraw all allowance from his subjects that are prisoners here? Is it to distress us? Is it that he is distressed himself? In whatever light we take it, it will redound to the honour of our nation if we show indulgence to those wretched persons. The wealth of a triumphant and victorious nation will be displayed in maintaining them decently, the humanity of a generous people in being kind to our enemies. The government already makes them a tolerable allowance. But what is food, or how little, to men in prison and naked and cold? The expenses of the state are vast; so are the riches of particulars. How nobly would it sound in Europe if private subscriptions were set on foot to relieve the French prisoners! Our valour has been shown in every part of the world. Let the fame of our bounty and munificence fly as far. Our empire has been carried to the height; let every virtue add a polish to our renown. I am persuaded that if a book was opened at some of the great coffee houses, considerable sums would be collected for the miserable people I have mentioned. Let us in our turn set fashions to France, and no longer receive laws and customs from those that we have vanquished.

Source: published transcription; *London Chronicle* (Nov. 1–3, 1759), p. 431.

¹I.e., JW's letter to *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, Oct. 20, 1759, which was reprinted in the *London Chronicle* (Oct. 25–27, 1759), 408.

By John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[November 9, 1759]

John Baptist, the disciple and teacher of Truth, etc. That learned one (sufficiently named in this and some other advertisements) asking me before a witness ‘how long I would go on in my publications against John Wesley?’ Till he, said I, or any of his apostles, and disciples, and followers, and contributors, or himself—his present defender—would be willing to make a public and *sufficient answer* for him, especially to the challenge I made to him, and to all of them, so many times, so clearly and publicly, of *fifty guineas* to *five*, even of my *life*, if I don’t convince them of falsity in any chief point, term, or article of his doctrines and practices. Our learned [one], more afraid of losing a farthing upon John Wesley’s justification than sure to get fifty guineas, found no better escape than to say, ‘How could we answer, if we cannot understand you?’ (The same answer, as dictated by the same spirit, not the Spirit of Truth, has been made since by William Cartwright, the above-mentioned chief minister of the new sect called the old, or primitive, that is dead, Christians;² and this answer of his has been published in an advertisement of the 8th of August 1760, with an offer to him of an *hundred guineas* on the above conditions.) Both of them pretended to have sufficiently proved that what men of as famous a learning as themselves declared not to understand was completely without sense (John 18:37, 8:46–47). Don’t you understand, said I to the first of them, this chief proposition of mine: Truth is the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master (1 Esdras 4:34–41; Mal. 2:1–4); or can it be expressed more clearly, shortly, and in better English? Our learned [one] begun to go round about, and make many words where ‘Yes’ or ‘Not’ were only required. ‘You believe the Scripture’, said he. Yes, said I, but the question is if you don’t understand that chief proposition of mine, or if you deny it as false, or as absurd, having no sense at all, and if you are sure of proving your denial? Going on however, ‘The Scripture’, said he, ‘are the foundation of all truths.’ That is *false*, replied I. I can prove upon my life, first, that it cannot be but one Truth.^a Secondly, that the ‘Scriptures are not the foundation of all truth’, but that the essentially one Truth is the foundation of all true Scriptures, and right reasonings, and that that first counter-sense and mistake of yours is the *foundation* of all your wrong interpretations, explications, applications of the Scriptures, which sink down and perish with their foundation. He left the field of battle and went away.

If that learned [one], or William Cartwright, or John Wesley, or any other of such schools has still at this beginning of this present year 1761 [*sic*], any better answer to oppose to whatever of my publications, they are desired to publish them on sennight of the publication of the above *Reflections*, in the *Public Advertiser* upon the offer of an *hundred guineas* as above, and six shillings for their expense. I say for a better answer (1 Cor. 1:19–20, 3:18–21).

^a See the first public *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, Apr. 1759, pp. 3–4, p. 5, line 26ff., p. 8, line 34ff.; Isa. 65:14–26.

Source: London Advertiser (Nov. 9, 1759); as reprinted (with last paragraph) in *Demonstrative Reflections of John-Baptist the Arch-Teacher* (London: J. Marshal, Dec. 1760), 48–49.

²William Cartwright (1730–99) was associated with the Manchester non-jurors and married the daughter of Thomas Deacon. He helped lead their formation as the Orthodox Church of Britain, and in 1780 was consecrated a bishop of the group.

From the Rev. John Haughton

[Kilrea]

November 11, 1759

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your kind favour came to hand last night, for which I sincerely thank you. I am indeed in danger. I know it; I feel it. Yet I believe providence has placed me where I am. I hope I in some measure see already of the fruit of my labours. I am endeavouring to tread down sin wherever I meet it, both in myself and others. I have lodged with a Justice of the Peace, with whom, his family, and servants I have laboured, and not in vain. I know not that I ever saw a greater change. Swearing and profane conversation are vanished away, and reading and Christian conversation introduced. After having been with them near a month, when I left them on Friday last to go home to my own cabin, we were affectionately sorry to part.

I have one of the largest congregations in the bishop's diocese.¹ Mostly poor people. Some say I am a Presbyterian, and they will prove it for I prayed with a sick woman extempore. I have entered the list once more against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Pray for me yourself, and commend me to the prayers of others, that I may prosecute the war with prudence and courage. This day I found myself much refreshed in reading prayers and preaching, though I am the talk of the neighbourhood. The popish priest of the parish is going mad, as several of his flock seem to stagger, and one of the heads of them declares he will never come in a Mass-house again. Money never did, and I hope it never will, stick to my fingers. I think I am not half so much in danger of settling and resting on past experience as I was before I came here. I have all to do, as the rector is sick and thirty miles off.

When I come in company with men who know not God, he is good and gives me courage to be as bold for him as they are for their master, without fear or shame. May the Lord pour upon me the spirit of prayer. I shall spend much time in writing. But I must retire more than ever, for reading and prayer. If I pray not, I shall be like a man entering the field of battle without harness or weapon. If the Lord be not on my side, if his power attend not my labours, nothing will, nothing can be done. Therefore let me beg of you to remember me in public, as the prayers of many are powerful. I do not forget you, nor my fellow-travellers on your side the water, for one. I am dear sir,

Your dutiful son in the gospel of Christ,

J. Haughton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 558–60.

¹Orig., 'district'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9). This diocese was Kilrea, Londonderry, Ireland.

From August William Philipp Conradi

Cloister Bergen near Magdeburg
November 29, 1759

Reverend Sir,

I now make use of the liberty of writing to you, which you gave me when at London, with so much kindness and humanity. I do not doubt on the least but you will favour it with a kind perusal; and hope my letter, though in one respect it must need give some pain to the English reader, for want of the propriety and delicacy of expression peculiar to your language, yet in another, it will claim your kindness in receiving it, as it contains a sincere profession of that candid love and esteem which its author makes bold to own he entertains for you—and give me leave to add, for your brother at Bristol. When I saw you the last time, before I left England, I had a great deal more to say than, in the hurry of business I was in, I was able to do. And, among other things, I forgot to give you my humble thanks for that excellent present you made me of a collection of your writings. If it ever could be profitable for one to forget that superlative goodness of yours and your brother's to me a foreigner, so excellent a present like this, bestowed with so much kindness, would be full sufficient to perpetuate your memory in my heart, which I beg you to believe most certainly. And out of this due sense of gratitude, of love and esteem, I shall take the liberty for the future to ask you now and then how you do and your family, how the Kingdom of God prospers in England. To which, knowing very well the bustle of business you are continually in, I shall expect some time but a short answer.

I arrived happily at Cloister Bergen¹ September 8, where I found our old and venerable abbot² very much pleased with what account I could give him of my having been acquainted with you. He assured me he would be very glad to hear from you very often and to have some account of the advancements of true religion in Old and New England; or, as he expressed himself, 'Jesus's becoming a glorified Saviour in England also'. Of this we have had of late many instances in the remarkable conversion of such as were his enemies. Whereof I could give you more than one, if my time did answer in proportion to my willingness—having been made in our college a private tutor of some young gentlemen, besides the function of teaching and instructing publicly. Yet I have employed as much time as I could spare for it in translating into English and making an abstract of a very remarkable case of a converted infidel of high birth and rank, which I take the liberty to send you. As the subject is undoubtedly interesting and agreeable to you, I hope the translation in consideration of this, though faulty and not quite English in some places, will not be looked on with a severe criticism. In case you should think it worth to communicate to others, it will be very easy to alter and render it better English.

My sincere love and esteem to the reverend Mr. [Charles] Wesley at Bristol. That the all sufficient grace of our good Lord and Saviour be with you all is the sincere prayer of him who remains, with a filial respect and love, reverend sir,

Your most humble servant,

August William Philipp Conradi

Endorsment: by JW, 'ad. Feb. 6, 1760'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, item 10.

¹This former Benedictine cloister had become a Pietist Lutheran school closely associated with August Hermann Francke's *Franckesche Stiftungen* in Halle.

²Johann Adam Steinmetz.

From Benjamin Biggs

c. December 1759

I was born at Winslow, in Bucks, in September 1709, and went to school there till I was about fifteen. I was always a sober, harmless child. Before I was twenty I went to live with a lawyer in Winslow. I stayed with him about three years, and was then butler to Mr. Lowndes, Member of Parliament for the county, for eleven or twelve years.³ During this time I had often good desires, though habituated to drinking, gaming, dancing, and all sorts of idle diversions. For a time I frequently left them all off, and prayed in private twice or thrice a day. But this lasted not long, before I fell back into all, as much or more than ever. When I was about thirty I came to London, where I first sold lace then kept a chandler's shop in Lambeth Marsh. But in three or four years, having run out most of what I had, I was recommended to Sir James Lowther, whom I served as gentleman and butler from about the year 1742 till he died.

In spring 1750 were the two earthquakes in London. These made a deep impression upon me, and made me pray much in private. Soon after my master's leg was cut off, which increased my seriousness. And it was further increased by a severe fit of the stone, which brought me very low. When I recovered I constantly attended the morning prayers at Covent Garden church, feeling I wanted something, though I knew not what, and longing for someone to instruct me. But I found none, till at Whitsuntide I rose one morning by mistake an hour too soon for the prayers. I was walking up and down the streets when I heard some singing, which was in West Street chapel. One asking me to come into a pew, I went in and heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach. I was well-pleased, and resolved to come again. I accordingly came to Short's Gardens. I now quickly found that what I wanted was faith, but believed I should not want it long. I grew more and more serious and desirous every day, though without much painful conviction, till one Thursday morning about Easter following I went to Short's Gardens. There was no preacher, but Michael Fenwick prayed. While he was speaking I saw, as it were, Christ on the cross, and heard those words distinctly spoken, 'Christ died for thee.' All my fears vanished away, and I was quite happy, though not assured my sins were forgiven. Till on Sunday morning, as I was at home reading a sermon, when I was thoroughly assured that I was reconciled to God. I walked a few days in the broad light, but then doubts returned. And in a few months I fell again into known sin. But immediately I found a hell in my soul, and could not have the least rest till I had a fresh assurance of being reconciled to God. For some years I was liable to these relapses into sin and sorrow, which sometimes bordered upon despair. Yet could I never neglect the ordinances of God, though in ever so great deadness and heaviness. About three years since I was admitted into the select society—by being present at which I saw things in such a light as I never had done before. I saw my want of inward holiness, and found a strong cry in my heart for it. I had more power than ever over sin, with more happiness and nearness to God.

In June 1757 I went to Whitehaven. Here I found more thirst after holiness than ever, and one Sunday morning, in singing a hymn, I felt the power of God so overshadowing me that I believed I had found it, being filled with God and with peace, and light, and love. The same day many promises out of the psalms were strongly applied to my soul. And I continued, though with many struggles, in the same confidence till August 1758. But about this time I thought I felt anger, and in a few days I gave up my confidence and fell into the same variable state I was in above a year before. Yet at times I was much in prayer, till in the beginning of January 1759 I returned from Wiltshire to London. I was much quickened during my short stay here by the conversation of lively friends. On January 31 I came to Norwich, with Mr. [John] Murlin, where I was sometimes earnest, sometimes not, till on September 20th I returned to London. Even on the road to it I found my desires much enlarged. When I came to my house, I found Mr. [John] Southcoate there, who was exceedingly athirst for full salvation. This stirred me up, so that we both longed, prayed for, and expected it all the day long. After about ten days I went with him to my class, and at first found nothing unusual. But when brother [Richard] Kemp went to prayer, I found at

³Richard Lowndes (c. 1707–75) was a Member of Parliament from 1741–74.

once that Christ was all to me. I found every creature taken away. All the promises came to my heart, particularly those in the 36th of Ezekiel. I trembled all over, with a glowing sweat, and could not doubt but the work was done. Yet on the Sunday following, seeing a woman buying fruit, and not reproving her, I was filled with doubts. This put me upon earnest prayer, and the next morning God renewed the promises to me. But for twelve or fourteen days I frequently reasoned concerning them, till one morning as I was dressing myself, those words were spoken to my heart, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.'⁴ Two days after, while I was visiting one that was sick, the same words were applied with much power. On the Sunday sennight following I was vehemently praying for the seal of the Spirit, and while I was communicating those words were applied, 'Thou art sealed unto the day of redemption.'⁵ This filled me with unspeakable joy, notwithstanding various temptations and suggestions of the enemy. Since that time I have never felt any doubt. But my peace and love remain unshaken, and I experience a continual growth in grace and in all the mind which was in Christ.⁶

B. B.

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 493–96.

⁴Cf. Matt. 22:37.

⁵Cf. Eph. 4:30.

⁶JW added a postscript: 'N.B. Such was the experience of this good man, as long as he remained with *us*. If he afterwards ascribed it all to nature or Satan, it is not *my* fault'.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley

[Loughrea]
January 12, 1760

Reverend and Most Dear Sir,

Though I had not the happiness of seeing you when I was in England, yet I do not the less retain the sincerest love and esteem for your person, whom I know in my heart to be a chosen vessel to the Lord; who seem indeed in a peculiar manner to be set as a mark at whom the devil may shoot his empty shafts, warded off by the shield of faith, through the grace of God given unto you.

In my way to this place I passed some time among the Christians at Dublin, Athlone, and Aughrim; though at the latter of these I had little conversation with any but Mr. and Mrs. Wade.⁷ I trust they are in earnest and that Mr. Wade will speedily make a noble struggle in the strength of the Lord to burst the bonds that hold him.

I am grieved to say I met with heavy complaints of coldness and deadness in the things of God at Athlone, and the reason that was given me for it will perhaps startle you. Many told me that four or five years ago there was the sweetest harmony and love among them conceivable, but that since that time a little narrow spirit broke out, much to the prejudice of the work of God.

The generality of the Methodists (especially those who are properly speaking of the established Church) have ever been and are still persuaded that the intention and desire of your heart was to see the Church (or rather the members of the Church) of England reformed, but not divided; and that you constantly pressed the people to attend the public service. But certain at Athlone have not only refrained from going to Church themselves but have likewise prevailed on others so to do—giving for their reason that the minister is not a child of God, that he does not preach sound doctrine, and therefore if they were not to bid him Godspeed, much less were they to go and hear him.

On the other hand, they who being governed by your prudent counsel continued to frequent the Church were not a little scandalized, and began to apprehend that an open rupture with the Church was intended. On their part therefore, they were less constant in attending the Methodist-meetings, in which they likewise were much to blame.

Now, though the arguments of those who forsake the Church are indeed founded in a dismal truth, yet I cannot think them sufficiently solid. For as to the general service of the Church, I do not find they make any objection, and indeed their prayers breathe nothing but the spirit of a sublime devotion. And as to the sermon, what have they to apprehend? For what danger is there that a man with his eyes open should be put out of the way by a blind guide? And what effect do they imagine such a conduct will have on the unawakened? Do they think this will bring over any of them to the truth? I fear just the contrary. It will have the appearance in their eye of impatience and petulancy, and from their prejudice against the professors they will think less favourably of the profession itself.

On the other hand, let them consider how blest the example may be, even to the unawakened, to see the decent, devout, awful behaviour of men wrapped up in the spirit of prayer, and kindling into love at every pathetic expression with which our liturgy so much abounds, and let them answer it as they can for depriving the Church of this benefit.

For myself, I have hitherto learnt to consider the Methodists not as any sect but as the purer part of the Church of England. But if any of them (I hope their number is not considerable) grow so wantonly fond of division as to form a schism, I foresee they will lose much of the gospel meekness, humility, and love; and a party-zeal will take place, instead of a zeal according to knowledge. I am persuaded, dear sir, you will pardon my freedom in informing you of this. I call God to witness what an interest I bear in your labours, and how highly I hope to give glory to God on your receiving your crown of rejoicing at the last day. If what I have here said may be a further incitement to prevail on you to come amongst us next summer, I shall perhaps appear a more interested person than I at first apprehended. For if your Master

⁷Jeremiah Wade (1711–72) was a significant landholder in Aughrim, Co. Galway. Wade rode with JW from Aughrim to Eyrecourt; cf. JW, *Journal*, May 10, 1749, *Works*, 20:271.

will permit you, I am full of confidence you will pass a few days with me.

Commending myself, dear sir, to your prayers, and imploring the Almighty to fill you with all the fullness of Christ Jesus, I remain,

Your ever-loving brother in the Lord,

Walter Shirley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 333–35.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]

February 26, 1760

Dear Sir,

In compliance with your request, I endeavour to answer your questions, though these are things better felt than expressed. I do see God continually by the eye of faith, though not as a human person. But I have at times an evidence of the glorious person of our ever-blessed Saviour. What I conceive of God is inexpressibly great. All the praise my tongue can give is nothing. I love and adore God for his holiness, though not for that only. No clouds ever arise to obscure my sight of God. When I am ever so closely beset, either with inward or outward enemies, I know as well where and how I am as when I am most at rest. Yet I then find need of more immediate watchfulness, from a sense of Satan's strength and my weakness. I never found the eye of my soul grow dim, since the Lord gave me a single eye. I see him as clearly as I see the sun at noon day. I see him in the sun, in the firmament, in all the creation. I trust I have learnt the happy lesson, to see God in all things and all things in God.

I am as well assured of invisible and eternal things, such as are revealed in the written word, as I am of any visible thing, of any thing I now see with my eyes. I do not understand the terms, 'walking in eternity', but I know I have no connexion with this world. And yet I know I am in the place where the Lord would have me to be, as much as those happier spirits are who continually behold his glory. I am sensible there is but one general church of the first-born, one innumerable company, of which I humbly trust I am one. Blessed be his name, I can trust him, and that absolutely with my soul and my body! Glory be to God for his unspeakable gift!

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and loving sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 555–56.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
March 2, 1760

Dear Brother,

I have thought and prayed about going to Norwich and am ready to go, but not on a fool's errand. Your want of resolution yesterday has saved you reading a long letter. Did you give Murlin and his fellows the least check?¹ Did you blame them in the slightest word? What must be the consequence? The rest, secure in their weakness, will do what they list; will, sooner than you are aware, follow the example of those three, and draw as many disciples after them as they can do into a formal separation.

If your weak conscience will not let you touch them, what signifies my going to Norwich? You will not stand by me. Your fear or dissimulation will throw all the blame upon me, or perhaps disown me. Yet for your sake and the people's, this I would do. Write a letter by me to the preachers, what you would have them and me do. Blame them as strongly as your conscience will let you. Otherwise you betray them and all the preachers. You betray your own authority and our children, and our church and are the author of the separation.

I see my first step, which is to secure this people *first*. The Lord, I doubt not, will direct and keep me.

You might answer this from the first place you stop at.

Can you find in your heart to speak a word tonight of continuing in the Church of England?²

Endorsement: in CW's hand, 'March 2, 1760. To B[rother], dropt by him and returned to CW'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 4/63.

¹The Wesley brothers had just learned that three Methodist lay itinerants in the Norwich circuit—John Murlin, Paul Greenwood, and Thomas Mitchell—had begun to administer the Lord's Supper, even though they were not ordained. CW did not believe JW was reacting to this development with sufficient concern.

²Sunday, Mar. 2, 1760, was JW's last day in London before departing the next morning on his regular preaching tour into the north.

From the Rev. Charles Wesley

[London]
c. March 6, 1760¹

Dear Brother,

We are come to the Rubicon. Shall we pass or shall we not? In the fear of God (which we both have) and in the name of Jesus Christ, let us ask, Lord, what wouldst *thou* have us do?

The case stands thus. Three preachers whom we thought we could have most depended upon have taken upon them to administer the sacrament without any ordination, and without acquainting us (or even yourself) of it beforehand.² Why may not all the other preachers do the same, if each is judge of his own right to do it? And everyone is left to act as he pleases if we take no notice of them that have so despised their brethren.

That the rest will soon follow their example I believe 1) because they think they may do it without impunity. 2) Because a large majority imagine they have a right as preachers to administer the sacraments. So long ago as the Conference at Leeds I took down their names. 3) Because they have betrayed an impatience to separate. The preachers in Cornwall and others wondered it had not been mentioned at our last Conference. Jacob Rowell's honesty I commend. Christopher Hopper, Joseph Cownley, John Hampson and several more are ripe for a separation. Even Mr. Crisp says he would give the sacrament, if you bid him.³ The young preachers are raw, unprincipled men, and entirely at the mercy of the old. You could persuade them to anything. And not you only—Charles Perronet could do the same, or any of the preachers who have left us, or any of the three at Norwich.

Upon the whole, I am fully persuaded almost all our preachers are corrupt already. More and more will give the sacrament and are set up for themselves, even before we die; and all except the few that get orders will turn Dissenters before or after our death.

You must wink very hard not to see all this. You have connived at it too, too long. But I now call upon you in the name of God to consider with me what is to be done? First, to prevent a separation; second, to save the few uncorrupt preachers; third, to make the best of those that are corrupt.

Endorsement: in CW's hand, 'Mine/ to my B. of Separation/ 1760'.

Source: MARC, DDWes 4/68 (CW's longhand copy for his records).

¹There is no date given on the letter, but this suggested date fits when the debate was at its height between the brothers that year.

²John Murlin, Paul Greenwood, and Thomas Mitchell, of the Norwich circuit.

³William Crisp, a grocer, was a key lay leader of the Methodist society in Loddon, Norfolk.

From the Rev. Thomas Maxfield

[London]
March 10, 1760

Dear and Reverend Sir,

Brother[s] [Benjamin] Biggs, Latles,¹ [Joseph] Calvert, and [John] Dixon go on,² I believe, faster than ever. We have not missed the Friday's meeting above once, and that was when we had service elsewhere. Your brother has been with us many times,³ and the Lord has been wonderfully among us. We continue at other times and places much as when you was with us. And God blesses us much more abundantly than ever. We are obliged to say the last is better than all we had known before. We have a little war, but it does not hurt us at all. We let it pass as though it was not. I think we can safely say we are blessed every where. Blessed be God for it. We always remember you, as though present with us. As to the affair of leaving the Church [of England], it has hurt the minds of many on both sides. I hope it will be fully settled at the Conference. I endeavour (as far as I can safely) to be on neither side, and exhort all to look and live to him that lived and died for them. As to my own state, I think I can safely say I grow in grace daily. My whole delight is in God. My whole soul goes out after him and I long with vehement, resigned, expectation for all the mind that was in Christ Jesus. I hope the time is at hand when all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength will bear the image of the heavenly as *perfectly* as ever it did that of the earthly. It is something ungrateful to say any thing about myself (only, as you ask me), for I seem to know little, very little of myself. And I think I know less and less, as I know more and more of God. I mean, I forget myself more and more. And yet I find if a word, or a thought, or a turn of the eye is departing from him, I both see it and feel it, and have power not to suffer either the word to be spoken, the thought to be formed, or the eye to be turned. But oh, how foolish and helpless and weak am I! I go unto him always as empty, as though I had never received any thing from him. And what I can say *is this*, that I know he loves me. And I love him a little; but oh how little it is! I long to love him with all my heart and soul and strength. May he hasten the time for his mercy's sake. I *bless God* that he is carrying on his work in my wife's heart also. We both join in duty to you, and love to all friends, hoping you will not forget us in your prayers.

I am,

Your very humble servant,

Thomas Maxfield

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 385–86.

¹Ori., 'Latlets'; but surely the lay preacher Jonas Latles, who paid for ordination by Avlonites in 1765 (see JW to CW, Jan. 11, 1765, *Works*, 27:413).

²These are members of the society in London.

³CW had come to London to provide supervision when JW headed on his preaching tour north in early March.

From Sarah Ryan

March 19, 1760

1. I was born October 20, 1724, of poor, but morally good parents. They brought up their children according to the best light they had, in all the outward duties of religion; but inward, vital Christianity I was an utter stranger to. From the earliest time I can remember the desire of praise was my predominant passion. Nor did I curb it at all, for I thought it right to be admired, and sought after it in all my actions. But my merciful God did not leave me to follow my own imaginations, but often checked me by that thought, 'Must all men die? Must all have an end? And must I die?' Sometimes I was so sunk at the thought as to be truly miserable. Not that I had much concern about an after-state; death itself was the thing I feared.

2. As I grew in years, my ill-temper gathered strength. I was artful, subtle, cunning; often loved and made lies, and had little regard either to justice, mercy, or truth. And yet something of fear followed me. Hence on Sunday night I did not dare to sleep without reading a chapter in the Bible. Indeed, I had a great love for reading, and about this time met with an old book which treated of faith. It gave me great pleasure and I was often reading it, to see if I could find out what faith was. But it was too hard for me; and the more I read, the more I was confounded.

3. About this time my mother insisted on my going to church. But I liked better to go to the meeting, thinking I understood what I heard there better, and being often affected by the prayers. But my father's circumstances now turning out bad, I was constrained, young as I was, to go out into the world. I soon sunk more deeply than ever into the spirit of the world. And as I increased in years, so I did in vice, above many of my fellows. The thirst of praise and of pleasure swelled my soul, and tossed me about, as a bubble on the water.

4. When I was about seventeen, I heard Mr. [George] Whitefield. He preached upon the prodigal son. I was greatly affected, wept most of the time, and resolved to hear him at all opportunities. Nor did the impressions I then received entirely wear off ever since. Soon after I went to live with some who had much of the form of religion. Here I had several times such drawings of the Father (though I knew not then what they were) as made me seem to be out of the body, and I could scarce cast my eyes on anything but I saw God in it. Nor had I any fear of his wrath, but always saw him as a loving father. Hence I went to live with some who truly feared God, where I met with one of Mr. Wesley's society. She was a great help to me. I cried and prayed, and was greatly distressed for God. But soon my unstable mind drove me among a people who had a name to live, but were dead—and my evil heart quickly led me to join with them in great extravagancies. Yet I continued to *talk of religion*; so that I was now a downright hypocrite. O God!

I sigh to say, How great thy love!
All kinds of sinners dost thou save.

5. God was not yet weary of me, neither left me to the hardness of my heart; but still followed me with secret desires, and drawings from above. I now got into a predestinarian family, and was quickly deep in their opinions. Here I heard much about faith, and easily persuaded myself that I was a believer. And indeed, 'All but the power of faith I had.' Yet I was not happy. I sinned and repented, and sinned again; having great desires to be a Christian, but no power.

6. Being now about twenty, and having thoughts of marrying, never did I pray more earnestly for anything than I did that I might be married to Christ, although I knew not what it meant. And this I continued to do, till I was married to the person on whom I had fixed my heart. Then I thought myself happy enough, without Christ. But God said, 'This is not thy rest.' All my comforts vanished at once, and the man I loved went away, and left me once more to the wide world. Destitute and distressed, I went to live in a Jew's family, and soon cast off both the form and power of religion. I sought pleasure, and nothing else. Present happiness was the thing I resolved to have.

7. After about a year and a half I left them and married again.⁴ This opened a door for great trials. Satan threw many snares in my way, and I became a captive to my evil desires. Happy I must be. Happy I *would* be, though it were to the damnation of my soul. But was I happy? O my God, briers and thorns surrounded me! What horrors, what fears, what dread!⁵ I should have been glad to be anything but a human creature. The Spirit drove me one way, my passions another; so that I was all a troubled sea. About seven years I lived in this distressed condition. My husband then going to sea, I went to live in the Jewish family again, where in a little time I fell sick. They were exceeding kind, and sent for my mother to nurse me. But I had no thought of God, till one night I dreamed I was in Mr. Wesley's society-room and saw an angel, who quickly disappeared, and I awoke. Falling asleep again, I thought I was in the same place, and saw a beautiful garden, and the angel walking up to me. Till he laid his hand upon my arm, and said three times, 'Come out from these Jews, or you will be damned.' I turned and said, 'If I live, I will amend my life.' It disappeared and I awoke.

8. Their Passover coming on, they sent me to the hospital. As soon as I was taken in, those words came with power, 'In your patience possess your soul. As your day, so your strength shall be.'⁶ Finding what people they were that were all about me, I felt great pity for them. I longed to convince them of the state they were in, and to bring them to Christ. I went all round, from bed to bed, and many had ears to hear. When I came out I was in great straits, having now my mother also to maintain. But my heavenly Father did not let me long want what was sufficient for life and godliness.

9. About this time a temptation to great evil was laid in my way. But as soon as it was presented to me, oh what a turn I took! Blessed be the Lord! What was like to be the occasion of my destruction was the occasion of my repentance. I felt in the instant such an hatred to sin as I never felt before. Mr. Ryan at this time coming from sea, I was exceedingly tried. But I now saw the hand of the Lord in all, till he went to sea again. Having soon after occasion to go to the Captain's wife, I found her to be one of the people called Methodists. After some talk, she said she was going to the Foundery. I found a desire to go too, which I did. Mr. John Wesley preached. Something said in my heart, 'This is the truth. This is the truth I shall live and die by.' As soon as the society begun, as I was leaning my head, all attention, I saw by the eye of my mind Jesus standing as he stood before Thomas, and saying, 'Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side.'⁷ My soul was melted down before him, and I longed to be joined with this people. And now I was more earnest to be a Christian than ever. I applied to Mr. Wesley the following week and he received me into the society, for which I was very thankful.

10. I now met in class, not doubting but I had faith, and spoke there as a believer for a whole year. My husband then came home again and tried me exceedingly. But I now bowed down my stubborn neck and said, 'It is the Lord.'⁸ I read my sin in my punishment, and was vile in my own eyes. But I still thought myself a believer, till I came acquainted with Sarah Crosby who, after talking with me for some time, told me, my faith was vain, and I ought to pray that I might know my sins were forgiven. I thought this a very presumptuous way of talking. Yet it made a deep impression upon me, so that I began to doubt whether I had faith or not. And the more I considered, the more I was convinced I never had. Soon after, I began to feel the necessity of knowing my sins were forgiven, and for a time I continued seeking after it. But then grew as dead and cold as ever.

11. In April 1754 I had stifled all my desires, when by the importunity of Sarah Crosby I went one Sunday, though very unwillingly, to Spitalfields church. Mr. John Wesley preached on the parable of

⁴John Ryan, a mariner, married Sarah Barker in London (Rotherhithe) on Nov. 30, 1748. It is unclear whether this is the current Mrs. Sarah Ryan, as Sarah Barker is described as a 'spinster'. She may have identified herself as such since her first husband deserted her (i.e., she was not a widow).

⁵It seems her second husband was abusive to her.

⁶Cf. Luke 21:19; and Deut. 33:25.

⁷John 20:27.

⁸John 21:7.

the sower.⁹ As he was describing the stony and thorny ground I knew all he said belonged to *me*. But when he spake of the good ground I could claim no part in it; only I found a wish that I could! When sermon was ended, as I stood in a careless manner, a thought passed through my mind, 'O that I may have a blessing!' It was immediately answered in me, 'Thou *shalt* have a blessing.' In the same moment I felt my soul all desire, and it was said to me, 'Ask, and thou shalt receive.'¹⁰ Upon which, clasping my hands on my breast, I said, 'I *will* ask, and I *shall* receive.' But my body was so weak I could hardly stand, while I was enabled to say, from my inmost soul,

My soul is on thy promise cast:
The promise is for *me*!¹¹

And all the way, as I went up with much difficulty to the table, I was still saying, 'For *me*, Lord; for *me*.' When I came up, my strength being quite gone, I threw my body across the rails and, being overwhelmed with the power of God, was utterly regardless of outward things. Mr. Wesley offered me the bread, but I was not able to take it. So he passed by me, and gave it me when he came back. When he spoke those words, 'The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ', they pierced my heart, and filled my soul with love to him. Immediately I said, 'This is the faith by which the martyrs went to the flames.' I felt a change through my whole soul, and longed to be alone. As soon as I got home, I fell on my knees and cried, 'Lord, are my sins forgiven?' I was answered, 'There is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus.'¹² But this did not satisfy. I wanted a clear witness that my sins were forgiven, and ardently did I wish for the next Sunday, hoping I should receive it at the table. For three weeks I had expected it in every means of grace, when being one night at my class with my sister, who was in great distress, I felt the burden of her soul laid upon mine in an inexpressible manner. And while I was exhorting her to believe, the power of God overwhelmed my soul, so that I fell back in my chair, and my eyesight was taken from me. But in the same moment the Lord Jesus appeared to my inward sight, and I cried out three times, 'O the beauty of the lovely Jesus, Behold him in his vesture dipped in blood!' A little after, my leader asked me, 'Do you now believe?' I faintly answered, 'Yes.' But I felt something of a doubt still, and wanted a stronger witness. The next morning these words were applied with power, 'Thy sins are cast as a stone into the deep waters.'¹³ I answered, 'Now I *do* believe. Now I know my sins are forgiven me.'

12. I came home rejoicing, and continued for about six weeks full of light, happiness, and heaven. I then dreamed I saw a bank full of green plants just coming up. While I was admiring them, one came and began to dig it up, when to my great surprise, as he turned up the shovel, there appeared a large body of all venomous creatures joined in one. Lifting up my hands and eyes, I said, 'How could these plants grow with such creatures at the root?' Then he laid them down on the ground, and they were spread almost all over the place. Afterwards a company of people, coming from the Foundery, began to kill them; in which I likewise was employed, but two clung about me for a long time. At last they also were killed, and I awaked. Reflecting on this, I thought the bank was my heart; the plants, the graces God had sown therein; the man was the preacher; the venomous creatures were my inbred corruptions—the two last of which were pride and unbelief.

13. From this time I was shown more of my heart than ever I had seen before. This caused me many times to doubt whether I had any true faith or no? And feeling such enmity against God, I often thought, 'Must I always bear this burden? If God *can* deliver me from it, he *shall*. I long to worship him in the beauty of holiness.' But all this time I was exceedingly distressed and tempted of the devil. And when I attempted to pray, those thoughts were continually suggested to me that the Lord Jesus was only

⁹Mark 4:3–9.

¹⁰Cf. John 16:24.

¹¹Cf. CW, Hymn 15, st. 3, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741), 31.

¹²Cf. Rom. 8:1.

¹³Cf. Mic. 7:19.

an impostor, and the Scripture a cunningly devised fable. For near a year these suggestions followed me, and I was unable to answer them. Yet in the midst of these temptations I had continually texts of Scripture brought to my mind such as, 'Thou shalt mount up with wings as of an eagle.'¹⁴ 'I will show thee how great things thou shalt suffer for my name's sake.'¹⁵ Meantime, I saw more and more clearly the depth of iniquity that was in my heart.

14. About this time God showed me an idol that till then lay concealed in my breast. And I now saw that this was the thing that stood between God and my soul, and that if I would give it up, my soul should grow like a cedar in Lebanon. And I was earnestly desirous so to do, to break through and forsake all for God. But I was not able. I could no more do it than I could cease to breathe. In this condition I was, when one day coming into the room to meet my band, I said, 'None of you shall deceive me any longer. I will not believe I have a grain of living faith.'

From that time I continued in great distress and anguish of soul till Easter Eve, when I found a weak, faint hope that God would manifest himself to me the next day. The service was at West Street [chapel]. As I went thither, I thought, 'If I might but find my Lord, I would not grudge going all the way on my bare knees.' Just then, a friend coming up, I took hold on her arm, and in that moment these words came with power,

Swift as, their rising Lord to find,
The two disciples ran,
We seek the Saviour of mankind,
And shall not seek in vain.¹⁶

15. I found nothing particular in the first part of the service. Afterwards I found a desire to pray, but could not—till a thought came into my mind, 'I *will* pray, and not rise from my knees till God has answered me.' I then kneeled down, though quite cold. But in a little while my desires revived, and while I was praying to find the Lord Jesus, the resurrection and the life, it came with power to my soul: 'Believest thou that I am able to do this?' I answered, 'Yea, Lord, I *do* believe thou art; and I insist on thy meeting me at thy table.' As I went up I still continued to hold the Lord to his promise. And it was to me according to my faith. Just as I came to the rails, God spoke these words to my soul,

Lift your eyes of faith, and look
To the signs he did ordain!
Thus the bread of life was broke!
Thus the Lamb of God was slain!
Thus was shed on Calvary,
His last drop of blood for *thee*!¹⁷

Immediately I was filled with light and joy and love, and said with confidence, 'Thou art the resurrection and the life.'¹⁸ Notwithstanding which, after the service, I began to reason whether it really was of God? But I thought, 'I will tell Sarah Crosby, and if she believes it, I will take it as a token of the truth of it.' I beckoned her to me. But before I spoke, she said, 'I know what you have to say. You have found the Lord.' I fell back in my seat, and was quite overwhelmed with the power and love of God.

16. For six weeks I went on in glorious light, and was carried above temptation. But after this, I began again to see the evil that was still in my heart, and now appeared more dreadful than ever.

¹⁴Cf. Isa. 40:31.

¹⁵Cf. Acts 9:16.

¹⁶Cf. CW, Hymn 55, st. 3, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745): 40.

¹⁷Cf. CW, Hymn 18, st. 1, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745): 14.

¹⁸Cf. John 11:25.

Likewise, my old temptation, of denying the divinity of Christ, violently returned upon me. At the same time I saw more clearly than ever that my heart was not whole with God, but was fixed on my husband (the idol before mentioned). And this I was fully convinced must inevitably separate my soul from him, if it were not cast out. But I had no more power to do this than to create a world. For sometime I continued much the same, and yet between whiles happy in God.

17. And now I received a letter from my husband, reminding me of an agreement between us that I should follow him to New England as soon as he was settled there. He desired I would write immediately and tell him whether I would come or no? This was a trial indeed. And so exceedingly did my heart go after him that my eyes were quite closed, and I really imagined that it was the will of God that I should go to him. But after some time I thought I will ask Mr. Wesley's advice, which I accordingly did. After we had conversed a little, he said, 'Can he maintain you there.' I answered, 'Yes. But can I go and save my soul?' He replied, 'What do you think of it, Sally?' Instantly light broke in, and I said, 'No, sir, I cannot.' I went home, and soon after wrote and told him, 'At the peril of my soul I dare not come.' No sooner had I sent away the letter but my soul was set at liberty, my idolatrous affection was under my feet, and my heart set on God.

18. For sometime I went on joyfully. But then I fell into reasoning again; the fruit of which was, that my idolatrous affection returned as strong as ever. But still I was resolved not to let the Lord go till he had delivered me from it. But how shall I describe the various temptations that now assaulted me? My soul was in continual bondage, so that I could do nothing without feeling condemnation. It seemed to me that I sinned wilfully, and that continually. Yet I had some comfort when Sarah Crosby came in one day and said, 'O sister Ryan, you will soon receive a great blessing!' Not long after, when one told me 'I believe, God has taken away the root of evil out of my heart', these words were immediately spoke to my soul: 'Go ye on to perfection.'¹⁹ I was very happy for two days. But on the third I felt such enmity against her as I cannot describe. This continued six weeks; near the end of which, as she was one day praising and exalting Christ, I found such a bitter enmity in my heart that I could hardly bear her in my sight. I began to consider, 'What can be the meaning of this?' And was answered, 'Thy enmity is not against *her*, but *me*.' I threw down my work, ran upstairs, and falling on my knees, began to bewail my wretched nature, feeling such loathing of myself that it seemed I could not live if God did not soon deliver me. Yet many times did I reason with myself whether God would ever save me from all sin. Once in particular, when being in great anguish of soul, I took up the Bible and opened on those words, 'I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.' Jer. 29:11–13.

19. Soon after the Lord fulfilled his word. As I was one day walking across my room, it seemed to me as if something was taken out of me. I was amazed, and could not understand it. But at night, going to pray against my besetting sin, I found my prayer quite changed. 'Lord', said I, 'thou hast taken the idol out of my heart. Now I shall grow as a cedar in Lebanon.' Indeed, it now seemed that nothing stood between my soul and God. I saw myself just like Noah's dove; I had nothing whereon to rest the sole of my foot. For though I did not rest on any creature, I had not yet sunk into God. However, I found a change through my whole soul, and seemed now to run without hindrance.

20. But shortly after this, one with whom I had been long acquainted professing to have found the blessing, I felt such enmity in my heart as cannot be expressed. And I said, 'What, *she*, Lord? What, *she*?' And was answered, 'Is thine eye evil because I am good?'²⁰ Then I said, 'Lord, work *when*, and *how*, and *as* thou pleasest, so thou do but work.' And from this time I was much encouraged to think, 'I too may hope for deliverance.'

21. Being after this one day with a friend, she said, 'I fear I have set you up too much, and have occasioned your thinking of yourself more highly than you ought to think, by permitting you to be at the meeting on Saturday nights, which is designed only for those who are strong in grace.' She added, 'You

¹⁹Cf. Heb. 6:1.

²⁰Matt. 20:15.

had better not be present at that meeting.' I found no anger at this, but carrying it to the Lord, my spirit was quite broken down before him. However, I was admitted again. When one laboured to convince me I was deceived as to the state of my soul, I found my spirit still broken down and simple as a little child. Only I was grieved. As I kneeled down to prayer, I felt myself strongly affected. And after we had prayed a short time, I said, 'Lord, if thou hast this blessing to bestow on *me*, let someone mention me in prayer.' Presently Sarah Crosby broke out, 'Lord, thou hast plucked her as a brand out of the burning, and thy light does now shine round her. What she hath gained this night, let her never lose, till she sees thy face in righteousness and she never *shall lose it*.' I answered in my heart, 'I never shall more', feeling my soul greatly confirmed and being filled with light and love.

22. As soon as we rose from our knees I went home, saying, 'The devil shall never more do by me as he has done.' For I felt my soul now stood on more than even ground with my enemies. But in all this I was deeply conscious the root of sin was still in my heart.

23. Sometime after, being deeply affected at this, I felt a cold sweat and a trembling come over me. I knew it to be the power of God, but said nothing to those with me. After a few minutes, attempting to take up my work, which had fallen out of my hands, I felt my strength quite taken away, and fell out of my chair. In the moment I saw (not with my bodily eyes) the Lord Jesus standing before me, and saying, 'This day is salvation come to this house.'²¹ I saw all my works and attainments laid at his feet, as nothing worth. And I saw my soul, as it were, taken up and plunged into God. Recovering myself a little, I began as I was able to tell what I had seen, when Sarah Crosby cried out, 'Let us pray.' And while she was at prayer, my body was in such an agony as it is not possible to repeat. I said, 'Pray for *me*, pray for *me*.' And *would* have said, Pray in those words,

Empty her of self and pride,
With all thy fulness fill.²²

But I could not get out the words. However, though I could not speak them, she used nearly the same words. While she spoke them, God said to my soul, 'I will sweep away thy sins with the besom of destruction.'²³ Immediately I felt the Spirit of God, as it were, go through my whole soul. My agony ceased and the love of Jesus was again represented to my mind. Only he now seemed above me. And as I looked up, I said, 'Lord, John leaned on thy breast; but I am in thy bosom.' To which my Lord replied, 'Neither heights, nor depths, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, shall' for one moment 'separate thy soul from me',²⁴ in time or in eternity. Quickly after, those words were spoken into my inmost soul,

Fill'd with abiding peace divine,
With Israel's blessing blest,
Thou, thou the church above shalt join,
And gain the heavenly rest.²⁵

After I had sat silent before God some time longer, he further spake to me in the following words,

²¹Luke 19:9.

²²Cf. CW, Hymn on Luke 15:21, st. 4, *HSP* (1740), 148; and CW, Hymn 203, st. 6, *HSP* (1749), 2:280.

²³Cf. Isa. 14:23.

²⁴Cf. Rom. 8:38–39.

²⁵Cf. CW, Hymn on Psalm 128, st. 9, *CPH* (1743): 94.

Well-pleas'd on thee thy God looks down,
And calls his rebel to a crown.²⁶

And with these words, I saw the Lord Jesus present my soul to God the Father.

I continued sitting in the same manner, and waiting what the Lord would speak, only crying out between whiles, 'O the power of God! O the power of God!' Sometime after it came into my mind would it not be better for me to retire to prayer? But I thought, 'What can I pray for? What more have I to ask for? The whole eternity of God is mine. How has he fulfilled his word, Give me thy will, and I will give thee all that I have?' And my soul continued lost in praise, in astonishment, and love.

24. The next morning I awaked with these words in my heart, 'Lord, what hast thou done for my soul? Is this only an increase of joy and comfort?' I was answered, 'No: thy soul hath entered into rest.' I said, 'Lord, the fight is nothing, the voice is nothing—the change is all; the change is all.'

In the day I met with many things to try me. I took the opportunity of searching 'Where is my will that was always so quick to feel the slightest injury?' But it was nowhere to be found. The same day I thought, 'Satan can never tempt me more.' And indeed, I felt that he could not *at that time*. But presently after, from a word which one spoke, he so tempted me that though my soul was still exceeding happy in God, yet my body was quite wearied out. Till the next morning, coming to God in prayer, I said, 'Father, if thou be willing, let this cup pass from me.'²⁷ It was answered, 'Know in whom thy strength lieth', and immediately the trial ceased.

The Sunday following, in Spitalfields church, I saw the Lord Jesus standing, and a little child all in white before him. And he showed me he had made me as that child, but that I should grow up to the measure of his full stature. I came home full of light, joy, love, and holiness. And God daily confirmed what he had done for my soul. And blessed be his name, I now know where my strength lieth! And my soul is continually sinking more and more into God. I find my whole heart and affections entirely fixed on the Lord Jesus. I have no will but what is conformable to his; no happiness but in doing his pleasure. I feel I am capable, yea, very capable, of suffering. And much of this he hath been pleased to lay upon me. But through all my soul sweetly rests on the bosom of my Beloved. I am willing to be offered up as a whole burnt-sacrifice to him. And I pray, from my inmost soul, that he would withhold from me no suffering that can work for his glory. Only let *his* will be done. To him I entirely consecrate myself. To him be might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore!

Sarah Ryan

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 2 (1779): 296–310.²⁸

²⁶Cf. CW, Hymn 116, st. 3, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745), 98.

²⁷Cf. Matt. 26:39.

²⁸JW introduced this autobiographical letter as an 'Account of a Woman of *long and deep* Experience' (p. 296).

From Anne (Balguy) Downes

Chancery-Lane, London
April 1, 1760

Soon after the death of my late husband the Reverend Mr. Downes, there was a *Letter* advertised, addressed to him by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley,¹ which, as the title expresses it, was occasioned by Mr. Downes's late tract entitled *Methodism Examined and Exposed*.² Whatever opinion Mr. Wesley himself may entertain of this, his *low* and *vulgar* performance, or however well it might be received by his two-penny *customers* among the *rabble*, I am persuaded that if Mr. Downes had lived to have perused it, he would scarce have thought it worthy of his notice. Though such a mean insult upon his memory may require some resentment from me, it being a kind of rude *libel*, quite of the *cheap* and *ordinary* sort, and so much of the same fabric with those which he has lately vended upon like occasions, that one would think Mr. Wesley, beside the use of the same bad metal, had only one *mill* or *machine* at the Foundry for the *grinding* of all his *wares*, as they turn out so exactly of a particular size and value.

For in this letter, as in the rest, he begins his *defence* with pleading 'not guilty'; and abuses his *opponent* for bringing what he calls an *unfair*, and *uncandid* accusation against him. To plead 'not guilty' is a privilege which our laws indulge to every *criminal*, and therefore it is not to be denied to Methodists. It was not withheld from Mr. Lloyd's *coachman*.^a He had it in his power to have used it, if he pleased, as well as Mr. Wesley. But the misfortune is that it had been so frequently in practice at the Old Bailey, amongst the most notorious and hardened *offenders*, that it is upon that account not so much regarded.

Besides, there is another disadvantage, which is a person making his *appearance* there too often. For then, the magistrates are apt to *remember his countenance*, and look back to the calendar of some former sessions to see what were the *crimes* that were then alleged against him. Since such frequent accusations, notwithstanding that he might have had the good fortune to have got off in such, or such a *mayoralty*, must bring some suspicion upon his *character*.

For the same reasons that a Court of Justice would suspect a common *criminal*, Mr. Wesley, in his way, may be deemed an *old offender*. For otherwise he would not have been brought to the bar so often; I mean the bar of *public judgment*, where by the means of the *Letter* above-mentioned, he has so lately made a fresh appearance.

The public, therefore, in order to judge of his *innocence*, and that of his *accomplices*, since he chooses at first to stand up likewise in *their* defence as well as his own, would do well to look back a little and examine the *evidence* upon former *trials*. For there have been several *indictments* found and proved against *this gentleman* and those of his *denominations*, by Bishop Gibson, Bishop Lavington,^b Dr. Trapp, Dr. Church, Dr. Free, Mr. Green, Mr. Stokes, and others; all agreeing in substance, or of the same tendency with the articles in the Examination lately published by Mr. Downes; the weight of which, when taken in *evidence*, must appear the more considerable from the trifling *exceptions* which Mr. Wesley has made against it. I will produce some *instances*, that the reader may see how little they affect the *argument*. Mr. Downes (for example), to express the ravenous disposition of the Methodists, though not yet, as he thought, arrived to maturity, had called them 'wolflings'. Upon this, out *jumps* Mr. Wesley

^a A Methodist now in Newgate for the robbery of his master.³

^b Bishop Gibson, the late Lord Bishop of London; Bishop Lavington, the present Lord Bishop of Exeter.

¹JW, *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Downes* (1759), *Works*, 9:351–66.

²John Downes (c. 1691–1759), *Methodism Examined and Exposed; or, The Clergy's Duty of Guarding Their Flocks against False Teachers* (London: Charles Rivington, 1759).

³This was Robert Tilling, who had robbed Samuel Lloyd, friend of Charles Wesley. See online: 'Ordinary's Account, 28th April 1760, Proceedings of the Old Bailey'.

and says that the phrase is too *diminutive*, ill sounding, and by no means so suitable as the name of 'wolves'. Perhaps Mr. Wesley may be right in this. I have therefore no objection to his claiming this as the more proper title. But I would be glad to know, in the meantime, how it will appear from hence that they did the less mischief? We will allow Mr. Wesley to amuse himself with amending the *phrase* of Mr. Downes, where the amendment has so little influence upon the *question*.

But Mr. Wesley, still harping upon the same subject, contends that *he* and his *associates* were not so *young* when they began their *disturbances* as Mr. Downes has represented. But what will it avail them if we grant them this? It is obvious to reply that if they were older, they should have *had more wit*. The argument in one case is, that they *wanted experience*; in the other, it will be that they *had experience*, but did not *profit* by it. We will indulge them therefore in this alteration likewise, the rather because there seems to be some ground for it in the present performance.

For if Mr. Wesley has studied the Greek Testament so accurately, as he boasts in one place;^c or applied himself to the *use of reason* so attentively, as he professes in another;^d no person, as far as one can judge from his *two-penny* pamphlet, ever did either to so *little* purpose, and with such small improvement.

I am but a *woman*, but yet I think, without the help of learning, I could make this which I have asserted of Mr. Wesley and his performance evident to any person of common sense. For besides the objections that may be raised against *particular passages*, the very *plan* of the *Letter* is weak, deficient, and fallacious. Everyone must observe that the design of Mr. Downes's book was to expose in *general* the *heresy* which passes under the name of Methodism. And therein not only a few of the *ringleader*, but also, as far as they had come to his knowledge, all the Methodists *of every class*. It is plain that Mr. Wesley took it so. For in the beginning of his *Letter* he says to Mr. Downes, 'In the tract you have lately published against the *Methodists*.'⁴ He does not say, 'against me in *particular*'. This is acknowledging it to be *general*, and one would think by the *preamble* that his *apology* would have been of the same *extent*. But instead of this, he chooses, though *covertly*, to understand the word 'Methodist' as entirely limited to his own congregation, or to himself; and after idling away *ten* pages of this *two-penny* tract, seemingly in the character of a *general* apologist, he thinks it high time then to change his note and inform us that we are to look for nothing farther from him than an answer for his *adherents* and *himself*. But I say, as this was not declared at first, it is a *capital error* in his *plan*, and falling very short of what he had led us to expect. For an answer to a *book* requires an answer *to all that is in the book*. Mr. Downes's book is against *all* the Methodists: Mr. Wesley's *Letter*, when advanced to near the middle, begins then to undertake only a defence of *some*, or rather of *himself*. But can the *innocence* of Mr. Wesley, supposing him to be so, wipe off the *accusations* brought against the *rest*?

For any thing that Mr. *Wesley* has yet attempted, except bold denials unsupported by reason, Mr. Downes's book remains in full *force* against the other Methodists. So out of four large tribes or families—the *whistlers*, the *madmen*, and the *romancers*^e—three of them are left to shift for themselves, to whom it must be no small mortification to see their cause at first seemingly undertaken with great firmness, on a sudden by their fallacious *advocate* miserably deserted. But no wonder, since he is so hard put to it to defend himself!

Witness [1.] his trifling objections about the use of less *elegant* words. 2. His *denial* of facts, which have been fully proved. 3. His acknowledgment of *particular* propositions after a general denial of the charge in the beginning. 4. His *contradicting* propositions, and leaving the *contradiction* entirely unsupported by any argument on the other side. 5. His *giving up* some propositions by *halves*, as not able to maintain them in their full extent. 6. His being *silent* on *others*, or having '*nothing to say at present*'.

^c *Letter*, p. 16.

^d [*Ibid.*], p. 17.

^e So called from their leaders: Wesley, Whit[e]field, Madan, and Romaine.

⁴JW, *Letter*, §1, *Works*, 9:351.

Not to mention his saying of others, that they '*do not belong to him*'. But that is no reason, I hope, why they should not belong to somebody else.

In one place however, I believe the only one in his *Letter*, he looks as though he would *attempt* a *proof*—to wit, 'That faith is a supernatural gift', by saying, that 'faith is the gift of God'. For this is a dismembered *part* of a *text* of Scripture, it being said, Ephesians 2:8, 'By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves. *It is* the gift of God.' By Mr. Wesley's leave, however, the passage can admit of no such meaning as he by his argument would deduce from thence. I have not indeed, like Mr. Wesley, examined every verse in the *original*.^f But if he refers to the text above cited, I think even our own *translation*, if we observe the italics, *with* the direction of some of our divines, will sufficiently enable us to find the true meaning, *though we know* not the *Greek*.

Dr. Free, in the prolegomena to his edition of Mr. Wesley's second *Letter*, etc., observes, *explication* the second, 'That in St. Paul's writings, the whole Christian *dispensation* is often called by the name of *grace*, to distinguish it from the *law* of the Jews, which as it laboured with many *ceremonies* is therefore by way of *opposition* or *disesteem*, for its *laboriousness*, styled *works*.'^g And again, maxim the eleventh, he says, 'Any *text* of the New Testament which shall contradict the general *tenor* of the gospel, and the light of nature, cannot be true.'^h Upon the *first* of these *principles* then, I will beg leave to offer an interpretation different from Mr. Wesley's; and upon the other, I will prove that his cannot be *true*.

The *meaning* which I would give then to the passage, adding as few words as possible, shall be this. '*Ye are saved* by the Christian dispensation, *through belief* (in Christ); *this* (dispensation) was no work (or invention) *of your own*, It is *the gift of God*.'

Now because a *redeemer* is *the gift of God*, would any man that has studied every verse of the Greek Testament conclude from hence that *faith*, in so strict a sense is the *gift of God* as in a *preternatural* manner to be given to one man rather than another, and not be acquired in a *natural* way, by all who hear the *gospel*?

This were making God a 'respector of persons', contrary to what St. Peter says of him;ⁱ and to those other texts of Scripture which represent him as 'willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth';^j and contrary to the light of nature, which leads us to discover the self same thing. This text of Scripture therefore, as applied by Mr. Wesley, cannot be true. And therefore beside the maxim: 'That any *text* of the New Testament which shall contradict the general *tenor* of the *gospel*, and the *light of nature*, cannot be true.' He would do well to observe the *corollary*; 'that as the gospel was before allowed to be *true*, any *text* alleged as capable of such *contradiction* must be a *text* that is *misinterpreted*.'^k And then I will beg him to attend but to one maxim more, namely the twelfth: 'The religion of Christ being allowed to be *true*, and consequently *uniform*, the *misinterpreters* of Scripture, who thus busy themselves in finding *contradictions* in it, and publishing the same for doctrines of the gospel, must be ignorant or dishonest men, or both together.'

^f Wesley's *Letter*, p. 16.

^g Dr. Free's *Edition of Mr. Wesley's Second Letter*,⁵ p. 8.

^h [*Ibid.*,] p. 6.

ⁱ Acts 10:34.

^j 1 Tim. 2:4.

^k Dr. Free's *Edition of Mr. Wesley's Second Letter*, pp. 6–7.

⁵ John Free, *Dr. Free's Edition of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's second letter, with prolegomena for the better information of the studious English reader* (London: for the author, 1759).

But perhaps I have administered a *bitter draught* in giving this *extract* from Dr. Free's writings, as Mr. Wesley has complained of his mixing 'wormwood and gall' in his compositions.¹ I do not imagine, however, that it appears so to others. The medicines seem to me to be well made up, and of wholesome materials. The fault may be rather in Mr. Wesley's stomach, so vitiated by a variety of slops and doses from *foreign* quacks as to be too weak for *retention* of *digestion*. However, to avoid offence, I will change his *physician*, and recommend him to Bishop Bull. This I do in remembrance, that Mr. Wesley was so kind as to direct Mr. Downes to the *Index* of Bishop Pearson.^m *One good turn deserves another*. And now I have thought of it, there is some excellent *milk for babes*, such as any *good mother* would be glad to use, in Dr. Clarke's essay on confirmation. Suppose that Mr. Wesley was to introduce it into his nursery, he might see the happy effects of it. The various meanings of the word 'faith' and 'works', as they stand in St. Paul's epistles (from *confounding* and *misapplying* of which the whole bubble of Methodism at first arose), are there so clearly explained and distinguished that as the author observes, and very justly, the doctrine of St. Paul concerning faith and works, in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, was 'so far from *contradicting* what he had said concerning *obedience* to the *moral* and *eternal law* of God, that on the contrary nothing does 'more clearly or more strongly confirm it'.ⁿ

If Mr. Wesley be really, as he professes in his *Letter*, a friend to *rational* enquiry, and thinks it of sovereign use in discovering the true sense of Scripture, let him read *himself*, and persuade his *followers* to read this short but comprehensive *dissertation* upon the *argument*, *scope*, and *phrase* of these epistles. And if they have understanding enough to comprehend its meaning, I am persuaded that, without having recourse to the Greek Testament, the *error* of Methodism will subsist no longer. A circumstance in which Mr. Wesley, and the rest of the *leaders* of that *denomination*, may have much more occasion to rejoice than in the number of their followers, since all these deluded multitudes may prove no other, at the day of judgment, than a *cloud of witnesses* surrounding their guilty *teachers*, and calling to the throne of God for vengeance on the heads of those who taught them to misrepresent his nature, blaspheme his laws, and impiously pretended to the direction of the Holy Spirit to plunge them into endless ruin.

But I have said enough of the *merit* of Mr. Wesley's cause, and the *merit* of his *Letter*, so far as it was intended to support the same. I have only to observe that Mr. Wesley's reflection in Latin towards the end of his address, which, I am told, refers to Mr. Downes's narrow circumstances, is no objection to his book. But I hope, next to its merit, it will rather prove an occasion of increasing the sale of it, as the advantages from thence arising should seem to be so much wanted by his *family*. And indeed as this is but too much the case, I hope the world will be so good, since my poor husband was prevented by death from reaping any *benefit* from his *labours*, as not to leave it any longer in the power of his adversary to make his misfortunes his reproach. It is well known (and they have it not in their power to procure redress) that the greater part of the *parochial* clergy not only fall a *sacrifice* themselves to the service of the *public*, but also generally leave their *wives* and *children* unhappy innocent *victims* to the same. I am sorry to say that I and my family are of the number of these unfortunate people; having beside myself, two daughters, and a son at Cambridge, whose education cannot be completed without some such timely assistance.

¹ Dr. Free's *Edition of Mr. Wesley's first penny Letter*,⁶ Ch. 1. Verse 10. Page 9. of the 2d. Impression.

^m Mr. Wesley's *Letter*, p. 10.

ⁿ Dr. Sam Clarke on Confirmation, pp. 129–30.⁷

⁶ John Free, *Dr. Free's Edition of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's First penny-Letter, etc. with notes upon the original text* (London: for the author, 1759).

⁷ Samuel Clarke, *Three Practical Essays, on Baptism, Confirmation, and Repentance*, 5th edn. (London: J. Knapton, 1730).

Shall the distressed circumstances of such a family be a matter of triumph to Mr. Wesley? Nay rather I hope and believe that the public will put it out of his power to exult any longer over Mr. Downes's poverty, by laying hold of this opportunity of making a decent contribution for our relief.

Anne Downes

Source: published transcription; Anne Downes, *The Widow Downes's Answer to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Letter which was addressed to her late husband the Rev. Mr. Downes, just at the time of his Decease* (London: Stanley Crowder, 1760).⁸

⁸The epigraph on the title page: 'And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the *love of the truth*, that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them *strong delusion*, that they should *believe a lie*' (2 Thess. 2:10–11).

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]
April 18, 1760

Dear Sir,

I hope this will find you safe arrived in —, and doing the will of him that sent you. I had not an opportunity of writing to you before, but trust it may be as acceptable now. I can very freely tell you all that is in my heart, without fear or reserve. Surely it is the gift of God, over-ruling the closeness of my natural temper. He has given to several of his dear children that they can have an entire confidence in *me*. And if he who is infinite in wisdom sees it will answer a good end, he will bestow the same more abundantly upon *you*. I can truly say I always speak and write in the simplicity of my heart. I care not if there was a window in my breast, that all might see the motives of my every action. But there are thousands of things which must be left till the judgment of the Great Day.

There are many that meet you daily at the throne of grace, where the oftener you go, the more welcome you are. God shall deliver you from every snare, and preserve you to this heavenly kingdom. I have many a time proved that all things work together for good to them that love God—whether sickness, or pain, or loss of friends, or whatever else he permits to befall us. I do, by grace, cast all my care upon him, and sometimes I find particular answers to prayer. But I see all I enjoy, both spiritual and temporal, is for Christ's sake alone.

I feel a hope full of immortality, and a measure of holiness. But I know I must be abundantly more holy before I am fully meet to mingle with just men made perfect, in the regions of bliss and glory. I do not so long for it as to have one wish, one desire to be there now. I rejoice to do and suffer the will of God on earth, so long as he pleases.

Dear sir, let the many snares that are laid for your feet stir you up to more abundant watchfulness and prayer, that you may rise superior to your every foe, and God may be glorified in your body and in your spirit. I am dear sir,

Your affectionate and loving sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 556–57.

From James Oddie

Leeds
May 6, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Brother Hosmer¹ has given you an account of a good many things, concerning which I need say no more.

The present revival of the work of God among us has been chiefly in country places. But we have prayed and hoped for a revival in Leeds also, and our prayers and hopes are not in vain. There is now a considerable appearance of it. I have seen, or thought I have seen, the dying flame rekindling for five months last past. Now it is more visible. There have been some converted lately, and others awakened. Last Sunday evening there were several, both in the public preaching and in the society, groaning very bitterly for the disquietness of their hearts. But the principal work is among those who have believed. Their souls are vastly refreshed, their graces enlivened, and they are provoked to seek after a farther degree of grace, and a constant exercise of love. May the good Lord make a speedy work among them!

The last quarter, we had thirty-seven conversions, fifty-three new members added, and five backsliders restored. I also took twenty-eight persons into society at two new places, Maplewell and Kasper, situate between Wakefield and Sheffield. We have preached also at Barnsley, where they are very angry, cast rotten eggs at us, and give us heavy curses. But I think the Lord will conquer them.

James Wild has left the round very abruptly and is gone to Sheffield, intending to keep shop there.² No reasonable offence was *given* to occasion so sudden a departure. He has *taken* offence at me. Some time since, we dined together at Mr. Ikins. After dinner, he declared there was no freedom from sin before death. I gave my reasons, in as few and mild words as I could, why I thought it might be. This he took as a great offence. I have wrote to him since and told him, *from my heart*, though I intended no offence, nor thought I had given any, yet I would lay my hands under his feet if it would do him any good. The Lord knoweth I would rather suffer any thing than designedly offend, or needlessly grieve, any creature in the world. I cannot think of it without tears flowing from my eyes.

The Lord Jesus is the desire of my heart, and the object of my affections at all times. He many times carries my spirit, all my powers, and affections up unto himself without any sensible effort of my own, and fixeth them in God, their proper centre. Sometimes I find a silent stillness, the region of the soul inconceivably calm, and all attention to an indwelling and inspeaking God. Then I could keep always at the feet of Christ, and weep my life away. No one knows how mean and insignificant I then see myself. I call myself a thousand times foolish creature, weak and helpless worm. The mediatorial undertaking of my Lord is never so precious unto me as at such seasons. Though there is not a power in my soul (nor a thought in my heart as far as I know) which thwarts the will of God, yet I never see so clearly as then what need I have of the death of Jesus. My obedience is not, by far, as broad as the commandment; for this, I need his precious blood. I feel my soul as helpless as an infant of days; for this, I need his power. I conceive an infinite number of snares laid for me; for the avoiding of which, I need his wisdom. I find myself a tender weakly branch, far from maturity; for which, I need the sap and nourishment of the blessed vine into which I feel myself engrafted. Yea, Christ is all in all to me. I only desire that I and others may be more and more conformed unto, and dependent upon Christ.

I have often thought of and prayed for you since I saw you last. Oh that the dear Lord Jesus may give you all the fullness of those blessings you explain, and are a means of conveying to others; that you may comprehend with all saints what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height; and know the love

¹Orig., 'Horsmore'. John Hosmer (d. 1780), of Darlington, Staffordshire, was one of the earliest Methodists in that area and became an itinerant preacher in 1758. He subsequently settled in Sunderland and practiced as a surgeon. Cf. Atmore, *Memorial*, 200–01.

²James Wild was accepted as an itinerant preacher at the 1752 Conference (see *Works*, 10:253). His last recorded assignment was to Cheshire by the 1758 Conference (10:287), since detailed Minutes for 1759 and 1760 do not survive.

of Christ which passeth knowledge; and be filled with *all the fullness of God!* This is the fervent prayer of
Your affectionate brother, and humble servant,

James Oddie

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 335–37.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley

[Loughrea]
May 27, 1760

Reverend and Very Dear Brother,

I bear in my mind, with all thankfulness, the tender love and charitable prayers with which God was pleased to inspire your heart, and the hearts of his dear children in Ireland, towards my unhappy brother, myself, and our afflicted family, under the late dreadful calamities inflicted on us.¹ May every blessing you sought for him or us be doubled and redoubled on your own souls, and may the Lord remove far from every one of you that bitter cup, which it seemed good to him that we should share in.

I have reason to bless my God daily for the humbling lessons he has taught me through these his awful visitation. O sir, is there much danger now that I should pride myself upon my family!

I doubt not but that your labours in Ireland have been amply paid in their success. And give me leave to assure you that, night and day, I continually recommend you in my fervent prayers before the throne of grace.

On many, many considerations, my earnest desires draw me towards you, and yet I perceive myself detained here, very much against my will, by a trust reposed in me by my late brother, to see his debts discharged and other matters properly settled, that no further dishonour may be reflected on his memory. I would to God I may meet you in Connaught, and give you a poor but hearty welcome at Loughrea, but fear I cannot possibly be down till the time you have proposed for your stay there is expired. Let me entreat you, however, that you will pay a visit to my poor flock,² for whom I am sorely grieved in my absence from them, and can only be comforted in the sweet hope that you will not neglect them in your travels. You are heartily welcome to my church, if you please to make sure of it. And I hope you will be truly welcome to the ears and hearts of all the people. May God continue to bless and endow you with the riches of his unsearchable wisdom, and permit you to us many years, for the furtherance of the ministry of his glorious gospel, and for the enlargement of your own everlasting reward, eternal in the heavens. Amen and Amen.

Your most unworthy, yet ever affectionate brother in the Lord,

Walter Shirley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 459.

¹His brother, Lawrence Shirley, the fourth Earl Ferrers, had been executed on May 5, after being convicted of murder in the death of his land steward.

²Shirley was rector at Loughrea.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]
May 30, 1760

Dear Sir,

I hope your love will pardon my seeming neglect in not answering you sooner. I was much affected with the trial you mention, but it is difficult to write unless I knew the particulars. And even then I should be utterly insufficient for the task. But this I know, if temptations increase, God will give a proportionable increase of strength.

You are set as a mark for the devil and his children to shoot at, and that in every kind. You may expect it. And who would not be willing, yeah, more than willing to bear all that men and devils can lay upon them, to have such fruit of their ministry as God is pleased to bless you with? I trust nothing will be able to induce you to shrink in any measure from the work that God hath set before you. My continual prayer to God is that you may be not only preserved but blessed and strengthened, and made more than conqueror. O that sympathy of spirit! O that bearing one another's burdens! Who can conceive it but they that feel it? I pray God to fulfil in me the prayer and desire of your soul. I trust he will still keep me a little child, and yet make me a father in Christ. I cannot find, upon the closest examination, any decay in my love to God, or that I love him less at one time than another. I am now, and always, happy in God. Love him less! No, I cannot. Every repeated instance of his goodness creates in me stronger returns of thankfulness and adoration, till I am many times lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Time seems to me to fly exceeding swift. I see we are on the brink of eternity, and therefore long to make the very best use of the present moment. I find sometimes a kind of heaviness through temptations, but no fainting in my mind. Yet I have sometimes found as if my mind would have cleaved too much to those that excel in virtue. But the Lord, by some blessed means or other, prevents it, so that in some sense I stand alone, as though there were only God and myself in the world.

O pray for me that he may fulfill in me all the good pleasure of his will, and make me just what he would have me to be!

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and loving sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 557–58.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley

[Loughrea]
June 18, 1760

Dear Sir,

I receive, with inexpressible joy, the relation you make of the progress of the gospel in Ireland. May the remainder of your days be even more blest than the past. I think it is an observation of yours somewhere that the Irish are open enough to slight impressions of the truth, but not to very deep ones. I trust, however, that in this your expedition you have found some depth of earth, and that the seed will remain and will bring forth such fruit as will be to the honour of that kingdom, and will make a chief part in your crown of rejoicing at the last day.

I am very heartily concerned that there should be even three or four at Athlone not yet convinced by you. How very wrong and unbecoming them it is to separate themselves from the service of the Church. And yet, I am still more grieved that they have the least appearance of reason to urge on their side.

Surely, surely we shall meet. I most ardently wish for it, as far as I dare wish for any thing in which I so much consult my own pleasure and advantage.

I cannot enough express what a warm affection I bear your dear brother. It has been a peculiar blessing to me that I had him to advise with on many interesting points. I commend you to God's love. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me with the greatest regard,

Your affectionate, though very unworthy brother,

W. Shirley

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 560.

From the Rev. Walter Sellon

Smisby
July 20, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I would have done myself the pleasure to have met you at your Conference, but having two churches to supply, and none at that time to assist me, must lay aside all thoughts of it.

I need not tell you what Mr. [George] Tizzard¹ has been doing in these parts, as he is with you to give an account himself. But as his labours are a good deal intermixed with mine, I take the liberty to offer my advice concerning carrying on the work hereabouts. I think it would not be amiss if Mr. Tizzard were continued another quarter in this round, till the people are a little more established, as he seems to be pretty well received in most places. But if it be thought proper to remove him, I must advise you to send a picked man—a man of gifts, of grace, of prudence, of seriousness, and of a tender healing spirit—for such a one is necessary for the people he will have to deal with.

What say you to an hospital for poor superannuated Methodist preachers and for travelling preachers' wives, together with a college for a master and four fellows and a certain number of students to be chosen from Kingswood school or elsewhere, etc.? To build and endow such a place would be a very great expense; yet, I am persuaded, not too great for the Methodists to bear, if they had only a willing mind. To make a beginning, I will promise to subscribe £20 down as soon as such an undertaking shall be agreed upon. I will not say how much more at present. How many have you in society that can afford to give £1 apiece? How many that can and will give that and more? How many that are much more able than I, that will give but half so much? If the ends proposed for such an undertaking be thought worth obtaining, consider at your Conference what can be done in it. Make an estimate of what you think can be raised.

I apprehend [1.] such an undertaking would free the preachers from many fears and cares, which must now almost necessarily attend them. 2. Under God, it would be a sure means of perpetuating the work for ever which you have begun, as there would be from hence a constant supply of travelling preachers to spread abroad the doctrine you have revived. 3. It would ease the societies of considerable expense hereafter. 4. It would be a means of causing the gospel to keep footing in some of our churches at least for ever, beside other good ends which might be mentioned.

May the Lord be with you and direct you in your consultations, and prosper all your undertakings for his glory and the good of mankind!

I am, dear sir,

Your unworthy brother in Christ,

Walter Sellon

Endorsement: by JW, 'Sellon's plan of hospital, July 24th, 1760. Ad. Sept. 4'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/114.

¹George Tizzard (fl. 1755–70) served as a Methodist itinerant between 1759–61, never appearing in the spotty Minutes from that period. He left to become first a Baptist preacher and then to obtain ordination as a priest in the Church of England on Apr. 1, 1767; cf. Atmore, *Memorial*, 426–28; and Everett, *Sheffield*, 1:159–60.

From Thomas Mitchell¹

Norwich
July 23, 1760

Dear Sir,

I thought it might be well to give you the best account I could of the life and death of Mr. Smith.

He was born in the year 1712. His parents were exceeding poor, and because of this they could give him no education. For want of learning and using the grace of God well, he turned out very wicked in all his ways. His mind was taken up in gratifying his own desires, and he slighted all the invitations of a loving Redeemer. And thus he continued till he was 28 years of age. At that time the Lord visited him with strong conviction. He showed him the condition he was in and that he would certainly miss of heaven if he lived and died in this condition. This caused him to reform his life. He left many of his evil ways and began to follow that which was good. He went to the Church and sacrament, and strove all he could to reform his life. And thus he continued four years. But by this labour he thought to merit heaven. He knew nothing of Jesus. There was no kind shepherd to lead him to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul. He knew nothing of justification by faith in the blood of Jesus. He at last turned from all attempt at religion and went to his old ways again, and became as wicked as ever. All his convictions left him and Satan took full possession of his heart. He went from ill to worst, walking according to the desires of his own heart. He continued ten years in this backsliding state. At last it pleased th gracious Redeemer to look with pity upon him and to call him once more to embrace the gospel.

About the year 1753 Mr. [George] Whitefield came to preach in this city. Mr. Smith heard him the first sermon he preached, but it had no impression on him. But the second sermon touched his heart. After this he began to feel the weight of his sins, and to be sensible of the lost condition he was in by nature. His convictions were very great. He many times thought he was dying. He thought he hung by as slender a thread as a cobweb. this he expressed many times, to many people. He roared out for the disquietness of his soul. In this conviction he was much drawn out in prayer for God's mercy. He told me he saw without Christ he was ruined forever, and this sight constrained him to cry out, "Come Lord Jesus and deliver me." I believe he was about four months in this situation and then the Lord came to his rescue. The Lord proclaimed himself gracious and merciful, pardoning transgression and sin. He felt peace in his heart and joy in the Holy Ghost. He found all his past sins forgiven him. He found he was reconciled to God through Christ Jesus. After this he went on rejoicing some time. But he found a heart still prone to backslide. By this and the many temptations he met with, he was drawn aside a little. But he soon recovered himself, by the grace of God. The Lord healed his backsliding and loved him freely. He said after this he went on in much joy in his loving Redeemer. But still he met with may temptations, both within and without.

By all the rage of fiends and men,
The vehement stream, the beating rain,
 assail on ever side.
Nor men nor fiends his firmness shook
The house was built upon a rock
 And every story defied.²

He was much tried with his wife. She opposed the gospel very much for some time after he was converted, and persecuted him very much. But he was enabled to pray for her. She told me that he has prayed for her till the sweat has dropped from his finger ends. And at last the Lord heard him and

¹There is no surviving address to determine whether this letter was sent to JW or CW; however Thomas Mitchell was one of the lay preachers who had started offering Lord's Supper in Mar. 1760 in Norwich, sparking a vigorous response from CW, so it is unlikely he would have been writing to CW.

²CW, 'On the Death of Mrs. Grace Bowen', st. 7, *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 25.

converted his wife. About five years before he died he was taken with an illness that continued with him till he died. But this disorder he was taken from his daily labour. But he had much of the presence of God in his soul. The most of his time was spent in prayer and in praising God and talking for his glorious Master. A great many were comforted by his words. They were the power of God unto salvation. About two years before he died he was obliged to take his bed, because his pains had made his limbs useless, so that he could not help himself. But in this situation he found the Lord was his refuge. Notwithstanding his great pain, he found so much of the presence and love [remainder missing].

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/55.

From the Rev. Samuel Davies

Nassau-Hall [New Jersey]
August 6, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I wrote to you, I think about a year ago, to make my acknowledgments for your *Notes on the New Testament*; for which I am deeply indebted to you. But as I have received no answer, I am afraid my letter did not come to your hands. Both my head and my heart, I hope, have been improved by your valuable present. And I am so far from taking offence at the few little things in which we differ that it gives me no small pleasure (though I must confess, attended with some mortification) to find that, notwithstanding these errors (as I must account them) you so vastly exceed me in sanctified knowledge and real goodness. May the Lord, your Master, whom you serve with so much fidelity and success, enable you, my worthy friend, to go on and prosper.

The immediate occasion of my writing to you at present will, I am sure, be acceptable to you, whether you should be able to comply with the design of the application or not. There has lately been an unusual stir about religion in the Church of England in Philadelphia, occasioned by a clergyman of that church who has officiated there for some time. I mean the Rev. Mr. McClenchen.³ Did you hear him preach, I am sure you would highly esteem him and bid him Godspeed. The depravity of human nature, the nature and necessity of regeneration, the influence of the Holy Spirit, justification by faith in Christ, and other unfashionable peculiarities of the gospel, which were wont to be contradicted or at least but slightly touched upon or passed over in silence in that pulpit, are the common materials of his sermons. And his talents are so considerable and popular that he represents them in a very striking light. And it has pleased God to grant his ministry unusual success. Need I tell you, sir, after the treatment you have yourself met with for so many years, that this gentleman could not be long tolerated within the walls of the church? He has been cast out. But the crowd of his hearers is not at all diminished, and they are now about erecting a new church for him, for ever appropriated to the use of ministers of his principles and spirit. The building must be large (I think about 90 feet by 65) to contain the multitude. And they have exerted themselves in contributing toward it. But they will fall short 1000£ after they have done their utmost. Will you forgive me, dear sir, that I advised them (particularly my good friend Daniel Roberdeau, Esq.) to apply to you for assistance, and undertook to introduce them. I told them I could give them no assurance that it would be in your power to do any thing for them, but I could take upon me to assure them of your generous willingness, and it might be worth while to make so easy and inoffensive a trial. I know you need no persuasives from me, and therefore after introducing my friends to you, I leave them to speak for themselves.

My hurry will not permit me to enlarge. With a heart full of love and veneration, I am dear sir,
Your friend, brother, and humble servant,

Samuel Davies

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797): 49–50.

³I.e., Rev. William McClenachan (b. 1714), a native of Ireland who had immigrated to North America, but returned in 1755 to get ordination in the Church of England.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley

Loughrea
August 29, 1760

Dear Sir,

I well understand what you would imply by that 'prudence' against which you so lovingly endeavour to caution me. It is a principle disguised under this specious form, but has indeed no better source than the love of the world and the fear of man. I am at the same time greatly sensible of my own danger from the plausibility of its arguing, and from the gentle *lullabies* it is ever singing in one's ears, by which it is apt to hush one's zeal to sleep. Nay, perhaps I may at this instant be a slave to it, without once suspecting my condition.

If I could discover this nasty motive in myself, I trust, by the grace of God, I should disdain and triumph over it. But here, as in many other respects, I perceive to my cost that the preacher stands continually in need of a preacher. All that I can do in my present case is to pray the Lord to make his paths straight before me, to resign myself wholly to his direction, to wait for his impressions on my mind, and to be clear concerning those impressions that they are of God, and then to press boldly forward in the way which he is pleased to lay open before me—without deliberating on the prudence or imprudence of such a step, without considering whether any temporal gain or loss is hereby likely to accrue to me.

Whether I have adhered closely enough to God in prayer that he may favour me with these divine notices is a question I am almost afraid to ask myself; or rather, to which I must plead guilty. But it is in vain to dwell upon the past. It is enough to be convinced of what is amiss, and then come to Christ, by whom I trust all will be set right.

I shall take into consideration what you say concerning fasting, and desire to make my hearty acknowledgments for this and other useful hints I have received from you. Let me entreat you, dear sir, to consider me as one standing greatly in need of a monitor, walking in fearful places, in the weakness of a babe, without any faithful guide to lean upon. And O, for God's sake, call to me when you apprehend I am going out of my way. Do not, I beseech you, content yourself with hinting, but be open in reproof. Be persuaded that I shall look upon this as the noblest proof of your affection. And whatever pain such a blow may give me, I shall be far from revolting against it.

If this reaches your hand before you leave Dublin, it bears to you my best wishes, and earnest prayers to God for your safe passage to England, and for every temporal and spiritual blessing which your own heart, according to the will of God, can desire.

Commending myself, dear sir, to your fervent prayers, I remain,

Your most affectionate brother, and much obliged humble servant,

Walter Shirley

Source: published transcription; *Collection* (1797): 50–51.

From the Right Rev. Dr. William Barnard, Bishop of Derry

[Londonderry]
[September 1760]

Reverend Sir,

It would have given me a very sincere pleasure to have seen you during your stay in Dublin; and I am concerned to find that your having entertained any doubt of it deprived me of that satisfaction. Indeed, I did not suspect your stay would have been so short.

Whether your expression—of our meeting no more on this side of eternity—refers to your design of quitting your visits to Ireland, or to any increase of bodily weakness, I do not read it without tender regret. However, that must be submitted to the disposal of providence. I pray God to bless you, and supply every want and sanctify every suffering.

I am, reverend sir,

Your loving brother and servant,

William Derry

Source: published transcription; Whitehead, *Life of ... John Wesley*, 2:292–93.

From the Rev. John Newton

[Liverpool]
September 9, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have taken a double journey since I saw you, to London and to Yorkshire. I had a very agreeable progress, found a happy revival in several places, and made many valuable acquaintance, particularly among the clergy. It gave me much pleasure to see the same work successfully¹ promoted by very different instruments; all contentions laid aside, and the only point of dispute amidst some variety of sentiments seeming to be this: who should labour most to recommend and to adorn the gospel. May the Lord pour more and more of a spirit of peace and love into the hearts of his people, however distinguished and denominated. Then shall public usefulness and private edification flourish wherever his name is owned. Then the opposition of the world shall only contribute to carry on the great work. But alas, the dissensions and heart-burnings among the members of the same body, which have too much prevailed, are an unhappy hindrance to those who know the Lord and a fatal stumbling block to those who know him not.

It was with some regret I heard you was so near as at Parkgate, without coming over to us. Had I known it in time, I would gladly have met you there, but you was gone. Our next pleasure will be to hear (from yourself) of your welfare. My fellow-traveller is, through mercy, in good health, and desires her respects, and an interest in your prayers. I enquired several times after Mr. Charles Wesley when in London, but he was in the country, and out of the reach of a stranger's importunity. Though had he been in health, I believe the distance would not have secured him from a visit. I should be glad to hear the Lord has restored him to his former strength and usefulness.

Blessed be God, there is an hour approaching when all veils and separations shall cease. We shall see him whom our souls love, and all our brethren who in so many ages and nations have drank of the same spirit and suffered in the same cause. We shall see them. Neither will it be a transient view, but we shall be among them and abide with them for ever. Then all mistakes and misapprehensions shall vanish. Then love, and joy, and praise shall suffer no interval or abatement. Happy state! Welcome period! When every evil shall subside and the shouts of war shall give place to songs of everlasting triumph. It shall come. Though it seem to tarry, the word of God is engaged for the accomplishment. The King of kings, the Lord of lords, is on our side. He has conquered for us, and will make us more than conquerors in our turn. And then we shall sing, as millions are singing already, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing and power, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Amen.'²

I hope, dear sir, you will still allow me a place in your friendship, correspondence, and prayers; and believe me to be

Your obliged and affectionate servant in our dear Lord,

J. Newton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 390–91.

¹Orig., 'successively'; corrected in errata (at end of vol. 9).

²Rev. 5:12.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]

September 20, 1760

Dear Sir,

The kind hand of the Most High surrounded me in my going out and coming in. I have great desires entirely to get the better of my natural temper. And I do gain ground upon it. What cannot the power of grace do? Mr. H. did indeed do me hurt, by reasoning me out of the promise that God had given. Yet I find the effect[s] of that promise abide with me ever since. My soul is stayed upon God, the Rock of Ages. His promises are to me as large as my wishes, and as lasting as my soul. Yes, I am as happy as ever, as much blest with divine love in my soul. I feel lowliness of heart. I find nothing like anger at any time. Know not whether I find absolute need of self-examination or not. I always see the state of my soul at one view. Yet I continually examine and measure myself by sermons and by the Word of God. I try whether I have the same measure of such and such graces, and whether I exercise them on the like occasions, in the manner our Lord describes and commands, and as the Christian did of old. And glory be to God, in many of these things he has dealt very bountifully with me. Wherein I have not been tried, I can trust him who has promised strength according to our day.

The Lord leads me continually to cross my own will, and I find unspeakable blessings in so doing. I rejoice in his will at all times, however contrary to my own. Thus have I endeavoured to tell you freely the present state of my soul. I desire to be instructed and helped by you, that I may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. May the same blessings rest on your happy soul, that both he that soweth and they that reap may rejoice together.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 611–12.

From Thomas Tobias¹

[Dublin]
October 3, 1760

Reverend Dear Sir,

Through much difficulty we reached the Irish shore. We took ship at Liverpool on Sunday, Sept. 14, 1760, about one o'clock. And by seven on Monday morning we were almost in sight of Dublin, when we met with contrary winds, which drove us back again to Holyhead. We got on shore and were directed to your old lodging, where we were very well entertained. A few of the neighbours joined in prayer with us the same night. Brother [Lawrence] Coughlan preached the next morning. About one we were on board, weighed anchor, and put to sea. We had a fair wind till five, when it began to rise between six and seven, so that we were obliged to reef our sails. At seven the sea rolled over our deck, sometimes half mast high. We looked every moment to be swallowed up. We had between twenty and thirty passengers on board, beside soldiers. Oh the dismal groans and cries we had on every side! Enough to pierce the most obdurate heart! We betook ourselves to prayer; all were now willing to join with us. Those who made a mock at it the day before cried, for God's sake let us come amongst you, and do pray for us. Soon after our first prayer, Mr. Coughlan, and [William] Thompson² were taken ill, so that they could not give a word of exhortation to the people, who were now willing to hear. God so strengthened me both in body and mind that I was enabled to speak to them for four hours successively; and I hope to some purpose, for I believe some will not forget it while they live.

All this while the sailors were obliged to quit the deck, and let the ship drive where providence would guide her. If we lived, the captain expected we should be in the north of Ireland. But about two o'clock in the morning we found ourselves surprisingly rolling into the Bay of Dublin, where the captain acknowledged, 'Surely the Lord hath stood at the helm this night, and miraculously brought us to this place.' At three we were at anchor, and we had the happiness of dismissing the people with a warm exhortation to repentance. They received it gladly, and bid us Godspeed in the name of the Lord.

Blessed be God, we are in good health. God hath been pleased in some measure to own us since we came into the round. Some have joined the societies, and we hear others have found the Lord. Yet, the work is not so deep in Ireland as we could wish. Our round is hard and fatiguing, but I hope God will give strength proportioned to our day. Pray, dear sir, for

Your loving son in the gospel,

Thomas Tobias

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 391–93.

¹Thomas Tobias (d. 1767) was a native of Wales who appears in the Minutes as a travelling preacher in 1755 (*Works*, 10:272) and served until his death in early 1767. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 428–30.

²William Thompson (1733–99) became a Methodist itinerant preacher in 1757 and served faithfully throughout the remainder of JW's life; so that he was elected the first President of Conference on Wesley's death. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 416–23; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 351.

From the Rev. John Fletcher¹

Tern
October 27, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I stand to it, though I have accepted of a living, *tecum vivere amen, tecum obeam ludens*.² Even the apostles, who said let us go that we may also die with him,³ tore themselves away from their beloved master when they were sent to preach the gospel. And God, who reads the heart, knoweth that I do not go upon another errand. You have taught me after Christ that whosoever loveth father, brother, etc., more than Christ is not worthy of him. I *may* then consistently with the sincere love and respect I bear to you follow the divine will in a manner that *seems* to cross that love and respect. You bid me 'see the snare of the devil',⁴ but I cannot see it in that light. What appears to you a snare seems to me to be a door providentially opened to preach Christ among the Gentiles. Here you say 'I cannot do well in a living, it is not my calling.' And I readily own that I am not fit either to plant or to water any part of the Lord's vineyard. All that I can say is that *if* I am called at all, I am undoubtedly⁵ called to labour in the parish that is now committed to me. There I was first sent into the ministry, and there a chain of providences I could not break hath again fastened me. What will be the consequence, I know not. This only I know, that though I should preach with as little success as Noah, I shall endeavour to be a preacher of righteousness. Nor am I quite without hope that he who once reproved a prophet's madness by the mouth of an ass,⁶ may reprove a collier's profaneness even by my mouth.

As to 'the liberty wherein Christ has made me free',⁷ I think it is no other than a readiness to part with all that is near and dear to me, to try to save my own soul and the souls that are committed to me, and of that liberty I am obliged now to make a severe trial. And as to 'preferring things temporal to things eternal',⁸ I am so far from doing it, in accepting the church of Madeley, that if I was inclined to make godliness a gain, I could easier save 20 out of the 40 pounds you have offered me than make both ends meet in living at Madeley upon 70— to say nothing of my having declined the offer of other livings three or four times better, in a worldly view, than that which reasons founded upon eternal things have made me accept. Three years ago, when I was curate where I am now vicar, there was such a prospect of a harvest that when the last incumbent would no more of my services, I offered them to him on any terms, asking no other salary but some vegetables out of his garden which I proposed to cultivate. This was not seeking temporal things, and I hope my principles in this point are still the same. In short, I cannot retreat now, as I have been inducted some days.⁹ And could I do it, I do not think it expedient, at least till I have had a fair trial¹⁰ among these baptized heathens and am quite convinced of my unprofitableness to them. In the meantime, if 2000 souls wallowing in the errors of the pharisees, the Quakers, the papists, etc., and in all the pollutions of this world, deserve any pity, I recommend them and myself to your prayers. Weak

¹Fletcher is replying to a letter from JW (which has not survived) seeking to persuade Fletcher to become JW's lieutenant in itinerant supervision of the Methodist movement, rather than accepting the living as vicar at Madeley.

²'With you I would gladly live, with you I would freely die'.

³John 11:16.

⁴Cf. 1 Tim. 3:7; 2 Tim. 2:26.

⁵Fletcher wrote, then crossed out: 'so to the church of Madeley'.

⁶Cf. Num. 22:28.

⁷Gal. 5:1.

⁸2 Cor. 4:18.

⁹Fletcher was inducted at Madeley on Oct. 17, 1760.

¹⁰Fletcher wrote, then crossed out at this point: 'of my unprofitableness'.

shepherd as I am (if I may assume that title) I can not leave those many sheep in the wilderness before I have exhausted myself in crying to them to turn in the name of the Lord, and have beckoned to more successful labourers to come and try their skill among them. But as my acting at present in a different line from you, sir, will not hinder me to tending to the centre, and endeavour at least to follow you as you follow the Lord, I hope also it will not impair the affection you have so long showed to

Your unworthy servant, sir,

J. Fletcher

In a fortnight I shall be at Madeley near Bridgenorth Shropshire.

Address: 'To the Revd Mr. J. Wesley / at / Bristol'. Also, near address but vertical: 'Mr Keagle Boe'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Fletcher / inducted in / a living! / Oct. 27, 1760 / ad Nov. 6'.

Source: holograph; University of California, Santa Barbara, Isaac Foot Collection, MSS 33.¹¹

¹¹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 116–17. See also *Soundings* 67 (July 1974): 42–43.

‘R. W.’ to the Author of the *London Magazine*¹

November 1760

Sir,

As you consult the profit as well as the pleasure of your readers, I request you to admit the following queries into your next magazine.

1. If shocks, in the phrase of the Methodists, or violent operations of the Spirit overpower the natural faculties, must it not destroy free agency, and thus confound the distinctions of virtue and vice, and subvert the foundation of future rewards and punishments?

2. If every man be furnished with an inward light, as a proper private guide and director for the conduct of life, must it not supercede the use and necessity of revelation? For if every man has a safe private guide, of what service is the public rule of life? Is not to follow the Spirit to follow the Scripture, which was edicted by the Spirit of God?

I am,

Yours,

R. W.

Source: published transcription; *London Magazine* (Nov. 1760), p. 614.

¹This letter is not addressed to JW, but he included reference to it in his continuing exchange with ‘Philodemus’ in a letter dated Dec. 12, 1760.

From the Rev. Walter Shirley

[Loughrea]
November 1, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The bad state of health of your dear brother gives me sensible concern. His unparalleled tenderness and affection to me, under the late heavy misfortunes of our family,¹ demand the utmost of my gratitude and love. Let him pardon me that my prayers are frequent to the throne of God that he will restore him to his bodily health, and continue him yet a little longer a blessing to his church and people.

I hope my time at Moira² was not passed unprofitably. I had many serious conversations with Lady Rawdon,³ who afforded me a more favourable attention than I could ever have expected. There is a certain nobleness of heart, and a love of truth so deeply engrafted in her that surely she must come right at last. She was pleased to allow what I said to be highly reasonable, and I trust that when her poor heart feels deeply the wretched want of those comforts which the realizing of these truths can only give, she will recollect the remedy which God enabled me to point out to her, and that a due application of it will be made to the healing of her wounded spirit, through the precious balsam of the atoning blood.

I preached three times at Moira, and find the people there ready enough to acknowledge the truth, but very backward in embracing it. On my return home I preached at Mr. Piers's church at Killeshee near Longford,⁴ and (as I am told) a young woman received grace under the word. In short, I find my excursions are more blest than my labours in my own parish. This is a great grief to me. I am nevertheless not discouraged, but wait God's time, in humble expectation that he will visit this people and give me to see of the travail of my soul and be satisfied.

In the meantime, dear sir, let me entreat you neither to forbear warning nor reproof, if you hear any thing of me you deem blameable. And be persuaded that your ingenious frankness on such occasions will be ever acknowledged as the best proof of your love and esteem for me.

Above all things, I request your earnest wrestlings with God in my behalf, that I may not be found an unprofitable servant in the day of the Lord, but that I may rejoice with you and the saints of God in glory, both I and the children whom the Lord God shall give me.

May the ever blessed and eternal God prosper you and the work of your hands.

Your very affectionate brother in the Lord Jesus,

Walter Shirley

Pray let me hear what state of health poor Mr. Charles Wesley is in. Tell him of my love, and my constant prayers for him, as indeed for you both.

If brother [Peter] Jaco is with you, I beg you will make him my most affectionate respects. I have not answered his letter, not knowing for a certainty where he is.

Address: 'To the Revd Mr John Wesley / Bristol'.

Postmark: 'Loughrea'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'ad 20'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/202; cf. *Arminian Magazine* 20 (1797): 407–08.

¹See Shirley's earlier letter of May 27, 1760.

²Shirley spells 'Moyra'.

³This is Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the Countess of Huntingdon, who married John Rawdon, Earl of Moira, in 1752.

⁴Rev. Fletcher Piers (c. 1713–67) was rector of Killashee.

From 'Stephen Church'
[i.e., John Cook¹]

[Leigh, Essex]
November 3, 1760

'To the Reverend Mr. Wesley'

Reverend Sir,

As you publicly profess yourself a presbyter of the Church of England, yet in several particulars act the very reverse, your kind solution of the following queries, to reconcile if possible such inconsistencies, will much oblige me with many more of our episcopal communion, which I imagine you are in duty bound to do.

I am, your humble servant,

Stephen Church

Query I. Why have you not, all this time, cleared yourself of those personal reflections, enthusiastic flights, unscriptural expressions, and rude behaviour, as quoted from your own writings, that you stand still charged with by a learned author of distinction—or is silence a tacit confession of guilt?²

[*Query*] II. How can you consistently charge your people to attend the worship of our Church and not Dissenters' meetings in a late treatise, if she be, as you modestly call her in a former, 'a mere rope of sand'?³

[*Query*] III. Whether this political direction clasheth not with the tenor of your *Christian Library*, an odd collection of mutilated writings of Dissenters of all sorts—not even Oliver's anti-Baptist chaplain Mr. Dale,⁴ nor that termagant lady and rank enthusiast Madam [Antoinette] Bourignon excepted—an emblem of Noah's ark, yet all equally recommended to the pious reader with the excellent and orthodox writers of our own church?

[*Query*] IV. Is not this presuming to appear as prince of letters, and declaring that you have a superior privilege, beyond all men, to print, preach, correct, or direct just as you yourself shall please?

[*Query*] V. Whether your extraordinary *Christian Library* is at last performed according to the first proposals and the expectation of the subscribers—who, instead of a medley of Dissenters' discourses of all sorts, so easily to be had any where complete, expected according to promise select and learned abstracts and translations abridged from the best church-writers successively, all the way down through every single century, from the apostles' time to ours, with Ephraem Syrus included?

[*Query*] VI. If you be really a Church of England priest, as you publicly profess, why do you set up by yourself so singularly, and make such a dust about words to bewilder the brains of weak people,

¹For the identity of 'Stephen Church' as John Cook, see the letter by Cook below dated Nov. 12, 1764. Cook (1705–77), a physician with an M.D. from Edinburgh University, hosted JW during some of his visits to Leigh (now called Leigh-on-Sea), Essex. The first visit was Nov. 21, 1748; see JW, *Journal* (*Works*, 20:260, n. 10). JW's last recorded visit to Leigh was in 1757. This termination may reflect growing tension over practices this letter criticizes.

²JW assumes Cook is referring to George Lavington's *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared* (London: John & Paul Knapton, 1749–51); in his reply of Dec. 12 JW reminds Cook that he published three replies to Lavington (cf. *Works*, 11:353–436).

³The 'late treatise' would be JW's *Preservative Against Unsettled Notions in Religion* (1760), which included 'Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England' (*Works*, 9:334–42). The reference to a 'mere rope of sand' is in JW, *Plain Account of the People Called Methodists*, I.11 (*Works*, 11:259).

⁴Cook apparently means William Dell.

and hold some tenets so contrary to hers?

[Query] VII. Pray, why did you not carefully distinguish those places in your New Testament with italics where you altered the old translation, and in your notes give the learned a good reason for doing so? Or must the world take your own bare word for it and esteem you the first Protestant pope that ever was in being?

[Query] VIII. Whether in philology and physic [i.e., medicine],⁵ as well as in theology, you do not rather assume too much and superbly disdain some superiors?

[Query] IX. What relation has your spirit with electricity, and why meddle you with the works of the flesh?⁶

[Query] X. How unlike St. Paul was you, after such protestation against marrying, and writing in praise of celibacy, to join to a person you could have no issue by, when you had matrons enough to act, with pleasure, all offices of life but that single one you should, in purity, have denied yourself?

[Query] XI. If you be a sincere friend of the Established Church, as you would have us believe, how comes it that, though in print you own episcopacy to be *jure divino*,⁷ in private you deny the same and say the Dissenters have far the better of the argument?

[Query] XII. If you be a priest of our Church, as at ordination you engaged, what did you propose by preaching up at your morning meetings for a Solemn League and Covenant,⁸ or something like it, to be most religiously entered into and strictly observed by your own people, producing a northern example for the same,⁹ the better to induce them to obedience?

[Query] XIII. Was the above said shackle invented and intended, had your hearers been so weak as to have been caught¹⁰ by it, to cut them off with their own hands from ever communicating for the future with any company of Christian but yourselves, and so to render them at last all Quakers in disguise, only your learned self being at the head of them?

[Query] XIV. What do you mean, too, in commending and approving of these late comets of divinity, the crazy Camazars [i.e., Camisards] or French prophets, according to their first setting out—as you do still the Quakers, and imitate them so much?

[Query] XV. How consistent with your scheme is your stinting of the spirit of your lay preachers, in your late *Preservative*, to three or four minutes only in their public prayers?¹¹ And well would it be if they would but better observe you!

[Query] XVI. If you be a true pastor of our episcopal Church that gave you your gown and honour, and act as your oath and priestly office require, how can you in conscience and consistently with such a sacred character and profession be guilty of such *canonical* disobedience, which neither your superior piety nor precise stiffness can in the least compensate for?

[Query] XVII. As a zealous presbyter of the good old Church of England, how in the name of God could you patiently sit and suffer such a tragic-comical farce to be bare-facedly acted before you as

⁵Remember that Cook was a physician.

⁶JW had just published *The Desideratum; or, Electricity made Plain and Simple* (1760). His focal interest was in the potential healing benefits of electricity, again a potential professional infringement to Cook.

⁷Divine law.

⁸The agreement entered into by the Puritan English Parliament with the Scots in 1643, during the English Civil War, which included transforming the Church of England into a presbyterian structure.

⁹Cook appears to be referring to the 'covenant renewal' service that JW introduced among Methodists as early as Christmas Day, 1747 (see *Journal, Works*, 20:203), and that took on more prominence in the mid 1750s; cf. JW, *Journal*, Aug. 6, 1755, *Works*, 21:23.

¹⁰Orig. 'catched'.

¹¹JW, 'Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England', III.3, contains a prudential rule against long prayers (see *Works*, 9:340).

those whimsical votes of your own lay teachers (those modern models of low divinity, assembled at an annual Conference at Leeds, while you yourself, in *propria persona*¹² either as pope or moderator supremely presided) whether they should for the future, like bold champions, entirely separate and for ever depart from the Established Church (as I imagine will be the upshot of all at last) and publicly set up for a distinct sect by themselves, and freely and familiarly in public administer to one another (as Quakers refined) the two sacraments as some of the warmer sort longed to be at, and at last—to my no small surprise and astonishment—really did so?

[*Query*] XVIII. If most votes had carried the day, what confusion would this madness have occasioned; and yet, whether it would not have been acting the honester part of the two?

[*Query*] XIX. Whether, to be plain with you, from the former premises and others that possibly might hereafter appear (when that worthy gentleman has done with you and has got his queries answered, you are now engaged with) you be a right clergyman at all, but rather a cunning and disguising Quaker in disguise, acting underhand, the second edition of Robert Barclay, and playing the part of brother Robert over again? And it is to be feared that, through the pride of becoming the ever-memorable head of a party, under the rouse you privately betray the Church, as Judas did her master with a kiss. If you be in the wrong, God confound your devices! If in the right, may he display it to all people!

[*Query*] XX. Lastly, I also query whether you are not in conscience and duty bound to give a speedy, honest, clear, and categorical answer to these serious questions, and that *bona fide*,¹³ without any equivocations or mental reservations—to purge yourself, to vindicate episcopacy, to satisfy the public, to prevent offense, etc., for the public good?

Source: published transcription; *London Magazine* (Nov 1760), 586–88.

¹²‘Your own person’.

¹³‘In good faith’.

‘Philodemus’ to the Editor of *Lloyd’s Evening Post*¹

c. November 10, 1760

*Casus multis hic cognitus ac iam
tritus ...*

Juv., *Sat.* 13²

Sir,

If the knowing well how to expose any misdemeanour or irregular proceeding were any security for virtue and good actions, what an excellent age might we presume to live in! Never was a nation, I believe, more fruitful of witty and satirical writers, nor an era in which the theatre could have made a more happy discharge of her criticism on religious buffoons, than at present.

We now have the pleasure of seeing Methodism ushered in in comic characters, and the ridiculous gesture of a Tabernacle imposter mimicked in the easier attitude of the stage.³ Forced actions are seldom pleasing, and it is not without some difficulties that we engage (if ever we do) in any knotty and unintelligible *system* of divinity and morality. Whatsoever appears contradictory or self-contradicting in principles must be received under the denomination of an ‘hypothesis’. And, if we adopt it as such, it must be granted to be a very slippery foundation to hazard our *all* upon.

The grand *machinery* of Methodism appears to have for its basis a favourite tenet, the *grace of assurance*. This is the *cornerstone*, or rather the fountainhead from which the rest are deduced in their respective orders: *regeneration* being only a preparative (good works not significant) for an introductory channel to convey them to so delightful a situation. However, it would be no unpleasant enquiry to ask from what portion of Scripture this *mystical grace* is collected. Though I have frequently, at my leisure, consulted the Holy Scriptures, the sacred repositories of divine knowledge, yet I must confess I never was so fortunate as to meet with one passage that could flatter me into so salutary a belief. I call it salutary if we are so happy as to possess it, as such a conviction must necessarily render us superior to all the inconveniencies this uncertain and transitory world would leave us liable to. Who would not rejoice to be assured they had obtained a full remission of all their sins? I frankly declare, on my own part, nothing would yield me a more sensible satisfaction. But if upon examination we find this opinion vague, our Methodist will not only lurch himself but his hearers. He may set his wits to work in vain, to conjure up a system that has authority sufficient to authorize a mere illusion. And notwithstanding he may thunder out damnation to us, and excommunicate us for our non-belief, we shall venture to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, as the apostle has enjoined us. And though we are not so compliant as to digest this dangerous pill Methodism has prescribed, yet (thank heaven) we have better assurances than to despair.

Happy may we account ourselves that we have the admonition of a sacred writer on this occasion, 1 Cor. 10:12,⁴ to prevent our embarking in so destructive a scheme. And while we are masters of those valuable treasures, I dare stand security for every person of sober sense and sound reason for ever adhering to matters of such pernicious consequence. Religion, examined in its strictest sense, was certainly never intended to depress our spirits but to elevate them and render our minds cheerful and serene. And whoever rightly considers the purport of it will be free from the immediate influence of devout melancholy and enthusiasm so peculiar to Methodists. To act with sullenness and sourness in that

¹While this letter is not specifically addressed to JW, he published a reply dated Nov. 17, 1760.

²Juvenal, *Satires*, xiii.9–10; ‘This is a case of bad luck, familiar to many people’ (Loeb).

³Referring to a satirical play that had just appeared about Methodism by Samuel Foote, *The Minor; a comedy* (London: J. Coote, G. Kearsly, et al., 1760). The Tabernacle was George Whitefield’s preaching house in London.

⁴‘If you think you are standing firm, be careful you do not fall.’

which was intended for our consolation and comfort can only proceed from ill timed reflection and a disrespectful notion of the Supreme Being; and, with due submission, I think it is valuing the transcendent blessings the divine Author of our religion has been pleased to confer upon us at a disadvantageous rate, to put the dictates of an enthusiastic preacher in equilibrium with his sacred injunctions. To be gay and cheerful (though innocently so) is with them accounted a crime almost equally heinous as sacrilege. This I speak from experience, as having some connection with several of them. Is this religion, or is it bigotry? For my own part, sir, I frankly declare that were I a person of an airy or volatile disposition (without offence) I had rather stand all adventures with religion than be delivered of it at so sad a cost as that of inconsiderateness and madness. It is not my intention by this last assertion to adopt a principle of free-thinking. For I honestly profess myself to be an unworthy member of the true church of Christ, and so disposed that no one fears to prefer his own private judgment more than I do, yet one that holds strange doctrines in contempt and derision. All I contend and shall contend for is that we would think of those things in which our eternal welfare is interested in a *good humour*, and with an *unbiassed affection*. And that this will be the best way, not only of guiding our judgment aright, will be evidently manifest, but be the securest antidote against enthusiasm and madness. To say the truth, I hardly care to think, much less to write, upon such a subject without entirely divesting myself of all prejudice and putting myself into as good humour as is possible—for to set out without these necessary preservatives would be running the hazard of foundering on the rock of enthusiastic madness, or sapping the best foundations we ourselves can lay of piety and true religion.

Thank heaven that we can still enjoy the benefits of a religion superior to that of Methodism, and we have still the satisfaction of seeing the gown not so totally undignified as what the followers of this sect would wish it to be. And it is still to be hoped that, whilst we have leading men of justice and probity, we shall still bid defiance to the ridiculous attempts of *devout melancholy* and prophetic *enthusiasm*.

I cannot help fancying that if we had some formal court of judicature erected to take cognizance of such matters, we should be better enabled to detect the cunning cant and hypocrisy of all pretenders to sanctify and devotion. And it would be an infinite service to induce men to put a more intrinsic estimation upon *honesty* and *virtue*. It would happily furnish us with a discerning spirit to distinguish betwixt *right* and *wrong*. And we should, at the same time, be more competent judges of ourselves in affairs of such serious importance. We should then discern what was equitable and what was opposite to it, and not be so credulous as to side with those who preach up religion to accomplish a *lucrative* design. We should not be so grossly mad as to listen to *treacherous insinuations*, and should be able to guard against those that preach up to us the ways of salvation with a view to make us undergo a *temporal fleecing*.

To rob and plunder is by some esteemed meritorious. And to accumulate wealth is the sovereign argument where *good words* are deemed unnecessary accomplishments. We can easily divest ourselves of the apostle's opinion, and fancy ourselves sufficiently religious, if we have only money enough. For as religion stands amongst us, it is equally consistent with down right policy for laics⁵ of that denomination not only to be *poor in spirit* but to preserve themselves from being too affluent in their circumstances of life. How well this doctrine coincides with the sentiments delivered in the Tabernacle is mighty clear and demonstrative. *Charity*—that excellent word *charity*—is become entirely obsolete and almost obliterated in many places, yet still here maintains her useful elegance. We are a good natured set of people, and pleased with any thing that appears strange and uncommon, and are willing to thrust ourselves into temporary calamity to support any piece of saint errantry. We are admirably inclined to listen to any proposals that are made from the pulpit, though ever so extensive. We have a kind fellow feeling for our pastor, and rather than see his coffers diminish a pound, readily contribute all that we have.

This is the true portraiture of Methodism. So well disposed are they towards their John Baptist, so blinded with zeal, and so gentle and moderating in their method of thinking, that they prefer their charitable offices for fashion's sake only, and are too modest to imagine good works meritorious. How barbarously then, nay more than heathenishly cruel, must we over-bearing Churchmen be to deny those

⁵I.e., laity or members.

poor enthusiasts this freedom and liberty of *thinking*; what a monstrous piece of inhumanity are we venerators of apostolic doctrine and episcopal dignity guilty of to those pretended saint errants and non-apostolical preachers! What an unhandsome question would it be to ask, 'How comes every trifling mechanic to commence preacher?' or 'Who gave them authority to undignify the priestly function?' These and a thousand such impertinencies we are culpable of, and put them in their shifts to render us a proper answer. And to complete their unhappiness, we have made them a theatrical scoff and the common jest and scorn of every chorister in the street. We must therefore, out of pity and compassion for our fellow creatures, assume a little more modesty, lest we should craze their imaginations more (as they are manifestly at present) and by that means render them useless members to the commonwealth.

In the interim, I am, sir,
Yours, etc.

Philodemus⁶

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* (Nov. 12–14), pp. 467–68.

⁶The pseudonym means 'love of the people'.

From the Rev. John Newton

[Liverpool]
November 14, 1760

Reverend and Dear Sir,

How shall I thank you for the obliging notice you take of me? I wonder you can find time, in the midst of so many more important concerns, to encourage so poor a correspondent. In one sense only I think myself not altogether unworthy your friendship; that is, I am not ungrateful. I honour and esteem you. I pray for your success, and sincerely rejoice in it. Whatever difference may be in some particular sentiments, I know no one to whom my heart is more united in affection, nor to whom I owe more as an instrument of divine grace. And your letters are doubly welcome, as a pleasing mark of the friendship you favour me with, and as a means of my improvement and comfort. I hope none of them are quite lost upon me, and this is the best motive I can offer to induce you to add yet more.

I am in a measure apprized of the value of time, and how fast it steals away. But I am really afraid of setting myself to work. It appears by the event that in the attempts I have already made, I have mistaken either the place or the manner in which I am to appear. Unless I could find something more determining, either within or without, I know not how to be assured that my next scheme would be more abiding and successful than the preceding.

I forgot to tell you in my last that I had the honour to appear as a Methodist preacher. I was at Howarth, Mr. [William] Grimshaw was pressing, and prevailed. I spoke in his house, to about one hundred and fifty persons. A difficult auditory in my circumstance, about half Methodists and half Baptists. I was afraid of displeasing both sides. But my text, John 1:29,¹ let me to dwell upon a point in which we were all agreed. And before I had leisure to meddle with doctrines (as they are called) the hour was expired. In short, it was a comfortable opportunity. Methinks, here again, you are ready to say: Very well, why not go on the same way? What more encouragement can you ask than to be assisted and accepted? But however it may do for a time or so, I have not either strength of body or mind sufficient for an itinerant preacher. My constitution has been broke for some years. To ride an hour in the rain, or more than above thirty miles in a day, usually discomposes and unfits me for everything. Then you must allow me to pay some regard to flesh and blood, though I would not consult them. I have a maintenance now in my hands, the gift of a kind providence, and I do not see that I have a call to involve myself, and a person who has entrusted all her concerns to me (and must share in whatever I feel), in want and difficulties. I have likewise an orphan sister, for whom it is my duty to provide; consequently it cannot be my duty to disable myself from fulfilling what I owe her. And still the weightiest difficulty remains—too many of the preachers are very different from Mr. Grimshaw. And who would wish to live in the fire? So that though I love the people called Methodists, and vindicate them from unjust aspersions upon all occasions, and suffer the reproach of the world for being one myself, yet it seems not practicable for me to join them farther than I do. For the present, I must remain as I am, and endeavour to be as useful as I can in private life, till I can see farther. I shall always be obliged to you for your free sentiments on my case.

Mr. Milner² has wrote to know my sentiment whether or how far the late great change in the state may be expected to influence the course of the gospel amongst us.³ I have nothing to say, or even think, upon this subject, and shall therefore defer my judgment till I can send it him under the sanction of yours. Many are angry, no doubt, but do they expect more opportunities of showing their resentment, or

¹'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'

²John 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; cf. JW, *Journal*, Apr. 7, 1753, *Works*, 20:450.

³Newton is referring to events earlier that year in Rolvenden, Kent, where appeal to the old 'conventicle act' under Charles II was used to fine a Methodist lay preacher for preaching in the house of Thomas Osbourne; cf. Tyerman, *Wesley*, 2:359.

otherwise. Have there been any more prosecutions upon the conventicle act. I was informed sometimes since that a bill was *in embryo*, to restrain the clergy to their own parishes. Would such a bill be more or less likely to pass now than before? Indeed these questions are hardly worth an answer while we know in general that the Lord reigneth and accomplishes his wise and gracious purposes, let men contrive and appoint how they will. While he is pleased to continue the light of his gospel amongst us, I am persuaded, that whatever happens from without shall contribute to its furtherance. The greatest danger to the work arises from within and amongst ourselves. The heat of party zeal does more harm than the heat of persecution, and the smiles of the world are more formidable than its frowns. I believe however, that there never was a place or time to which those words of our Lord, Luke 10:23,⁴ were more applicable than to this nation and this day. What a glorious revival have we already seen? And I hope it is yet increasing. Happy those who share in it. Happy above measure those who are employed to promote it. Oh where is the Lord God of Elijah! Oh had I the call, the mantle, a double portion of the Spirit from on high, I should be well and satisfied. Till then I must languish! I can think of but two things worth wishing for, either to publish his grace and salvation here upon earth or to quit the earth for good and escape to heaven. Pray for me, dear sir. Mrs. [Mary] Newton sends her love, and will rejoice to see you. Will you permit me to subscribe myself,

Your unworthy but affectionate and obliged brother in the gospel-hope,

J. Newton

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 441–44.

⁴‘And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.’

‘T. H.’ to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post*¹

November 20, 1760

Sir,

I read in your last Friday's paper a long letter seemingly wrote against the people called Methodists. I at that time observed to a friend that I imagined it was wrote by one of those people, only to give himself an opportunity to defend their tenets and insinuate to the world that they are hardly dealt with in the opinion of the public. And in yesterday's paper I read an artful kind of a letter in answer to it, signed John Wesley, which more fully confirmed me in my former opinion.

I must leave the world to determine whether I judge right, and—if I do—to make the natural reflections arising on it. Though, if I should be right, I must observe that I think this strange dealing gives them a very just title to the appellation of Methodists.

I beg leave to propose the following queries, viz.:

Query I. Whether a very considerable body of the Methodists do not lay so great a stress on the doctrine of assurance as to declare that there can be no good hope of salvation without it?

[*Query*] II. Whether they do not put a greater confidence in what they call ‘regeneration’ than in the moral and social duties of life, or the mercy of the Divine Being?

[*Query*] III. Whether the stage, in latter years, has ever ridiculed any thing really serious? And whether any thing can be religious that has not right reason to countenance it?

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.

T. H.

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* (Nov. 21–24, 1760), p. 496.

¹This letter is not addressed to JW, but he included reference to it in his second response to ‘Philodemus’ on Dec. 1, 1760.

‘Somebody’ for the Editor of *Lloyd’s Evening Post*

c. November 20, 1760

To. Mr. Wesley¹

*Spirat non tragicum, tamen feliciter audet*²

Sir,

It is with infinite pleasure I survey your animadversions upon my letter,³ in which you not only exhibit an admirable piece of controversy but likewise discover yourself not overcurious in your quotations. You have, undoubtedly, discovered a great penetration of judgment by *vainly* supposing I have assumed the ‘character of a clergyman’; whereas, in reality, you find me a *retainer* to the *theatre*. This last assertion is excellent, and exactly coincides with that *prophetic* spirit peculiar to you and your followers. How agreeably, sir, may you fancy yourself to be deceived, when I declare to you that I have not the least connection with any in the *theatrical* way. I have already professed myself to be an unworthy member of the church of Christ, and have always thought it a duty incumbent on me to appear in the cause of virtue and defence of truth. It seems you are excessively *angry* with me (though you are pleased to cavil with me for not being in a thorough *good humour*) by the multiplicity of words you have taken the trouble to extract out of my letter. I am sorry you should have forgot yourself so much. I am afraid you are only a preacher of patience, and not a practicer. But let us hear them: ‘religious impostors’ (I deny the very expression, sir, and defy you to prove such a one in the whole); ‘religious buffoons’, this I grant you, as I frankly confess I never heard it mimicked more than when one of your auditors; ‘knotty’ and ‘unintelligible’ stuff, without all dispute, to every person of sober sense and sound reason. But pray, good sir, how comes it that you are not so candid and ingenuous as what one might reasonably expect? For, after having made an extraction of all the immaterial words, for cavilling sake, and in the explanation of them manifested yourself a very able and *accurate divine*, you have, agreeable to your usual prudence, passed over in silence the most interesting and material circumstances.

And now, sir, give me leave to remind you of some queries, relative to the priestly function, in the latter part of my letter. I am not so happy as to be one of that order, yet one that reveres and respects it. I cannot, without concern, see it undignified, as it most certainly is by the numbers of lay preachers that swarm in our country. This is a gross and palpable abuse, and very inconsistent with the notions of our primitive founders. The first ages of Christianity never looked upon those that were guilty of so flagrant a piece of iniquity in any better *light* than heretics and *deceivers*. I do not appropriate this to yourself, as I believe you have much better pretensions to it than several of your followers that have commenced preachers. And your character had been more illustrious still, had you not impiously apostatized from those principles of religion which you undertook to defend. But it was not for your purpose to take notice of one syllable of this. To such shifts as these are people unhappily driven that are resolved to maintain a bad cause.

But your definition of good works is still more extraordinary. You shall have it in your own words, where you quarrel with me for esteeming them meritorious: ‘No, neither does ours’ (mind the expression) ‘or any other Protestant church; but meantime, they hold it is their bounden duty, as they have time, to do good unto all men; and they know the day is coming wherein God will render to every man according to his works.’ Admirable contradiction! Was you intoxicated with liquor, or *jure divino*⁴ mad?

¹This is a response by ‘Philodemus’ to JW’s answer (dated Nov. 17, 1760) to his first letter.

²JW prefaced his answer to ‘Philodemus’ with a quote from Horace, *Epistles*, II.i.16, ‘*Spirat tragicum satis, et feliciter audet*’ (‘He breathes sufficiently the tragic spirit, and is successfully daring’); ‘Philodemus’ has reframed with emphasis: ‘*Not* breathing a tragic spirit, *but* successfully daring.’

³I.e., ‘Somebody’ is the same author as ‘Philodemus’ earlier this month.

⁴‘By divine law’.

Is man to be judged for his deeds done in this life, when it is immaterial whether he does any or not? These are your own words, sir, and I appeal to the sense of every unprejudiced person whether this construction is not the true meaning of them? But what reason for bringing in other 'Protestant churches'? Every serious Protestant despises the enthusiastic madness of Methodism, and rejects you and your followers as members of that community. And I heartily wish, sir, you yourself may not have cause one day to repent of your favourite system, when too late.

With what effrontery do you, sir, challenge me to produce those that esteem gaiety and cheerfulness a crime, etc. This would be no arduous task for me to do, but at the same time no credit to you nor your persuasion. I repeat it once more, I am acquainted with several, but it is not my intention to point at individuals. I hope you will think it more prudent to strike at a collective body. Nor do I account that mirth but folly, which has the least tincture or stain of immorality and indecent behaviour. What an amiable comment have you made upon the 'grace of assurance'. It must be acknowledged, sir, you have given it a true *Methodistical gloss*. But where are the proofs from Scripture you was challenged to produce? Not one single text. On the contrary, you seem greatly embarrassed to clear up so *salutary* a point. Your threadbare words—'Spirit', 'regeneration'—seem to flow very plentifully, I suppose from your frequently using them, though indeed you are mightily at a loss to explain them. Nor can you, with all your evangelical rhetoric, handsomely illustrate your *assuring* grace, without divesting yourself of the apostle's advice to 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling'; which, if adopted, your already tottering tenet will fall to the ground.

What a pity it is a man should be angry to be reproved for his faults! Is it any crime to say Methodism is established upon a lucrative principle. (I deny the word 'robbing' you have taken the liberty to jumble with it.) Surely not at all. We have ocular demonstrations what noble structures an itinerant enthusiast has raised. But indeed it is only losing time, for I judge arguing with Methodists is like pounding fools into a mortar,⁵ and therefore shall conclude myself (being sorry so defenceless a cause has no better defender), sir,

Your humble servant,

Somebody

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* (Nov. 21–24, 1760), p. 497.

⁵Cf. Prov. 27:22.

From the Rev. John Berridge

Everton
November 22, 1760

Dear Sir,

I received your letter from Ireland, and purposely delayed my answer till your return to England, that I might not write in a spirit un-becoming the gospel.¹ I wish that all who love the Lord Jesus Christ were perfectly agreed in their religious sentiments. But this, I find, is a matter rather to be wished than expected. And perhaps a little disagreement in non-essentials may be designed as one part of our trial, for the exercise of our candour and patience. I discourage the reading of any books except the Bible and the Homilies, not because of the jealousy mentioned by you, but because I find that they who read many books usually neglect the Bible, and soon become eager disputants, and in the end turn out predestinarians. At least this has happened so with me. If my sentiments do not yet altogether harmonize with yours, they differ the least from yours of any others. And as there is nothing catching or cankering in those sentiments of yours which are contrary to mine, I am not only willing but desirous you should preach at Everton, as often as you can favour us with your company. Last week I was at Bedford and preached to your society, from whom I heard that you was returned out of the West and purposed to come amongst us soon. Will you call at Everton, as you go to or return from Bedford? You will be welcome. My invitation is sincere and friendly, accept of it.

I send my love to your brother, and to all that labour among you. May grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied on you, and

Your affectionate servant,

John Berridge

P. S. If you come to Everton, I should be glad of a line sometime beforehand, because I am frequently out three or four days in a week.²

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

Postmark: 'NO/24'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'ad. 25'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/8, and published in *AM* 20 (1797): 305–06.

¹Berridge is replying to JW's letter from Dublin, dated Apr. 18, 1760.

²The postscript is struck through and duly omitted in *AM*.

‘G. R.’ to the Author of the *London Magazine*¹

December 1760

Sir,

As the principles and practices of the Methodists have lately much engaged the attention of the public, I must entreat the favour of a place in your most useful collection for a short history of the Montanists.

In the second century, about 160 years after the birth of Christ, there appeared a pernicious sect called the Montanists. They pretended to greater degrees of purity and sanctity than all other Christians, calling others ‘carnalists’, as sensual, not having the Spirit, the life and power of Christianity. But to themselves they gave the name of the ‘spiritual’, as having frequent and bright manifestations of the Spirit. So very humble were they that they thought themselves not worthy of the very ground they trod upon, exclaimed against rich furniture and all costly superfluities, and what was expected for the support of rank and dignity they said should be applied to pious and charitable uses. They avoided company and conversation, denied themselves the most innocent recreations of body and mind, and gave themselves up wholly to meditation, to watchings, to fastings often. They macerated their bodies to purify their souls, that their souls might be capable thereby of receiving the Spirit as a constant, inward, vital principle. They insisted that they taught no new doctrine, only reformed what was abused and revived what was neglected.

By these pretences they were at first followed by many sober sincere Christians, and as they went up and down drew numbers of religious melancholists. They then gathered a select society and formed a schism, not without but within the church. [They] uttered the most bitter invectives, the most scandalous declamations against the bishops and clergy, the governors and ministers of the church. They never mentioned their names but in terms of the greatest disrespect, and with the utmost malice too, because they rejected that spirit of delusion by which they spoke.

The end of Montanus was tragical, for he is said to have hanged himself with a famous she-disciple of his, Maximilla. The doctrine of these Montanists with the condemnation of their opinions by several councils of orthodox bishops, you may read in the great church historian Eusebius.

It would fill a volume to draw a parallel to show the similitude between Montanism and Methodism. Such a crude composition is this Methodism that there is scarce any one pestilent heresy that has infested the Christian church but that is an actual part of their doctrine.

I am,

Yours,

G. R.

Source: published transcription; *London Magazine* (Dec. 1760), pp. 688–89.

¹While this letter is not addressed specifically to JW, he responded in a letter dated Feb. 17, 1761 in the *London Magazine*.

‘R. O.’ to the Author of the *London Magazine*¹

December 1760

Sir,

It has been an observation—I wish that it was in my power to say that it was not a true observation—that there are more religious divisions (I might say subdivisions) in England than in any one country in the known world. And it must be allowed that it may produce this very bad consequence among vulgar common minds, that it may bring the most important truths into doubt. For thus they may easily and naturally reason among themselves. All pretend to be in the right, none will allow themselves to be in the wrong. And yet, some must be in the wrong because truth cannot be with them all, as truth is and always will be one and the same thing.

The truth is men generally differ about very trifles, things confessedly of an indifferent nature, such as the forms and modes of worship, which I could wish was duly and dispassionately considered by those who separate from the communion of our church, who mightily extol moderation, which they seldom practice towards others though they would have it always exercised toward themselves. Because what is the consequence of these divisions among Protestants but that they weaken ourselves and strengthen our enemies, the papists? The emissaries of the Church of Rome appear in every shape, and act every part to promote the interest of their church. They know that we can and have defended the constitution of our church against all attacks, by proofs from reason, Scripture, and antiquity. As therefore they cannot overcome by reason and argument, their great policy is to undermine us by faction and division. Those then who make division amongst us I can never consider as good Protestants, but rather as friends to popery, whose cause (thought perhaps undesignedly) they most certainly promote. And if the papists should once destroy our church, how will our swarm of enthusiasts and sectaries be able to defend themselves, when to name their doctrines is to confute them?

I have not only attentively read the writings, but have also frequently conversed with many ecclesiastics of the Church of Rome, both regulars and seculars. And the grand topic of their discourse, the most formidable weapon they have to employ against us is this: What are the doctrines of Protestants, or where is the dignity of their priesthood, when the wildest notions pass for inspired truths and ignorant persons, the meanest of the people, are admitted into the sacred order [and] are the dispensers of God's word and sacrament? Alas! When we hear these things what can we reply? We are filled with shame. We are covered with confusion. We would throw a veil over these things, but they are too true to be denied and too bad to be defended. The truth is, though they are among us yet they are not of us. We disclaim such persons and such practices as much as the Church of Rome does.

We can justify the validity of our ordinations. We can produce an uninterrupted succession of Christian bishops in our church. And we can defend our doctrines not only by Scripture and reason but by councils and fathers too. For a learned clergy, we confidently challenge for their equals the whole Christian world. Prophets are not without honour but in their own country. What a scandal it is for this age and nation that these very men should be universally admired and applauded for their learned labours, their immortal writings abroad, and yet should be held in low esteem, in the utmost contempt at home!

We freely acknowledge, we heartily lament, that these enthusiasts and sectaries are undoubtedly our present shame. I pray God that they may be not our future ruin. The truth is, among weak minds religion runs into enthusiasm, and in free states liberty will degenerate into licentiousness. But we trust in that providence which permits the tares to grow up with the wheat and suffers heresies that the faithful may be proved.

The present troublers of our Israel are that heterogeneous mass, the Methodists, who (whatever they may pretend) are avowed enemies to the doctrine and discipline of our Church, have faithfully copied the worst of men in the worst of times. For proof of this I shall refer to Walker's *History of*

¹While this letter is not addressed to JW, he responded to it (misidentifying the author as ‘R. A.’) in a letter dated Feb. 17, 1761 in the *London Magazine*.

Independency.² The author was Clement Walker, a curious observer of the times he lived in, a gentleman of a very large fortune, an eminent lawyer, a member of parliament, a zealous covenanter, and consequently no friend to the Established Church; and yet, in his *History of Independency*, part II, page 155, I meet with this very remarkable passage:

April 12, 1649, it was referred to a committee to consider how to maintain supernumerary itinerant ministers, who should be authorized to go up and down, compassing the earth, and adulterate other men's pulpits and congregations, and put affronts and raise factions and scandals upon such orthodox and conscientious ministers as cannot frame their doctrine to the damnable practices and principles of the times. These wandering apostles, like Balaam, shall bless and curse for his, and poison the people with such changeable and various principles as shall be dictated by those who sit at the helm. They shall cozen the people with pretended illuminations, revelations, and inspirations, and pour out all the vials of God's wrath amongst them.

Such were and are the prophets of England. Now, what sport and triumph must this afford to the papists! Aha, say they, so we would have it! And indeed, to all libertines. For if such men's enthusiastical notions be the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, better it would be to be a Jew, a Turk, an infidel, than to be a Christian. For it is much better not to believe in Jesus Christ than to believe such doctrines to be his as are against common reason and common sense, are repugnant to the first principles of truth and equity. In a word, I cannot but be of [the] opinion that if a man be punishable by law who counterfeits the hand or name of another man, what punishment does he deserve who (if I may use the expression) counterfeits the broad seal of heaven, and falsely pretends to act in the name and with the finger of God?

I am,

Yours,

R. O.

Source: published transcription; *London Magazine* (Dec. 1760), pp. 689–90.

²Clement Walker, *The History of Independency* (London: Brome & Marsh, 1661).

From John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar

[London]
[December 1760]

Occasioned by a letter of John Wesley's to the editor of the [*Lloyd's Evening Post, and*] *British Chronicle* of November 26, 1760, whereof this is an extract:

Just as I had finished the letter published in your last Friday's paper, four tracts came to my hands: one wrote, or procured to be wrote, by Mrs. Downes; one by a clergyman in the county of Durham; the third by a gentleman of Cambridge; and the fourth by a member (I suppose, dignitary) of the Church of Rome. How gladly would I leave all these to themselves, and let them say just what they please, as my day is far spent and my taste for controversy is utterly lost and gone. But this would not be doing justice to the world, who might take silence for a proof of guilt. I shall therefore say a word concerning each. I may, perhaps, some time say more to one or two of them. ...

To John Wesley himself,

'Out of thy mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant' (Luke 19:22).

1. Are you not 'guilty of not having done justice' not only to 'the world' but to *the* God, sovereign Master of the world, by that proud unfaithful silence you have held for these four years upon writings, truly as much to the shame of his and our enemies^a as to the glory of his almighty name, which I declare and publish for upwards these ten years since to be the word of the union, and reconciliation of the world,^b that is of all people, of all nations of the world with one another, of man with himself, after having been reconciled with *his* God in and by Jesus-Christ. In the number of those very writings you never did so much as to mention even those in which you are namely mentioned, of those which have been publicly directed to yourself and sent to you, that you might not pretend ignorance of them, while you are so ready to inform the world of a tract of Mrs. Downes, justly come into your hand, likewise of those of the clergyman of the county of Durham, of the gentleman of Cambridge, and of the supposed dignitary of the Church of Rome. None of those tracts would their author be willing to insure by the price only of *fifteen guineas*, no more than you any of yours concerning religion, as I did for almost this year since, and do still insure all my different writings concerning this same object, for *an hundred*.

2. The substance of controversy was, until to your and my days,^c an equal blindness of both sides with regard to the light, and knowledge of Truth,^d and that even in men the most clear sighted upon any other account. By that equal blindness a man unable to distinguish himself truth from false, was not able to prove it to another by unconfutable reasonings and in proper incorrupted terms. Supposed that one alone had been so far enlightened as to know and prove truly what was true, none of the others, being all blind, could have been sensible of that light in his reasonings, and thus be convinced or persuaded. But all those who would have been faithful in their incredulity, would have been likewise ready to seal even by their blood, contrary assertions which they could not have been able to prove by their words. In the

^a Luke 1:71, 74, 77–79; Rev. 12:10.

^b 2 Cor. 5:17–20.

^c Matt. 11:12–15.

^d John 1: 5–14; Rom. 3:9–18; Isa. 60: 2; John 9:4.

moment of their eyes being opened, as it is said of the two faithful disciples who did not know Jesus-Christ their master teaching them as they were going to Emmaus, like them they acknowledge at the least sign, at the first word, what the greatest and clearest demonstrations could not have proved and persuaded them, no more than the interpretations of the sacred Scriptures made by Jesus-Christ himself to these two disciples of his could make impression upon them. A man whose heart was not burning in himself, as it is said theirs was, that is, who was not ardent and faithful in his blindness, as they were in theirs, or who out of pride or covetousness is become unfaithful at the moment of his eyes being opened, like the traitor apostle after having swallowed the dipped sop, such man far from beginning to acknowledge what he has begun to know, and from publishing it at the same hour, as the two faithful disciples did, endeavours to hide it even to himself, and silent like death upon it, goes on according to his old way of speaking and reasoning. In a different manner betraying his master no less than that apostle did, he betrays likewise by assertions which he would no more be willing to seal by half the price that former traitor received. The same assertions which he would have been or would be willing to seal by his blood, had he been or were he now faithful. I desire you may be known no longer in that intelligible picture, as you are in those visible of different sorts which you have caused to be spread in the world, some of them with equally proud, and wrong inscriptions. Your 'taste for controversy' could not be lost and gone, as you say, in a more proper time than when controversy has no more room, when the *golden argument*,³ unknown, unnamed before your and my days,^e has made short already, as you feel it in yourself, of all blindly or unfaithfully wrong assertions or contradictions, there being no more *medium* between an humble and faithful acknowledgement of what you dare not to contradict, at least publicly, and a proud unfaithful silence, which is no less to the glory of Truth than to the everlasting shame of her and our enemies,^f those who are no more willing than you to make and publish her *their* God.^g

3. Besides about an hundred and thirty public advertisements, in at least four and fifty of which you are mentioned as the most remarkable of the enemies of Truth, you have held a likewise deadly silence upon five unconfutable writings, namely concerning Truth, that very object of your fear, since it is not the object of your love:^h

The first entitled, *Two Letters to Mr. George Whitefield* of January 30, and March 18, 1756;

The second, the solution of this most old, and new question, *What is Truth?* of June 5, the same year;

The third, *The Fall of the Old Serpent*, directed to the late Doctor Joseph Stennet, a chief preacher of the old sect called the Anabaptists, of March 18, 1757, at the end of which is a letter to you of the 27th, and to George Whitefield, your colleague, of the 25th December 1756, and another to him of February 17, 1757;

The fourth, an *Examination* of your system concerning the original sin, of July 15, 1757, at the end of which is an advertisement of the 30th of April, which is an abbreviation of the whole and upon your account; another directed to Mr. George Watson of the 6th; another to Mr. William Romaine of the 10th of August 1756, upon the difference between Truth and trinity;

^e Matt. 11:12–15.

^f Luke 1:71, 74, 77–79; Rev. 12:10.

^g Eph. 4:14–16.

^h 1 John 4:18, 8–21; 2:18–19.

³I.e., Sulamar's wager of money for anyone who could prove him wrong; cf. Feb. 5, 1761.

The fifth; *A Letter to the most Reverend Doctor Thomas Secker Archbishop of Canterbury: Upon the present beginning of the Reign of Truth acknowledged but in our days*ⁱ *to be the only true God universal Principle, and sovereign Master* (1 Tim. 2:4; John 17:3, 26); *Upon the Baptism, or Renovation universal, in and by the universal Knowledge of Truth*^j (Matt. 3:11–12; Luke 12:49–50); *Upon the Institution of the Eucharist as a Symbol or Sign of an universal Love* (John 13:1, 20, 12, 17); *Upon the everlasting Sacrifice* (John 15:13); *Upon the two parts of the Ministry, or Order ecclesiastical universal* (John 15:13; Matt. 28:19–20); and upon other likewise important matters, the whole going now under the aforesaid insurance of *an hundred guineas*.

The Preliminary of that [fifth] writing is especially upon your account, with an addition totally concerning you from the 44th page to the 48th;⁴ at the 46th is that very advertisement of February 24, the same year whereupon you took leave of your followers the next day, so much more as a flying that you could not prove to have had a greater business than to answer so material and strong an advertisement still subsisting unconfuted, had you found room to do it even carefully, as you have newly answered that Mrs. Downes's tract, and the three others, or had you not understood that such scorn should be returned foul upon you.

Upon those five public writings of mine, as material as especially the fifth appears by its contents declared in the title page, *all* the critical writers and journalists of all kinds, *all* those who are reckoned the most learned in that sort of science which under the name of religion, concerns wholly the internal affections, have been silent like you, like you acknowledging in them the beginning of the accomplishment of this prophecy: 'I will destroy the learning of the learned, and I will reprove the prudence of the prudent', that false politics which makes them to oppose the deepest silence to the loudest publications of the beginning of the reign, and glory, and triumph^k of the only almighty sovereign Master of all, *the* God only of those who love him in the Truth, and Truth in him (see Note 1 at end). They have taken the key of all learnings, by establishing themselves judges of all, as alone by whose eyes other men ought to see, and look upon as not existing, or not deserving any kind of attention, what they would appear not to have taken notice by way of approbation and praise, even by way of contradiction or scorn. Of those two last kinds was the notice they have taken of your tract of *The Doctrine of the Original Sin*,⁵ and other writings of yours likewise expended upon the most evident corruption of the sacred Scriptures, and contradiction of right reason. And that notice you have taken yourself of Mrs. Downes's tract, and of the three others, no more right and no more material, than reasonings of blind to blind, or of unfaithful to unfaithful.^l By that key of learning they have taken, that is by that kind of despotism they have attributed themselves as sovereign absolute judges of any kind of learning, they have supposed that they could shut up for ever the door of knowledge of the public to those writings of mine, and annihilate them by stopping their spreading in it as much as they could. But like the stone rejected by the builders, which becomes the head of every angle, being grounded upon it, they do and shall subsist in, and by, and with it; likewise rejected, but likewise unconfuted.^m They shall subsist and be read when none of the 156 in the

ⁱ Matt. 11:12–15.

^j Heb. 8:11; 1 Tim. 2:4.

^k Ps. 93:1–2, 94:1–12.

^l Matt. 15:14, 7–9.

^m John 8:45–47; 1 Tim. 2:15–19.

⁴See June 1, 1759 above.

⁵JW's *The Doctrine of Original Sin* did not receive that many reviews in journals when it appeared, but there was a negative review in the *Monthly Review* (Nov. 1757), pp. 445–46.

list of yours⁶ (except, maybe, the little number of those which do not concern especially religion) shall subsist no more, or no otherwise than as a moment of the aforesaid corruption of the sacred Scriptures, and contradiction of right reason, and shall be no more looked upon, as they begin already not to be, but (according to the word of Truth in Isaiah 64:1–7) with the same loathsomeness as the filthy linen of a woman in her courses. Neither is that expression as filthy as those which you reckon the most pure and sacred in yours, even those of the sacred Scriptures being corrupted and defiled in and by the use and application you make of them.ⁿ As it is said, unto pure all is pure, but unto them that are defiled, turning from Truth to give heed unfaithfully to traditions, doctrines, precepts, and practices of men^o who never knew Truth, nor seek for to know her; to such kind of incredulous nothing is pure, even their mind and conscience, that is their heart and spirit, are defiled. They profess to know Truth but deny her by their works, being abominable by their unfaithfulness, and unable to do rightly any right and good works.^p The sacred Scriptures, pure and undefiled in themselves, were defiled and corrupted in your speeches and writings by the universal *illusion*, which was the universal ignorance of Truth, and countersense of her words, before you know her. Since you know her, as I know her myself, they are likewise corrupted, and defiled by your personal pride and unfaithfulness and *lie*, which makes you to go on in the same way as before, and take always in vain the sacred almighty name of the Father of Jesus-Christ's own name, of which he has said that he had declared it unto men, and that he would declare it again unto them, as he does now by me.^q You do not only take it in vain, but you abuse and profane it still the most wilfully, stubbornly, and inexcusably.

Note 1

None of the critics and journalists of all kinds could have had a narrower obligation of mentioning those publications, either as assenters or as deniers and opposers, or slighers, or scoffers, than those established by themselves for these eight months past under the title of 'Christian's magaziners', or 'treasurers of divine knowledge',⁷ since even by that title they declare themselves not to have other object than (as they say at the first line of their preliminary) to diffuse sacred science, which cannot be other than the science of Truth. On the contrary, by their first number, which went out the first of last June, through a collection of old reasonings, in old or new forms, all equally wrong, equally unmaterial, equally aiming to the perpetuation of our past ignorance and blindness if it were possible (Matt. 24:24), I perceived that what these new journalists had called 'sacred science' was that old incoherent, inconsistent, even ungrammatical doctrine, the substance whereof is the universal ignorance of Truth the only true God universal Principle and sovereign Master, and the thorough counter-sense of the words dictated by her Spirit. Otherwise, that it was the doctrine of that old serpent called the devil and Satan, who seduced all the universe, till the present days of our deliverance from the slavery of the great Babylon mother of the greatest fornications, troubles, desolations, abominations in the

ⁿ Gal. 5:9–17, 3:1.

^o Mark 8:6–16.

^p Titus 1:13–16.

^q Ps. 22:22.

⁶JW had published a list of his publications in Jan. 1759 that numbered 156 items (see *Bibliography*, No. 752).

⁷William Dodd launched *The Christian's Magazine; or a Treasury of Divine Knowledge* in June 1760, published by J. Newberry and J. Coote.

earth, that is from the slavery of our own *illusion* by the strength and power of the beginning reign of Truth our God in Jesus-Christ, her visible person and masculine nature. To *stir* all of them *up*, either for or against Truth, and me her disciple, the publisher of her reign, I directed *to them all*, by the *London Advertiser* of the sixth day following,⁸ namely to J. Newberry and J. Coote, their publishers, the proposal of *an hundred guineas*, to *fifty*, if I should not prove them false in every chief point, term, and article of their present performance as they called it. Instead of answering so weighty a proposal and argument, and fearing (as they say of it, but the most indirectly, at the second line in the blue-cover of their next journal) lest my remarks or annotations be not adapted to their scheme, as truly they cannot be, no more than *truth to illusion* or *lie*, light to darkness or blindness, either involuntary and faithful, or voluntary and unfaithful, they prevailed upon C. Say, the printer of that *Advertiser*, against his bounden duty to the public, and in so great a concern of it as to be deceived or undeceived in the most material and extensive and lasting point. Either corrupted by bribes, or by the fear of the loss of their custom exceeding mine for some shillings, he complied with them so far as not to admit any more of my publications namely against their performance, receiving with an insolent sneer and abusive reasonings even those which he dared not to refuse upon any pretense, the name of *Christian Magazine* and magaziners being not in them, though no less upon their account and no less sent to themselves. *How* weak are men who have no other weapons to oppose Truth, and me, than so base artifices, and what shame for such ones not to yield to, and range on the side of a power to which they can oppose but their silence, their weakness, and baseness, and unfaithfulness. It is hard to them to kick against the pricks.

Source: 'Preliminary Reflexions', *Demonstrative Reflections of John-Baptist the Arch-Teacher, occasioned by different writings published upon the account of the comedy called 'The Minor'; especially by a letter of John Wesley ...* (London: J. Marshal, Dec. 1760), 3–8.

⁸Unfortunately, no surviving copies of the *London Advertiser* for June 1760 can be located.

From 'E. L.'¹

c. December 10, 1760

'To Mr. John Wesley'

*Saevit atrox Volcens, nec teli conspicit usquam
Auctorem, nec quo se ardens immittere possit.*²

Reverend Sir,

'It is indeed great condescension' in you to lose so much time in *shuffling*, neither *confuting* nor *clearing* point (as requested), which kind of behaviour makes me really despair of ever contributing any thing to your enduement by 'pounding'. On the contrary, the more *honesty* you are dealt with, the more your *foolishness* becomes the wonder and admiration of the *public*.

Most certainly, sir, your concession is very *just* in acknowledging yourself *really foolish* in imagining I had assumed the *character* of a clergyman by barely styling myself a Churchman. Though at the same time you are not *over charitable* in your sentiments, in calling in question the veracity of my assertion in respect to the *theatre*. It is a matter of indifference to me whether you will credit me or not. But so much of the theatrical man am I that my face has not been seen at either of the playhouses these twelve months, yet a constant attender at divine service every Sunday. But whether I am under any necessity to 'tell my name' is another point, as 'who or what I am does not affect you'. 'Only you are concerned at what I say', as you reasonably may be; and the public blush for you, at least your proselytes, till you have given a better *solution* to the articles demanded of you.

You are yet, it seems, between hope and *doubt* whether you have not *impiously apostatized* from these principles of religion you undertook to defend. You still maintain the 'Bible with the liturgy and homilies of our church' and do not 'espouse any other principles, to the *best of your knowledge*, but what is consonant and agreeable to the Book of Common Prayer, etc.' Granted, Mr. Methodist, in respect to the former part of your assertion. But whether or no you would not espouse other *principles*, to the best of *our* knowledge, if you durst, is evident from some *innovations* you have already introduced, which I shall *attempt* to prove in the subsequent part of my answer. Consequently this complaisance of yours is the result 'of a slavish and painful fear' (to make use of your own words) and not a veneration for the form of worship by law established—a plain proof, when you took the liberty to falsify the very first article of the Athanasian Creed (in your first),³ which you could not have done had you any respect (as your pretend) for the Book of Common Prayer.

I thank you, sir, for *accommodating* me with that 'awkward and unscriptural expression' the grace of *assurance*. Truly sir, though born and educated in the Church of England, I never heard it from any of its pastors. But did you never use such a *phrase*? Certainly, or my ears have been so *unhappy* as to deceive me. Everyone, I dare say, of your community will vouch for the truth of this assertion. But come, good sir, no flinching. We will appeal to your melancholy Methodists and civilly ask them the reason of that solitary *gloom* that discomposes their countenances. And they will instantly tell you that they are under *conviction* and *despairing* of their capacity to receive that *salutary presumption*—the grace of *assurance*; while, on the contrary, your more *cheerful* ones have both their hearts and heads amply

¹This is again 'Philodemus', replying to JW's letter of Dec. 1, 1760.

²Virgil, *Aeneid*, ix.420. 'Volcens storms with rage, yet nowhere espies the sender of the dart, nor where to vent his rage' (Loeb).

³The first article of the Athanasian Creed reads: 'Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith.' 'Philodemus' is reacting to the line in JW's letter of Nov. 17: 'The fundamental doctrine of the people called Methodists is, Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the true faith—the faith that works by love.'

replenished with it. But still, sir, I cannot help being so unreasonable as to make a clamour for the texts of Scripture in proof of this *assurance*. Your concordance and mine are widely different, for mine is really so unfaithful as not to favour me with a single one and you have been so ill-natured as purposely to refrain from quoting *chapter* and *verse*, especially as you ‘expected I should bewray my ignorance’, perceiving the Bible to be a book I am very little acquainted with and every ‘sentence in your account is a text of Scripture’. Unchristian pastor! Is it thus you do your endeavours to instruct the ‘ignorant’? However, sir, take notice once for all that the author of this has had the happiness of perusing that inestimable treasure of *divine knowledge* in four different languages, and is ready and willing at any time to dispute face to face not only a point of controversy but likewise of literature with you. Therefore, reverend sir, agreeable to the dignity of your character, produce your texts from the sacred writings, the *touchstone* of truth. Otherwise, coolly and dispassionately retract publicly what you have advanced; or as ‘your taste for *controversy* is entirely gone’, lay aside your quill. Your *ipse dixit*⁴ has no authority with me. Make no apology for being *jocular*, but crave pardon for being *abusive*.

How admirably, sir, have you made the apostle’s advice subservient to your purpose. I am glad I have the honour to remind you of a text that has lain long dormant, and been *buffeted* for approaching the verge of your *sacred rostrum*. It appears that you are not a dealer in words but a *torturer* and *perplexer* of them. You are glad to embrace any shift to twist them to your own meaning. We are none of us ignorant ‘that faith is an evidence or conviction of things unseen’; yet most certain it is that the major part of Christians, whose faith, charitable sir, I do not scruple may be put in equilibrium with yours (you justly merit a reprimand for your unlimited ‘plerophory’), will never be so inconsistently mad as to hazard their salvation on your *regeneration*, or your dangerous system of *assuring grace*.

Excuse me, sir, if I modestly ask you, ‘Did you ever meet with a Protestant divine of any eminence that ever taught so dangerous a system as that of assurance?’ No, I dare be bold to say never a one. And may not we then justly term this an innovation in matters of faith? Yes, certainly both a very gross and destructive one. Did you ever, learned sir, gather one single thought from the writings of the ancient fathers, or from the definitions of councils or synods, that had the least tendency to favour so extraordinary a doctrine? No, not one single word. I defy you to prove it. For my own part, sir, I have the honour to be personally known to some of the best theologians in this nation, gentlemen revered for their piety, learning, etc., who cannot help sufficiently expressing their astonishment at the *artifice* you ineffectually use to engage others to abet your abominable principles. And, to complete your character, you have the *effrontery* to deny that you ever make use of such a ‘phrase’ as the ‘grace of assurance’, though the contrary is evident from the authenticity of hundreds, and ‘Wesley’s grace of assurance’ is become a common *proverb*. If you are at last come to deny facts as manifest as the day, we must necessarily conclude you begin to be tired with deluding souls by mere fantastical illusions. But how ungentle will it be to lurch those that have raised you from the dunghill? Surely you do not expect to be admitted into that Church from which you have *pro factis*⁵ absented yourself? The necessary consequence, then, must be that you will be a *false teacher* equally *rejected* and *excommunicated* on both sides.

Permit me to compliment you once more upon your second ‘definition of *good works*’ (though you are pleased to assure me that ‘truly you gave none at all’), and do not change colour when I inform you that we are merry at the expense of your *sublime understanding*. Reverend sir, let us appeal to the *criterion*, as you consent to be *judged* by *Scripture* and *reason*, and give me leave to ask you, as you *pretend* to be so *conversant* in divine literature, if you never *stumbled* on that wholesome *advice* to ‘lay up’ for ourselves ‘treasure in heaven’, etc.—which words (with submission) I think not only imply *faith* but plentiful *alms*, deeds of *mercy*, and other *good works*, which God keeping in *remembrance*, will reward them accordingly. As on the contrary the apostle saith, ‘He that soweth sparingly shall reap

⁴‘He himself said it’; i.e., a bare assertion with no proof.

⁵‘In fact’.

sparingly', consequently *fidem sine operibus nihil prodesse*.⁶ And yet I readily grant you that works, unless accompanied with *faith* and *God's grace*, are not *meritorious* in the least.

It was reasonable to suppose, sir, in answering my letter that you would more fully have explained, particularly 'to one that seriously desired *information* on that account', by what authority you have commissioned cobblers, carpenters, etc., to preach the gospel? Oh sir! Tis is too 'knotty a point' for you to 'settle'. Here I find the *shoe* pinches. Your 'calmly' referring me to the perusal of such and such *tracts* (wrote, I dare say, by you or some of your journeymen) will never convince me that you have a right to vilify and debase episcopal *dignity*, as you most certainly do by your proceedings. Where, sir, is your authority, I demand once more? Are you so *vain* and *foolish* as to derive it from the flattering *appellations* of your *adherents*, who made no scruple to style you 'bishop'? Which, *ex ipso facto*,⁷ is very plain you have been careful enough, at all opportunities where you safely could, to encourage them to do. But, good sir, have you this *power* by divine *right*? No sir, no. I deny that you have one venerable author to vindicate your *presumption*. *Councils* and *synods* have ever *anathematized* those that pretended to preach without proving their *lawful mission*, much less allowing them to delegate others. This, sir, I hope you will not be so barefaced to deny, as you have several other things when it was not in your power to *confute* them. But more excellent still, it seems your *missionary* mechanics are all *thaumaturgians*, or miracle workers. The case of poor Thomas Skinner was more delightfully introduced in one of your late *evening entertainments*.⁸ O fie upon you, sir. I blush for you and cannot help wishing you had a little more share of *modesty* yourself.

It seems you have made over your houses at Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle to trustees long ago. Perhaps you may, sir, thought I do not question but you find your account in that, otherwise you act opposite to the character of Mr. John Wesley. But as these places are entirely beyond the limits of my excursions, I never imagined that you had any there. I thank you for your information; though, by the bye, I am sorry to find that the spirit of *seduction* has spread so far.

I shall beg leave to conclude, first observing that I shall not give myself the trouble to write you any more, as it is only wasting paper to cavil with shuffling *controvertists*. A *personal* dispute would be more agreeable, in which perhaps your opinion 'may be heightened to exclude all doubt' whether I am so *ignorant* as you would gladly make me to be, both in respect to *sacred writ* and other points of literature. And your legal authority for granting a toleration (with your '*ite, predicate*'⁹) to lay preachers, and your proofs for assuring grace, shall be candidly contested, first admitting a dignified clergyman of the Church of England, which I shall procure, nor can you object against him, to be umpire of our debate. Which, if you approve of, your leaving a line at the Half Moon Tavern, Cheapside, appointing your time and place, will be received by, sir,

Yours in very good humour,

E. L.

Source: published transcription; *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* (Dec. 10–12, 1760), pp. 561–62.

⁶'Faith without works profits nothing.'

⁷'By the fact itself'.

⁸The story of Thomas Skinner's dramatic conversion can be found in JW's *Journal*, July 29, 1759 (*Works*, 21:216–20). 'Philodemus' seems to have encountered this story at a public reading of such accounts in Methodist gatherings—before it was published.

⁹I.e., '*ite, praedicate*' or 'Go, preach'.

From Alexander Mather

Evesham
December 17, 1760

Honoured Sir,

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you and yours! Glory be to God, his work prospers in many parts of this round! Particularly in Staffordshire, where our congregations are so large that we can scarce contain them. And God, who brings them together, does work among them. And not among the outward hearers only, but also among our old members, so that above forty have found the Lord this last quarter. Most of these have been long seeking; some five, some seven, some ten, yea, some from the first of your going to Wednesbury. Nor do I perceive that the reason of their not finding sooner has been, as it sometimes is, their negligence or disorderly walking. No, for the most part they have been diligent in all the means and blameless in their lives.

Although at Wednesbury several have been added and many converted this last quarter, yet the most remarkable part of the work of God has been in that old, persecuted, steadfast society, Darlestone. Who, in the midst of all the parties that have been in Staffordshire, have stood unmoved to their first principles, never encouraging any other party, no nor suffering any of a different judgment so much as to sing a hymn amongst them. And this their steadfastness was the more surprising as there were but about seven in the whole society (which consisted of forty-eight members) who professed having faith at Michaelmas last. But, glory be to God, their number and their grace is greatly increased! Now there are above thirty out of the forty-eight who have saving faith, and have received it within these last six weeks, yea, many in a fortnight. And as their grace, so their number has increased thirty-three this quarter. Twenty-seven of them I joined last Thursday and Friday, many of whom had scarce ever heard till that week. Is any thing too hard for the Almighty! Thou workest and who can stay thy hand?

The remarkable work amongst the outward people was occasioned by an apprentice of Mr. Thomas Day, whose heart the Lord touched in such a manner on Sunday night (December 7th) that he could not rest, but roared the whole night to the great alarming of the whole family and the neighbourhood. They prayed with him but he still remained miserable till Monday morning, when his distress was such that his crying brought many together, insomuch that the house was filled and surrounded with people—before whom it pleased God to deliver him, and so to inflame his heart with love, and fill his mouth with praise, that the beholders were astonished. It pleased God also to open his mouth to speak to those who were present, so that none (no not the most stout hearted and greatest enemies to godliness) were able to resist the spirit and power wherewith he spake. They fell before his word, cried for mercy, and above twelve were delivered that day. So the whole exercise of that day was prayer and praise, as also of the two days following, when the boy went from house to house. Even the wicked, who could not withstand his word, being cut to their hearts, cried for mercy. To whom he pointed out Christ, and his willingness to receive them, and praying with them, many were delivered who had scarce heard a sermon. So visible is the change that they abandon all their former ways and company, and are full of love. It would rejoice your heart to see them under the word, particularly two children about nine years of age who talk so feelingly of the love of God that they would amaze you. Nor was the flame quenched last Friday, the boy being still employed as before. This whole town, young and old, seems alarmed and come in troops to the preaching at Wednesbury. Oh Lord, maintain thy glorious cause! And ride prosperously in the gospel chariot, till the nations bow before thee. And take thou all the glory, for thou art worthy! Oh pray for me, that I may have wisdom in all things!

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate son and servant in the gospel,

Alexander Mather

From Adam Milsom

London
December 27, 1760

Reverend Sir,

I am desired by Mrs. Brewer to acquaint you of the death of her husband, Mr. Robert Brewer, who departed this life the 16th instant, about five o'clock in the morning. And as I attended him in all his illness, it may not be amiss to relate a little of it to you, that you may either speak of it, or read it, as you shall think proper.

He bore his illness patiently, and was never heard to murmur or complain, and always declared he had a sure trust and confidence in God. The fear of death being taken away, he said he was assured, die when he would, he should go to heaven. One Sunday evening as he and I were by ourselves, I was speaking to him concerning his death. He said he knew not whether he should die or live, and that he had no desire of either. He neither desired life nor death, but that the will of God might be done by him, in him, and upon him. We had at other times sweet and comfortable discourse together, and when he was not able to speak his looks declared the happiness he enjoyed. The last words he spake was to me. When I asked him if he knew me, he said, yes, I know Adam. I pray God bless you and all your family! I asked him if he was happy. He said, yes I am. I said, has not God been good to you from your youth. He said, yes, he has. After which he fell back, and never spoke more.

I am, reverend sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

Adam Milsom¹⁰

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 3 (1780): 444–45.

¹⁰Orig., 'Milsam'; corrected by JW in his personal copy of *AM*. Milsom appears in the Foundery Band Lists as a leader of a band for single men from March 1742 and in bands for married men after his union with Hannah Page in 1743.

From Ruth (Crowther) Hall

[York]

December 30, 1760

Dear Sir,

I have often told you what I find both of the witness and the fruit of the Spirit. But I prefer, before all other, that evidence which arises from the very nature of the change. I have known the time when I could not easily distinguish between sin and temptation. But of late I am enabled to see it clearer in the light of the Lord. I doubt not but there may be a witness of the soul's never falling. But I think the most excellent way is to live the present moment, and leave all futurity to God. You ask, if I ever had a persuasion that I should never offend God more? I can say no more (and I desire no more) than this, I have the comfort to know that I do not offend him.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate sister,

Ruth Hall

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 4 (1781): 612.