

Great Barrington, 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1764.

Dear M<sup>r</sup>. West!

You will not be offended or surprized, I hope, while I take this method to obtain that free access to you, and express those sentiments of my heart, which cannot be done in any other way.

While I hope you are one of the humble followers of Jesus Christ, who have given your heart, and you all to him, in the exercise of sincere love; I can't but look upon you as unspeakably more happy and excellent, than <sup>all</sup> the most beautiful, rich and gaudy; whose hearts are alienated from the glorious Saviour; and value your esteem and friendship, beyond expression more. And I find myself united to you with that affection and friendship, which I can't but hope is of a lasting, pure and immortal nature. And which, at the same time, is to me an incontestible evidence (if there was no other) that Christianity is a reality.

Surely these are divine realities, which are so suited to raise and inflame the heart with that love, which puts the soul into the possession of a degree of sublime enjoyment, which no earthly thing can give: and unites the hearts of those who are captivated with them, to each other, with a peculiarly strong and pure affection, which is indeed inexplicable, in this imperfect state; and which enables them in a degree to enjoy one another, when at the greatest distance; and lays a solid foundation, for the happiness of society, which cannot be destroyed by death itself. Oh! how happy will the society of the redeemed be!

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May we not argue our union to Christ, from our love to the saints? Yea, can our hearts be drawn out in the exercise of this sweet, heartmelting, endearing affection, without having a degree of satisfaction that we belong to Christ? — "We know that we have passed from death <sup>unto</sup> life, because we love the brethren!" 1 John 3. 14.

But alas! our darkness and blindness to be deceived, by the many counterfeits that there are; and the great degree of opposition and corrupt exercises, which may even mix themselves with ~~the~~ <sup>those which are holy</sup> ~~the~~ while that which is truly genuine, if there is really a degree of it, is so very weak and imperfect; ~~may~~ make it necessary that we should be constantly jealous of ourselves; and is perhaps inconsistent with our living any length of time in this sinful state, with<sup>out</sup> doubts and misgiving of heart.

My dear friend, have you chosen that good part, that shall never be taken from you? You have indeed made a worthy choice! Press forward to the things which are before. This is not a world for rest and enjoyment; but for trial and labor. Through much tribulation you must enter into the kingdom of heaven, if ever you get there.

Please to accept this ~~my~~ letter as a small token of my love to you, which I hope is truly Christian. I am ashamed it is so barren, and contains no more of the truly noble sentiments, which become every Christian. Your prudence, I trust, will teach you to conceal every thing in it; as 'tis to you only I write. When therefore the contents are in your mind, the end is answered.

I prize and ask a remembrance ~~of me~~ when you are before God; especially on the morning of the Lord's day; when you may expect a particular, mutual remembrance, by  
your affectionate friend, in Jesus Christ,  
Nob E. West. Samuel Hopkins.

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Sept. 14-1764

TO

Miss Elizabeth West

To the care of  
Mr. Peck.

Boston.