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COLLECTION

OF

LETTERS,

ON

SACRED SUBJECTS.

COLOS. iii. 17.

*Whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the
Name of the Lord Jesus.*

D U B L I N :

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COLLECTION

Margaret Bentz

LETTERS

ON

SACRED SUBJECTS

Colo. 17. 17.

Ed. John.

D. B. L. M.

Printed by A. Dugdale, No. 10.

CHURCH STREET.

1837.

Margaret Bentz

ADVERTISEMENT.

T O T

NOTICE

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THIS Collection was published several Years ago in SHEFFIELD, and universally well received, but as it is little known in IRELAND, the Editor hopes it will prove acceptable to all Lovers of *pure and undefiled Religion.* This Collection is enriched with several selected from the Arminian Magazine, and other publications.

T H E
P R E F A C E.
T O T H E
F O R M E R E D I T I O N.

I. **I**T will be easily discerned by the reader of this collection, that the various Authors, however obscure in their life and reputation, have acquired a thorough acquaintance with the ways of God, and are deeply experienced in his work. The letters themselves will sufficiently evince the truth of this. For they are evidently the productions, not of such as are mere Novices in true, vital religion, but of such rather as have penetrated into the "Interiora Regni," the hidden mysteries of the kingdom of grace. By this it will appear plain, that they will be received and understood by those only, who are endued with somewhat of the like knowledge and experience; or are really desirous so to be. And to them, little doubt can be made, but they will be more acceptable, than perhaps any thing of this kind, which has been before presented to the world. The reason for this opinion is obvious: because, I do not know, that there is any volume of letters besides, on the same subject, wrote by so many different hands, coming from persons so different in their genius, disposition; and understanding;

ing; and consequently displaying the glorious works of God in so different, yet clear, and striking a light. What can we imagine therefore, more entertaining, more profitable, or more edifying?

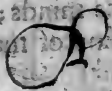
2. It has been the general opinion of men wise and learned, that a collection of polite letters, wrote by persons of taste and abilities, are a valuable treasure: because in them we may discover, commonly at least, more of the temper and the whole turn of mind of the writer, than in any other compositions whatever. How extremely valuable then, in the esteem of such as have received the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the wisdom that comes down from above, will be, we may reasonably suppose, a collection of spiritual letters, clearly setting forth, and thereby forcibly recommending the power of godliness? Free justification through faith in a Redeemer's blood, and that work of God which is afterwards carried on in the believing soul, against many and various temptations, under the conduct, and by the operation of the spirit, are the interesting subjects of these epistles. And the latter often so expressed by some of these writers, in the account they give of their experience, as may possibly be found a most lively comment upon some remarkable deep and weighty passages of scripture. Particularly such as these: *The God of hope fill you with all peace and joy in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power*

power of the Holy Ghost. — That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. — For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. — And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. And if we may be allowed to consider them in this light, which after a perusal, I believe, will not be thought unreasonable, they must surely be unspeakably precious to those who are lovers of the word of God. — But

But least any one should be induced to think, by what has been said, that they are exalted beyond the desert of mere human compositions, which will always be liable to imperfections, it may be needful to observe, that I would not attempt to acquit them of many inelegancies and inaccuracies of expression, nor even of some mistakes and errors. The candid reader, therefore, is desired, if he finds any thing not agreeable to his judgment, to remember they are wrote by men: and by men who make no pretensions to infallible inspiration. But at the same time he is likewise desired impartially to weigh the substance, and, for the sake of his own profit, to give the just esteem to what is truly valuable. This he may surely be persuaded to do, notwithstanding some parts may not exactly concur with his sentiments. For moderation and christian love towards those, who differ from us in their opinions, ought carefully to be cultivated in all serious minds; the contrary having been the occasion of many very apparent evils.

4. For my own part, I take most peculiar delight in those writings, which exalt to the utmost Christ my great Redeemer, his infinitely meritorious life, passion, and death, and the exceeding great efficacy of the sanctifying influence of his spirit. Wherefore those books, or sermons, or conversations, which, however strongly they may enforce the inward work
of

of God in the soul, yet speak but sparingly or slightly of Christ's adorable rich merits, to me seem to diminish their lustre, lose their strength, and become far less useful. Nor can it be esteemed, on the other hand, suitable to the christian plan, under a pretence of extolling the sufferings and atonement of a crucified Saviour, to depreciate, by omitting to inculcate, the sanctifying work of his spirit. We can never sufficiently admire, or expatiate upon the former; but then we ought likewise as largely and fully to treat of the latter. May it please God, therefore, to give unto all those, whom he has visited with his grace, "A sound judgment in all things pertaining to his kingdom"! May he also prosper with his blessing, this little work, that it may be to the glory of his name, and the happy establishment of many christians in knowledge, grace, and experience!



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A
C O L L E C T I O N
OF
L E T T E R S.

L E T T E R I.

[From Mr. Charles Perronet.]

On Communion with the Father and the Son.

THE answer I gave you before was too concise for the importance of the subject. It is worthy of all our thoughts, demands all our time, and should be the whole pursuit of life, *To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, is eternal life.* He that redeemed us, hath purchased the most perfect grace for all that believe: and with every other gift bestows *himself*.

Gifts, Graces, Manifestations, are small things without God dwelling in us, and making all we receive to center in himself. The image of God is too divine for less than God to satisfy its wants, or employ its large capacities. Our fall is too great to be repaired by any thing short of indwelling

Deity. Nothing can restore the soul, but Jesus descending as Lord of the soul, and actuating the graces he bestows.

Our Creation was the act of *three* Divine Persons in *one* undivided Jehovah. So is our Redemption; each undertakes a particular part; each bestows his gifts, and vouchsafes distinct manifestations of the Godhead. Man had at first free admission to God; yet not without a Mediator of Access. All we receive now, is through a Mediator of Atonement. Sin separated from God: only by a Mediator could favour be restored. There is no Mediator without equality: Restoration implies that equality: and equality proves the possibility of restoration. We are sent to the Lord Jesus: the Father gives us to the Son. Thus we draw nigh to God through Jesus Christ. The Son reveals the Father: thus we know God, enjoy his favour, have free access, and become One in the beginning. The whole is by the Father giving the Son to us, and bringing us to the Son. Jesus transacts all with God. And whatever he did on earth, or doth in heaven, is brought into the soul; we die, rise, live with him, and his Spirit prays in us.

The same will it be in Glory. But we are first with Christ in Paradise. Then the Son presents us to the throne of his Father, where we shall behold his face for ever.

Our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. We equally adore the Eternal Spirit; apply to him, with the Father and Son, for Grace, and receive peculiar manifestations from him. He blesses, sanctifies, and reveals himself, in them that come unto God through Jesus Christ.

Each Divine Person vouchsafes to bear a peculiar relation to us, assumes a peculiar character, and acts a distinct part in our redemption. God is undivided in his Essence, but distinct in Personality : and what in one part of Scripture is ascribed to the undivided Godhead, is in other parts ascribed separately to each person. The Son sends forth *Grace*, which implies the whole of our Redemption, Pardon, and Holiness ; all *purchased favour*. The Father sheds abroad his *Love*, opposite to the *wrath* which is due to disobedience. The Spirit vouchsafes *Communion*, which through his agency we receive with the Father and the Son. And this Communion is opposed to *Separation* from God.

So in future Glory, God is eternally One ; but each Person will communicate a peculiar part of our joy. Yet, whether in this or the world to come, whatever is the act of one, is the act of the whole Trinity. *The Son can do nothing of himself*, because of his perfect unity with the Father : and the Father and Spirit do whatever the Son doth, because of an undivided essence.

Under the Old Covenant, God appeared distant and more severe : in the New, he draws nigh, and is more benign. In the Old, God is most spoken of : in the New, Christ. In the former dispensation, Christ is peculiarly considered as a *Governor* : in the latter, as an *Advocate* and *Atonement*. This the apostle has an eye to, when he ranges the *General Assembly*. First, and remotest from God, are the *myriads of Angels* ; then the *Church of the first-born*, the Old Testament saints, who are nearer. These he places before God as a *Judge* : last, *the spirits of just men made perfect*, by *the bringing in of a better hope*, the Gospel-dispensation. These he gives to Jesus,

as a Saviour, Mediator, and Sacrifice. Thus the order of the united host is preserved, and the Climax raised as high as it can go, God dying to redeem!

It is undeniable, there is One spoken of in the Old and New Testament, called JEHOVAH or SABBAOTH; and all that the most High God is or doth is ascribed to him. It is certain, he is described as acting subordinately, and at the will of another. And it is as certain, there can be but One JEHOVAH, and that JEHOVAH can be no less than himself. Infinity admits of no Degree or Multiplicity. It is One: it is Equality: the least inferiority makes the distance Infinite. *But he that ascended, first descended. He descended into the lower parts of the earth* (a term for human conception) *he came down from heaven: yet, as God, he was in heaven while on earth. He came not to do his own will. But the Divine Nature could do no other will: nor be sent; nor serve; nor be other than equal, undivided Jehovah. Therefore, the nature spoken of is the created existence of him who is JEHOVAH, the beginning of the creation of God; by whom God created all things; who appeared to the fathers; led Israel through the wilderness; was manifested in the flesh, died, ascended, and will judge the world.*

When I first sought the Lord, I found no intercourse open with him, though his Spirit daily changed my heart, and drew me from all outward things, to seek my all in Uncreated Good. The first six months I was refreshed by various influences of grace, which drew me after heavenly things, but discovered nothing of him from whom they came. I was all desire, all fervour; and, on the stretch for divine communications, as one dead to all below. Outward things could not allure me,

me, because I had renounced them, and devoted myself to the Love of Christ. But it was not till after much joy and sorrow, that I knew the mighty ALL, for whose sake all was and is, the first, eternal spring of all things, in whom they begin and end.

After this, I was three months in deep distress, through the loss of those meltings of heart, of that light and joy, and power to approach God in prayer. Then Christ restored the graces I had possessed with double increase, and the revelation of *himself*. The grace I received came now with Jesus Christ himself in so clear a manifestation, that from what I daily experienced, I could have preached him to all the world. If I had never heard the name of Christ, I could have declared him to be God and Man, and the Mediator between both.

Now I sought Grace; but Jesus above Grace, and all that could be imparted. Whatever help or strength I obtained, it seemed a small thing if he came not with what he bestowed. The Son of God was now my refuge from every storm; my friend, my hiding-place on all occasions. I talked with him; he seemed to look upon me with precious smiles; became my delightful abode; gave me promises, and made all my existence glory in himself, fixing all my desires upon his Love, and the glorious display of his own person. I could relish only Jesus: to have been a moment with him, I would have given up all besides. I was so engaged with Christ, that the thought how he had been despised while on earth, drowned my eyes in tears: and the thought, that now he possessed all fulness, so satisfied my largest desires, that I had no choice, whether to exist or not: whatever was *myself*, was no more. It seemed to

make no part of my Happiness. All centered in Jesus, and him alone.

Before I experienced this, I had never known that Prayer was offered up to *Christ*, but only in *his name*. But now all my cry was to him, as he was the only person of the Godhead I beheld. At first he discovered himself as the Holy Lord, and Ruler over his Redeemed: then as a Father of his adopted Children, a friend, an intimate and condescending Companion: last of all, as the Spouse of his Church, of all Believers; which character exceeded every other. Every manifestation more abundantly knit my heart to himself, his word, and commandments. I could truly say, *How dear are thy counsels to me, O God! All my study is in thy commandments.*

The Scripture displays the relation God stands in to his people, in a multitude of sacred characters. Some of these relate to this world; some to the other: but all prove diversity of experience; and that *one star differeth from another*, both in grace and glory.

Just after my uniting with the Methodists, the Father was revealed to me; and soon after, the whole Trinity: I beheld the distinct Persons of the Godhead; and worshipped *one* undivided Jehovah, and each person separately. After this, I often had equal intercourse with Christ and with the Father: afterward, with the Spirit also. But after four years, my usual Communion was with Christ only: though at times, with the Father likewise; and not wholly without the Spirit. Of late I have found the same access to the Triune God. When I approach Jesus, the Father and Spirit commune with me; but not in the degree as before. Whatever I receive now, centers in taking leave of Earth, and hastening to another place. I am as one
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that is no more. I stand and look back on what God has done; his calls, helps, mercies, deliverances; and adore and devote myself with new ardour.

In speaking of these things, it is hard to find utterance. And human weakness, intermixing much of Imagination, causes the Truth to be rejected. If it be asked, "In what manner I beheld the triune God?" I answer, It is above all description: it differs so much from what is human. Who can describe Light, so as to make him understand that has never seen it? And he that hath thus seen God, can no more describe what he has seen, than he that hath not. In two of these Divine Interviews, the Father spake, while I was in agony of prayer for perfect Conformity to himself; twice more, when I was in the depth of sorrow; and each time, in scripture words.

The Manifestations to the Patriarchs were Outward, and therefore admitted of being described. But what I relate was not Outward: it was not any External Vision: it was not what we commonly call Faith: it was not an Impression upon my mind, but different from all. While the Soul is under the power of Faith, the person of Christ is often presented to the imagination. But what I speak was not this; rather I suppose, it was a similitude of what is seen in Eternity. But still only a similitude: for while we are in the body, all the operations of God's Spirit are wrought upon our body and spirit, inseparably conjoined. We are now composed of a material and immaterial part: and nothing can possibly act upon one, without affecting both. But by and by we shall be, for a season, pure Spirit: afterwards, joined to a spiritual Body, so totally different from this corruptible body, that what we then perceive

perceive will be different from all we perceive now.

It may be asked, "Was the Appearance glorious?" It was all divine: it was Glory, I had no conception of: it was God. The first time the Glory of him I saw, reached even to me: I was overwhelmed with it, body and soul, penetrated through with the rays of Deity.

"But was it light?" It was not brightness, more than darkness. Our common acceptation of Glory above, is that of something *glittering*, and something that is *our own*. But here are two mistakes: 1. We do not consider the difference between this and the other world. To us, That is excellent which is bright and shining: but what is excellent to them, is of a kind, which hitherto we have no conception of. 2. We imagine Glory to be something that is *our own*; whereas it is all things centering in God. Separate from him, there is nothing glorious: spotless Souls would loath themselves, and their grace and glory, could it be possessed out of God. But there he is the first and the last, the mighty All. All things are *by* him, and all things are *to* him; flowing back to their first rise, and resting in him as their eternal Center. There the clamour of self-seeking and self-complacency ceases, or it would not be Heaven. We only know, That God is: and he, being what he is, is our All.

In consequence of this, I could never rest in Grace absent from God. After I had beheld him, nothing but his presence could suffice. This wrought in me much thankfulness, that the darkness of the Mosaic Dispensation is past; that the true light shines on us, and we are admitted within the veil, to see what many prophets and righteous men could not. The feeble now exceed in communion

munion with God, the chief under the old covenant : and the least in the Gospel State enjoy more of the Divine Nature, than the greatest before Christ came. It also caused me to give up all thoughts of an Heaven, that was not God himself above all things, and all things in him : his presence making the blessedness of the outward Mansion prepared for us.

Though it doth not appear what we shall be, yet the things of earth are patterns of things above. Whatever is now, will be hereafter, only existing in a different mode. And that which we were in our first creation, the same will remain for ever. Man is compounded of Body and Soul; and will be so to eternity. He has now many faculties and capacities; and so he will have hereafter. And this diversity of powers, requires diversity of employment. The outward man was formed for the outward things, which God displayed in the Creation. But all blessedness lies in union with his Spirit : here is the rise and center of all Enjoyment, the Channel through which all descends, and what alone constitutes Heaven. Whether on Earth or in Heaven, we derive nothing from God separate from himself; but by being one Spirit with him, we receive the Gift through union with the Giver.

Our Understanding rises higher than the Senses, contemplating the Works and the Attributes of God. But the soul has capacities higher than this; Capacities of admitting an immediate intercourse with God. Here, indeed, human language fails. But, if I may be allowed the expression, this Part of the Soul cannot stoop to any thing less than Union with God. The Understanding, meantime, can rise no higher, than to contemplate his perfections : and the Senses can rise no higher than to
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be employed in remote, indirect participations of God, through those outward things which are so many vehicles to convey the Knowledge of God; by the manifestation of his power, wisdom, and goodness in these his lowest works.

Let it not be conceived from any thing which has been said, That the soul possesses God's incommunicable Essence, or enters into that Union, by which the Three are One Jehovah: or that through the grace of the Lord Jesus, we partake of the Divine Nature in the same manner that God exists in himself. The former is the error of *Jacob Behmen*, and *Mr. Law*; the latter of such spiritual writers as *Arndt*. All that God is, is incommunicable and incomprehensible. Therefore, we cannot partake of the least degree: no, nor conceive what it is. Only it is something divine, which bears a correspondence with the perfection of the divine nature. And our Redemption is a restoration by being united to Christ, not as the Father and Son are united, but as branches in a vine.

But as we were made for externals as well as internals, and for intercourse with creatures as well as the Creator, one alone does not complete our Happiness, without both: only this difference: Immediate participation with God exceeds what is received through the medium of creatures; and himself dwelling in us is more than all outward displays of his Divinity.

When Adam was formed, it was in the likeness of God. First, A divine resemblance of God in his Natural and Moral Perfections. His similitude in the Natural, is the ground of it in his Moral Perfections. Whatever Wisdom and Power is in God, we have something correspondent therewith in ourselves. Again: as Truth, Justice, and
Mercy,

Mercy, are in God, so there is the similitude of them in us. What God really is, we have no direct perception of, and can receive no real communication of. But by looking into ourselves, we know the same must be in God, only in a manner suitable to his infinite nature, and infinitely differing from ourselves, in kind as well as in degree.

Secondly, The Divine Image we were formed in, was the nature of the created existence of Christ; as he is *the beginning of the creation of God*. We are not of the nature of Angels; but of Christ in his finite existence. This made the Church capable of being his Spouse. And this relation seems to be a cause, why we were redeemed. The sacred nearness to himself made it worthy of Christ to suffer for us.

This image consisted, thirdly, in man's being the Vice-God, or head of the Creation. *Let them have dominion*, said God, *over all the Earth*.

Paradise was an early resemblance of the glorious place of God's abode. Adam took possession of it, and was set to *dress and keep the Garden*. But as Paradise must have been a large place, and as God's Vicegerent must have had no employ unfit for a divine station, his office must have promoted, not hindered the design, of his being created in the likeness of God. To *keep the garden* was to preserve it in the order wherein God had planted it. To have made this the *work of his hands*, would have been sinking him into earth: something like the toil allotted to him, after his transgression. Neither could the hands of one man have dressed such a garden: nor does it seem to have been a work, that hands could have any part in.

Adam was endued with intuitive Discernment. Reason was beneath him, and was the Serpent's prerogative;

prerogative; bearing the same proportion to Adam's Knowledge, as groping in the dark does to walking in the clear light. By his Authority he gave names to all Creatures, and, by his intuitive Discernment, he suited the name to something peculiar in the nature of each.

The Creation seems to be hieroglyphical, pourtraying the Creator. All that which affected the outward senses; was emblematic of some attribute of God, and a vehicle to convey a delightful communication of it: so that through the creatures the Creator was conveyed, and man made to center in God.

His supreme Joy consisted in direct intercourse with God: the next, in contemplating his Excellencies: the lowest, in what he beheld of the outward manifestation of God, or tasted in the hieroglyphic Garden in converse with Eve, and exercising his office of ruling over the Creation. These completed his joy, and were the type of what he was to enjoy more perfectly above.

Hereafter the Soul is to enjoy the fulness of God, and to dwell in his immediate presence, having abilities to contemplate his excellencies, and by means of the Resurrection-body, to enjoy the local Heaven, and the fellowship of the Saints. These conjointly will complete the Joy, which no one of them alone would do.

What the Resurrection-body is, and what its capacities are, we know not. But we know its powers will be amazing: and these employments equal and suitable to them. And both the Body and all its offices, are subservient to the Soul's receiving its full happiness.

The House not made with hands is all divine. The City has the glory of God, and her light is like a jasper stone, clear as chrystal. The wall is of jasper,

jasper, the city of pure gold. The gates have angels for ever and ever attending on the favoured inhabitants: and each is said to be made of one pearl, to shew that the work was beyond estimation. God and the Lamb dwell in the city, and are the light and temple thereof. The *light* and *walls* are jasper, to which he that sitteth on the throne is compared. The light of the city enters not in; but flows out on those that are not holy enough to enter. Nevertheless, they walk in the light of it, as the inhabitants of its suburbs.

The same may be said of Grace as of glory. Many are so engaged with outward things, that though they are spiritually employed, yet their dwelling is not within the City, but in the distant light of it. I long for better things for *you*: and wish you to be engaged in securing to yourself a place, where God and the Lamb dwell for ever!

In the internal Heaven is God the Spirit, under the emblem of *pure water*, termed *a river*, for its abundance, *proceeding out of the throne*. The experiences of Grace below, are from the Father and the Son. And the enjoyment of glory will be *from God and the Lamb, and from the throne*. A throne is the highest glory of kings: and to reign is the highest office, and the most active part of kingly greatness. This we shall possess with Jesus, as Co-heirs of his kingdom. For, as one experience of Grace, so does one manifestation of glory differ from one another. And that which *proceeds from the throne*, is the highest that is communicable. This is from the Father and the Son, in glorious, eternal fellowship, through the spirit of *one undivided Jehovah*. *There is no curse*, but all is now as if God had never been offended: no

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fin,

fin, sorrow, grave; but the beatific vision, and immediate access to it.

The throne of God and the Lamb is in the city. So the place out of which the living waters issue, is itself their abode. *They see his face*; which implies access, and a nature capable of knowledge, fellowship, and union, with him we behold. *His name is on their foreheads*; his nature in their essence, and appearing in their countenance. On this is founded the possession of all they enjoy.

In our state of probation, God was our center: yet not so fully, but there were appetites as well as capacities for other things. In heaven, he is so our center, that there remains no appetite, no capacity for any thing but God; therefore, no possibility of falling: not that the place makes us immutable, neither our heliness: but when God engages his omnipotence on our behalf, that is our immutability.

Many are the hinderances of our Communion, at least of our full Communion with the Father and the Son: unobserved Sloth, secret Unfaithfulness to the grace we have received: not perhaps doing what God forbids, but omitting to do what he requires. Hereby a dying insensibility steals upon us, and our garment is destroyed before we find it is hurt. It is hurt by our not pressing near, but being content to live at a distance from God: by our ceasing to watch; or to strive by our thrusting away the cross, or neglecting to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. If we fall, we do not rise instantly, and fly to be reconciled to the Son. When *his wrath is kindled but a little*, then we might draw near; but we keep off, till our heart is hardened.

Some lose all their Communion with God at once; but most by slow degrees. They do not
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add the graces of the Gospel to Faith, and so gradually lose their spiritual sight, forgetting that the design of Grace is to purify nature, and that all is vanity but the Love of Jesus. Hence they indulge themselves in the common things of life, as food and dress. They allow themselves all they like, and only sacrifice the offals to God. Can these retain Communion with him? How few will make themselves poor with Christ, and share poverty with his members? So God cannot deal bountifully with them, because they are straitened in their own bowels.

Other Hinderances are: We do not humble ourselves as little children. We do not bear, yea, in a sense, submit to the froward, giving place unto wrath. We do not study to improve by the daily cross: we do not see the need and the use of it.

We do not behave to those under us with proper mildness, and as considering the greatest among us is to be the least. We do not see the good of being of no reputation, of being despised and rejected of men. Nay, perhaps there is a grosser hinderance. We are not exactly temperate. Even in the advanced stages of grace, this may be the case. When nature is decayed by age or trials, then we endeavour to repair it by Drink. Nay, let Christ be our Cordial. Be content with him and let him do what seemeth him good.

In the beginning of my Conversion, I was much led by divine impressions in sleep. Some warned me of temptation or sin; some of approaching affliction: others quickened me in the way, or comforted me through hope of seeing the promises fulfilled. When my experience was least, I had most of these; but they were never wholly withdrawn.

I seemed in my sleep to be often with Christ. I carried him an infant in my arms. I heard him speak. I walked with him, and saw him work Miracles. I helped to support him in his Agony: saw him crucified, and was crucified with him. I saw the approaches of the Last Day, and waited the trumpet's sound. Another time we all stood before Jesus. I cried in an agony to be made fit. I was made so, and rejoiced.

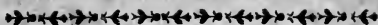
In September 1761, I returned from the West to *Brentford*. One for whom I had been sorrowing for years, had greatly sinned in that place; and I knew it not. I dreamed, and saw a glorious Building. None might enter into it that were not holy. At my first going in, I saw many looking one way, and attending to one thing. I looked the same way, and saw our Lord surrounded by a smaller company. I went near; but there was a partition that incircled them, and none might go in that had not on white robes. Christ Jesus was speaking. I got near him, and asked, "Where I was to be?" He pointed near to his feet. Immediately a door opened, and a white robe covered me. I went in, and fell at his feet; and, in an agony of Prayer for that man, awoke.

Now seek ye the Lord! And all ye that love him, see that ye hate the thing that is evil. All that have communion with him, follow righteousness: ye that are Jesus's sheep, hear his voice! He calls you to die with him, to rise, and live forever! O, let us devote Body and Soul to him! And let us part from all that is unlike the Resurrection-life of both the outward and inward man! Be willing to suffer, that ye may reign; and patiently overcome, that ye may inherit all things.

CHARLES PERRONET.

Shoreham, May 1772.

L E T.



L E T T E R II.

[The Rev. Mr. Fletcher to the Rev. Mr. Wesley,
asking Advice concerning his entering into
Holy Orders.]

Rev. Sir,

Nov. 24, 1756.

AS I look on you as my spiritual Guide, and cannot doubt of your patience to hear, and your experience to answer a serious question proposed by any 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 heart, which was, I think, when seven years of age, I resolved to give myself up to Him and 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 that Grace had wrote upon my heart: however, I went through my studies with a design of going into Orders, but afterwards upon serious reflections, feeling I was unequal for so great a burden, and disgusted by the necessity I should be under to subscribe to the doctrine of Predestination, I yielded to the desire of my friends who would have me go into the army; but just before I quite engaged into 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, in which I have often admired the goodness of God, who has so many times hindered me from rushing into that important employment as a horse does into the battle: but I never was more thankful for this favour than since I heard the Gospel preached 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 into a way of life which required so much more grace and gifts than I was conscious to have: but yet from time to time I felt warm and strong desires to cast myself and all my inability upon the Lord, if I should be called any more, as knowing that he could help me and show his strength in my weakness; and from time to time those desires were increased by some little success that attended my exhortations and letters to my friends.

I think it necessary to let you know, Sir, that my Master often desired me to take Orders, and said that 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 very soon; and a Clergyman that I had 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 try to go into Orders. For as for the Living, were it vacant, I have no mind to it, because I think I could preach with more fruit in my country and in my own tongue. I am in suspense: for on the 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: but on the other,

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 of the Gospel, 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 the Lord, and I conclude that an extraordinary punishment will sooner or later overtake my rashness: as I am in both those frames successively, I must own Sir, I do not see plainly which of the two ways before me I can take with safety, and I shall be glad to be ruled by you, because I trust God will direct you in giving me the advice you think will best conduce to his glory, the only thing I would have in view in this affair: I know how precious is your time, I desire no long answer, *persist* or *forbear* will satisfy and influence

Sir,

Your unworthy Servant,

JOHN FLETCHER.



L E T T E R III.

[To the same.]

Rev. Sir,

London, May 26, 1757.

IF I did not write to you before Mrs. Wesley had asked me, 'tis 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 dare hardly open my mouth before a child of God sometimes, and think

think it is 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 me should have the privilege to converse with one, whose soul is besprinkled 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 one, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. I rejoice that you find every where an increase of praying souls. I doubt not but the prayer of the just has great power with God; but I cannot believe that it should hinder the fulfilling of Christ's gracious promises to his Church: he must and will certainly come at the time appointed, for he is not slack as some men count slackness; and though he would have all 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 Zach. xiv. 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, is still concealed from us. I must say concerning Mr. Walsh, as he said once to me, concerning God. I wish I could attend him every where as Elisha attended Elias; 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 compleat?

Lord

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 to you sevenfold.

I am,

Rev. Sir,

Your unworthy Servant,

JOHN FLETCHER.



L E T T E R IV.

[From the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, to Miss F—, and Miss R—.]

Dear Sisters,

October 1, 1759.

I Have been putting off writing to you, lest the action of writing should divert my Soul from the awful and delightful worship it is engaged in; but now conclude I shall be no loser, if I invite you to love him my soul loveth; to dread him my soul dreadeth, to adore him my soul adoreth: sink with me, or rather let me sink with you, before the Throne of Grace; and while Cherubims veil their faces, and cry out in tender fear and exquisite trembling. Holy! holy! holy! let us put our mouths in the dust, and echo back the solemn
found.

found, Holy! holy! holy! Let us plunge ourselves in that ocean of purity: let us try to fathom the depths of divine mercy; and convinced of the impossibility of such an attempt, let us lose ourselves in them; let us be comprehended by God, if we cannot comprehend him; let us be supremely happy in God; let the intenseness of our happiness border upon misery, because we can make him no return. Let our head become waters, and our eyes a fountain of *tears---tears* of humble repentance, of solemn joy, of silent admiration, of exalted adoration, of raptured desires, of enflamed transports, of speechless awe. My God and my all!---your God and your all! our God and our all! Praise him; and with our souls blended into one by divine love, *let us with one mouth glorify the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; our Father, who is over all, through all and in us all.* I charge you before the Lord Jesus who *giveth life and more abundant life.* I intreat you by all the actings of faith, the stretchings of hope, the flames of love you have ever felt, sink to greater depths of self-abasing repentance, rise to greater heights of Christ-exalting joy; and let him *who is able to do exceeding abundantly more than you ask or think,* carry on, and fulfil in you the work of *faith with power; with that power whereby he subdueth all things unto himself: be stedfast in hope, unmoveable in patience and love, always abounding in the outward and inward labour of love, and receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

I am, dear Sisters,

Your real Well-wisher,

JOHN FLETCHER.

L E T



L E T T E R V.

[From the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.]

Madeley, June 6, 1781.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I Rejoice to hear that your spiritual bow abides in strength. I would have wished you joy about it since my arrival, if I knew where a letter could overtake you. I heartily thank you about the directions you give me to hinder my bow, so far split, from breaking quite. Now I must imitate your prudence, or the opportunity of doing it will soon be lost for good.

I would do something in the Lord's vineyard, but I have not strength. I can hardly, without over-doing myself, visit the sick of my Parish; I was better when I left Switzerland, than I am now; I had a great pull back in venturing to preach in the fields, in the Cevennes, to about two thousand French Protestants. I rode thirty miles to that place from Montpellier, on horseback, but was obliged to be brought back in a carriage. And now that I am here I can neither serve my Church, nor get it properly served. Mr. G—s owns, the place is not fit for him, nor he for it. He will go when I can get some body to help me: could you spare me brother B—? It would be a charity. Unless I can get a Curate zealous enough to stir among the people, I will give up the place: it would be little comfort to me to stay here to see the dead bury the dead. I thank God however, for resignation to his will.

As

the *penal fire* of the Mystics, to the *burning love* of the *Spirit*, revealing the glorious power of the *Father* and the *Son*, according to John xiv. 26, and filling us with all the fulness of God? Plain Scripture is better than all Mystic refinements.

When I was at N——, near Geneva, three Ministers received the Word, and preached the Truth. When persecution arose because of the Word, the two Pastors were afraid; but the Curate of the first Pastor, a Burgess of the town, stood by me. This Timothy opened his house, when the Pastors shut both their pulpits and houses; and I heard him preach a Discourse before I came away, worthy of you, Sir, upon the heights and depths of holiness. He wrote an apology for me, which he sent to the head of the persecuting Clergy, and so stopped the torrent of wrath. He made observations upon the mischief done to Christianity by a bad Clergy, such as George Fox, and you, Sir, would not disown. When I told him of you and the Methodists, he expressed a great desire to come to England, to hear you, to see the English brethren, and to learn English, that he might read your Works, and perhaps translate some of them. He can have no Living in his own country, because he will not *swear to persecute all who propagate Arminian Tenets*: which is more honest than the Clergy, many of whom are Arians, Socinians or Deists, and do not scruple to take the Calvinian Oaths! I shall endeavour to wait upon you at Leeds at the time of the Conference: in the mean time,

I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

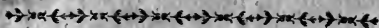
Your obedient Servant,

And affectionate Son in the Gospel,

JOHN FLETCHER.

L E T-

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L E T T E R. VII.

[From the Housekeeper at Kingswood-School
to the Rev. J. Wesley.]

Kingswood, Oct. 30, 1748.

Dear and Rev. Sir,

WHEN I look back upon my past life, and see the directing and over-ruling hand of my gracious God, I am astonished, and cry out, Lord, what is man? and what am I? an ungrateful, rebellious worm, not worthy the ground I tread upon. Even in this last call of his Providence, how have I resisted, and mixed bitter draughts in my own cup, which the Lord never designed for me? But it was my perverseness and littleness of faith: I listened to the voice of the enemy, rather than the voice of God: I could not trust him, though he had been my refuge in every time of trouble. How did he gently strive to subdue my stubborn spirit, calming my fears, and shining in upon my soul with such clear, demonstrative light, that I could no longer withstand. I then rose up, and feebly followed the small still voice. I soon found obedience brings its own reward. My anxiety, my doubts, and distrust all vanished, and a sweet calm succeeded, which has continued ever since. I know not what the Lord is about to do with me; but I am enabled to leave it all to him. O may I never again take the matter out of his great hand; but lay my body, soul, and spirit, all that I have and am, at his feet! O that he would make me as a weaned child, simply trusting up to him for all things!

The spirit of this family is a resemblance of the household above. As far as I can discern, they are given up to God, and pursue but the one great end. The Lord in a peculiar manner preserveth us from the rocks on either hand, and we safely walk between them. Having our God for our guide, what can harm us? Nothing but losing sight of him: and for this there is no necessity.

If any is afraid this school will eclipse and darken others, or that it will train up soldiers to proclaim open war against the God of this world, I believe it is not a groundless fear. For if God continues to bless us, "one of these little ones shall chase a thousand." I doubt not but there will arise ambassadors for the King of kings from this obscure spot, that shall spread his glory all abroad, and bring many souls unto the knowledge of the truth.

Dear Sir, we beg your constant prayers, with those of all the brethren with you. May the Lord bear you all as on eagles wings, and comfort and establish your hearts together! This day I felt my spirit mingling with my beloved London friends: and it was sweet consolation. It will not be long ere we shall meet in our Father's house, to rejoice together throughout an happy eternity. Pray always for

Your unworthy,

affectionate Servant in the Gospel,

MARY DAVEY.

L E T T E R. VIII.

[To the same, From a poor, happy Woman, then living in the Orphan-House at Newcastle.]

Newcastle, Nov. 1, 1748.

Rev. Dear Sir,

I THINK we never had a more blessed time in this house, since it was a house. I know of no thing amiss betwixt Sister M—— and me: but we cannot be as one soul (as you express it); for you know, she must have a little pre-eminence. I am exceeding willing that she should; and so we live in great peace, and, I believe, in love.

You may expect plain dealing from me: and if I thought you distrusted me, I would not write; but I am fully persuaded you do not: and therefore why should I hide a heart from you, that is quite uncovered before the all-seeing eyes of God? I may possibly deal too openly with others; but I am fully convinced, I never can with you. Nay, I could heartily wish that you saw all that is in my heart; you could then be a better judge of it than I am myself.

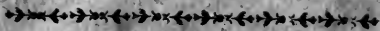
I know not how to agree to the not working. I am still unwilling to take any thing from any body. I work out of choice, having never yet learned, how long a woman can be idle and innocent. I have had as blessed times in my soul sitting at work, as ever I had in my life; especially in the night-time, when I see nothing but the light of a candle and a white cloth, hear nothing but the sound of my own breath, with God in my sight and heaven in my soul, I think myself one of the happiest creatures below the skies. I do
not

not complain, that God has not made me some fine thing, to be set up to be gazed at; but I can heartily bless him, that he has made me just what I am, a creature capable of the enjoyment of himself. If I go to the window and look out, I see the moon and stars, I meditate a while on the silence of the night, consider this world as a beautiful structure, the work of an almighty hand; then I sit down to work again, and think myself one of the happiest beings in it. I do not murmur because I have not what they call goods of fortune, or a little skin-deep beauty; but I am happy, because as long as God lives, I shall enjoy him; so long as there is a heaven, I shall possess it. If this thought cannot make me happy, without anything else, I deserve to be miserable. Then how can I enough adore that Redeemer, who bought all these privileges for me with his own blood? But here words fail me, and I can say no more: I sink deep into my own nothingness, and cry out, with astonishment, O what has God done for me!

O pray for me, that I may no more be found unfaithful. Dear Sir, pray for me, that I may be always watchful and serious; that all my conversation may adorn the gospel. To the divine protection I commit that which is dearest to me on earth, and remain.

Your affectionate and loving child,

JEANNIE KEITH.



L E T T E R. IX.

[From Mrs. Elizabeth Mann, to Mr. Wesley.]

London, September 14, 1749.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I Trust you do not forget to pray for me; for, indeed, I have need. I feel myself now, as at all times, a poor helpless creature, unable to do any thing without the mighty power of God, unless it be to sin against him; and the more I feel of my own weakness, the more I desire to feel of it. I think I would fain be nothing, that Christ might be all in all: it is so blessed and pleasant a thing, to receive all from him, who is so ready to bestow upon me, that I would not accept of any strength or help, but what cometh from him alone: and, indeed, I have need of no other. His grace is sufficient for me. O, what a mystery is the life of faith! how weak is the soul that hangs on Jesus; and yet, how strong? Of itself it is not able to stand against the least enemy; but must necessarily fall a prey to the weakest, even of its inbred foes: but through him it is able, not only to wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers: with the rulers of the darkness of this world; and with spiritual wickedness in high places: and is made more than conqueror, through his love, who is become the Captain of our salvation.

I often meditate on the happiness of those souls, who have wholly ceased from their own works, and feel every moment that it is Christ that work-
eth

eth all their works in them; and are always sensible, that it is not themselves that speak, but the Spirit of their Father, which speaketh in them: and whose every thought proceeds from that fountain of all holiness and perfection. O what a heaven is there opened in that soul! and what a burning and shining light is it to all around! Within all is holy and undefiled, and there is nothing to annoy or disturb that peace, which continually floweth as a river: and I think to all without them, their words must come with life and power. O what a rest is this! how worthy of the Almighty Author, to bestow on all that fear and wait upon him! And yet, it is no wonder, that human nature should stagger at the greatness of the promise through unbelief: especially, as it is so much the interest of the great enemy of mankind, we should: indeed he does not much concern himself, when men give only a cool assent to the truth of the promise: but, when a soul is stirred up to follow hard after it, then the devil stirs up all the unbelief of our nature, and is continually suggesting, how can these things be? But when a soul is enabled to surmount these oppositions, and can steadily behold the promise, though it be afar off, how inexcusable is it, if it be not every moment panting and longing for the possession of it? But, alas! where falls this censure? It overwhelms myself: now my soul earnestly desires, and pants after that glorious liberty: but how often is it dull and languid, in the pursuit thereof: nay, perhaps, for some moments, I lose sight of the high prize of my calling. O when shall this be so no more: when shall my soul cry without ceasing, "Come Lord Jesus, and set up thy kingdom fully in my heart; and reign thou thyself the Lord of every motion there."

Dear

Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene !

Hear what preacher you will : but hear the voice of God, and beware of prejudice and every unkind temper ! Beware of foolish and hurtful desires, or they will pierce you through with many sorrows. In one word, be any thing, but a trifler : a Trifler with God and your own Soul. It was not for this, that God gave you

“ A mind superior to the vulgar herd !”

No, Miss ———, no ! But that you might employ all your talents to the glory of him that gave them. O do not grieve the holy Spirit of God ! Is he not still striving with you ? Striving to make you, not almost, but altogether a christian ? Indeed *you* must be all or nothing : a saint, or a devil ! Eminent in sin, or holiness. The good Lord deliver you from every snare, and guide your feet in the way of peace ! How great a pleasure would this give to all your real friends, and in particular to,

Your affectionate Servant,

For Christ's sake,

JOHN WESLEY.



L E T T E R XI.

[To the same.]

Colchester, March 20, 1759.

MY Wife, Miss ———, surprised me last night, by informing me, you are left mistress of
a large

a large fortune. Shall I say, agreeably surpris'd me? I cannot tell: because I believe there is another world. And I do not know, what influence this change may have on your condition: therefore I am in fear, and in hope. You may be hereby far more happy, or far more miserable in eternity! O make a stand! Consider the situation you are in: perhaps never before were you in so great danger. You know a little of your natural tempers: now you have means of indulging, and thereby inflaming them to the uttermost. And how many will incite you so to do? How few will dare to warn you against it? Now what food will you have for *pride*? What infinite temptations, to think more highly than you ought to think? You do so already. But oh, where will you stop! The good Lord arrest the storm in mid career! How impetuously now, (unless God interpose) must *self-will* whirl you along? How deeply (unless he help) will you shortly be immersed in practical atheism? As ten thousand things will concur to drive God out of your thoughts, as much as if he were not in the world. But above all, how will you escape from being swallowed up in *idolatry*? Love of the world, such as you never knew before!

Hitherto you have been greatly superior to every delicacy in *food*: but even this may assault you now: and perhaps raise in you other *desires*, which you are now a stranger to. At present, you are above the follies of *dress*: but will you be so a twelvemonth hence? May you not easily slide into the *pride of life*, in this as well as other instances? Especially considering how your *vanity* will be gratified thereby. For who will not *admire* and *applaud* your admirable taste? It will only remain for you to *marry* some agreeable person,
that

money, the more learning, and the more reputation a man has, the more good he will do. And whenever a christian, pursuing the noblest ends, forms his behaviour by these maxims, he will infallibly (though perhaps by insensible degrees) decline into worldly prudence. He will use more or less of conformity to the world, if not in sin, yet in doing some things that are good in themselves, yet (all things considered) are not good to him : and perhaps at length using guile, or disguise, simulation or dissimulation, either seeming to be what he is not, or not seeming to be what he is. By any of these marks may worldly prudence be discerned from the wisdom which is from above.

This, *christian prudence* pursues *christian maxims* and by *christian means*. The ends it pursues are holiness in every kind, and in the highest degree ; and usefulness in every kind and degree. And herein it proceeds on the following maxims, The help that is done upon earth, God doth it himself : it is he that worketh all in all. And that, not by human power : generally he uses weak things to confound the strong : not by men of wealth ; most of his choicest instruments may say, " silver and gold have I none : " not by learned or " wise men after the flesh : no ; the foolish things hath God chosen : not by men of reputation ; but by the men that were as the filth and off-scouring of the world : all which is for this plain reason, " That no flesh may glory in his sight. "

Christian prudence pursues these ends upon these principles, by only christian means. A truly prudent christian, while, in things purely indifferent, he becomes all things to all men, yet wherever duty is concerned, matters the example
of

of all mankind no more than a grain of sand. His word is then,

————— Non me, qui cætera vincit
Impetus, at rapido contrarius evehor orbi.

He will not, to gain the favour, or shun the hate of all, omit the least point of duty. He cannot prevail upon himself on any account or pretence, to use either simulation or dissimulation. There is no guile in his mouth: no evasion or ambiguity. Having one desire, one design, to glorify God with his body and with his spirit; having only one fear,

Left a motion, or a word,
Or thought arise, to grieve his Lord.

Having one rule, the word of God; one guide, even his Spirit, he goes on in child-like simplicity. Continually seeing him that is invisible, he walks in open day. Looking unto Jesus, and deriving strength from him, he goes on in his steps, in the work of faith, the labour of love, the patience of hope, till he is called up, to be ever with the Lord.

Oh, that this were in all points your own character! Surely you desire it above all things. But how shall you attain? Difficulties and hinderances surround you on every side! Can you bear with my plainness? I believe you can? Therefore I will speak without any reserve. I fear, you have scarce one friend who has not more or less of the prudence which is not from above. And I doubt you have (in or near your own rank) hardly one example of true christian prudence! Yet I am persuaded, your own heart

practice of this, would do me much service. Never was my soul in more danger than now; and I feel the want of inward Holiness more than ever. It is a very dangerous precipice, to be blest to the souls of others, and needs the whole Omnipotence of God, to save us from being destroyed thereby. For I often find a Work of Mercy, nay, a Means of Grace, stand between my Soul and Christ. I have toiled till my body was almost laid up, when all the time it would have been more pleasing to God, had I been hewing wood or drawing water, with my soul evenly carried out after Him. O Sir, Holiness, Holiness is the thing we want; to have Jesus our all in all! Till this is effected, whenever I point another to the Lamb of God, something in myself cries, "Behold me! behold me!" And I feel the weight of those words,

Yea though by faith vast hills I could remove,
Yet *all* is nothing without perfect Love."

And why should this be delayed any longer? What amazing Answers to many Prayers, have both you and I received, with regard to outward things? And will not the same love more abundantly constrain him to bless us in our souls? — Surely this is an acceptable time! Yet the devil continually strives to discourage me, and suggests, "God will not do for *thee* as he has done for others." But I *will* trust him: and I *do believe*, if from this time we fix our eye steadily on the prize of our high calling, the Lord will shortly bring it into our hearts. The Lord's ear is not heavy, nor his hand shortened that it cannot save. O that we may now pierce heaven with our cries, and never cease till we see his

E 2

full Salvation! May the Lord renew your strength,
and fill your soul with love!

I am, yours, &c.

M. B.

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L E T T E R X I V .

[To the same.]

Dear Sir,

March 7, 1761.

THE Lord has of late laid me on the hearts of many of his children: so that several of them said, they could not rest, till he had delivered me. For this fortnight he has been many times very nigh; but yet the sons of Anak seemed to triumph, till on Thursday morning, being at prayer, I felt an hope, that he would keep me *every moment*. Yet I durst not say, “Christ *has* delivered me:” but “he *will* bruise Satan under my feet shortly.” And I felt, as it were, a claim to Jesus, such as I never remember before. On Friday I saw his exceeding willingness to save, and could almost believe. At Intercession, I felt every word sink into my soul: yet soon after I was surrounded with such sorrow and anguish, that I could not forbear crying out exceedingly. I then felt a little power to believe; and my soul was calm. And I could not pray for any thing, but that he would do with me what seemed him good. When I waked this morning, my soul seemed absolutely empty: only I found power to lie before Jesus. After we left you, we went to Mr. *Fay's*, when the power of God was present indeed, and even I could say, “He *will*

will keep me without spot unto the day of redemption."

What the Lord has done, I know not ; but I find an exceeding great change. Those sins that held me in the closest bondage, I know not what is become of them. I am accused almost every moment ; but before I can look, the thing is gone. I feel no desire, but for Christ : no fear but of losing my hold of him. Yet I am often so tempted to give it up, that it is almost more than I can bear. I have but little love for God, though I love nothing so well. I feel a little difference every hour, and I long to see Jesus glorified. Yet I do not seem to be so joined to him as I would : only under his peculiar care, it seems, the man of sin is taken out of my heart, but I am not assured he shall never return. I find more need of watchfulness and prayer than ever, and of the means of all kinds. May there not be a measure of pure love, and doubts remain ? Be that as it may, I will trust in Jesus. And though a host of foes surround me, I know he can deliver me from them all, and cast them under my feet.

I remain, yours, &c.

M. B.



L E T T E R XV

[To the same.]

Dear Sir,

May 5, 1761

IF one who has so much more grace than me was deceived, how can I stand against all the snares thrown in my way ? I have no security but this :

I am all weakness: Christ is all strength. I dare not look forward in any thing: I only judge for this moment. O pray for me, that the Lord may teach me in all things! The ways of God are past finding out: may his dear Will be done!

In order to obtain the blessed *fruit* of love, your surest way is, first to get the *Root*. It is the Will of God, you should *now* receive it; and then all the rest will follow. O let us look to Jesus! He knows our inmost soul, and he will heal our every wound. Do *you* fear you have not begun to be a Christian? O how dreadfully did I fear this, the last quarter of an hour before the Lord gave me the great blessing! Continually was Satan darting that at me, "Thou art not justified!" For a time it much discouraged me. But I found the readiest way was, to go immediately to Jesus, and say, (whether I could *feel* it or not,) "I cast me afresh on thy atoning blood. I *will* trust in it; and if I perish, I will perish at thy feet! - I *will* believe; for I am thine." I held to this, whatever Satan could say. And this going continually to Christ, is all we want in every state. Were you ever so polluted, wash in the all-cleansing blood, and you shall be white as snow. O fly every moment to your Ark! I know the Lord is nigh to bless you. Cast yourself, again and again, on that precious blood that flowed so freely for you! Claim *your* Saviour! He is all your own: he hath given himself for *you*! Yea, his very life he did not with-hold, but bought *your holiness* with blood divine.

I am, yours, &c.

M. B.

L E T.

L E T T E R XVII.

[To the same.]

Dear Friend,

June 5, 1762.

O How blind and dark is all human wisdom! teach me, my Saviour, by thy Spirit! I thought God called me to give up corresponding with *you*; and I found, I could readily comply. But whether he does call me to it or no, I cannot see. I rather think, he does not. It seems to me at present, I am to continue this prayer, "Let thy Star appear, and I will follow it." and that in the mean time, I am to continue writing; only with the closest prayer and strictest watchfulness.

The burden I feel for you is very heavy; much heavier than I used to feel for my own soul. But if in a little measure I am like my Lord, what does his tender heart feel for you? The way you are to take is straight before you: fly to your loving, bleeding, dying Saviour. See him hanging on the accursed tree, his head drooping beneath *your* load, and crying in the midst of his agony, "Fear not! all thy sins were laid on my head, and I bore them all away!" Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee! Wound me not afresh! Renounce all for my sake, and I will adorn thee with the robes of my Righteousness." O accept the offer! He is *your* Saviour. Cast yourself just as you are, upon him!

Shutting yourself up will not do. The root is within. Cut off every thing that would nourish it. Those things, we here falsely call *Innocent*, are the right eye to be plucked out. If you were be-

sieging

sieging strong enemies, and had no hopes of conquering but by starving them, would it be *innocent*, now and then to throw them a little bread? O beware of such innocent things, as may cost you your life! And ought you not to guard others, as well as yourself, against them? Remember, you are answerable, if you do not teach us, the strictest, narrowest path of Self-denial! Yet God will be better pleased with your sacrificing yourself to him, than if you were to save the whole world.

I am, yours, &c.

M. B.



L E T T E R. XVIII.

[From Miss B. to a Friend].

Dear Friend,

July 6, 1762.

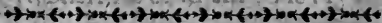
I Do find enough in Jesus: I dare to say, I love him with all my heart. Therefore the difficulty on *my* side is done away, and I am not tempted as before, concerning *you*. But O! beware, lest *in any degree*, I should prove a temptation to you. I fear lest you should so rest on any created Good, as to feel less need of Jesus to rest on. O fly for refuge, rest and Happiness to your bleeding Lord! Though you should feel as if he did not hear or answer, yet force yourself upon him, and plead the promise, That he *will not send you a warfare at your own cost*. And O! be earnest with him, to *tear away your All*, if you cannot *give* it! O that you may cast your whole soul on Jesus, and find in his Love your abiding home! What heights and depths of Holiness have many attained

attained with half the helps and half the time that we have had? My dear Friend, from this moment, let us know nothing but Christ! But let us remember! If we would know Him, we must know him crucified. Yea, we must be crucified with him, or we can never reign with him.

How may you be crucified with him? The thing you want is Faith: Faith to believe that from this moment the Captain of the Lord's host will go before you, and subdue all your Enemies beneath your feet? By the power of that Faith, you would say to the mountain of Sin, "Be thou cast into the sea, and it would obey. O cry for Faith! May Jesus bless you!" Pray *for us*, as we do for *you*!

I am yours, &c.

M. B.



L E T T E R. XIX.

Dear Friend,

July 16, 1762.

I Have many fears lest you should find such a Rest in the enjoyment of your Friends, as shall hide from your eyes your need of Christ to rest in. When I cry earnestly for you, it seems to me, that this is the very hinderance. And I tremble, lest I should be one, and you insensible of it. Were you sensible of the danger, and watchful against it, I should be no more hurtful to *you*, than you were to *me* the last two months, when I really fought with all my might.

Sure I am, that my Jesus, who has saved you from ten thousand dangers, is now waiting, yea longing to fill you with the Faith that opens heaven. And though we find our heart full of corruption,

who depend upon sinning as long as they live. The Lord has graciously given me a clean heart, and I hope to use it in his service. I find I speak less than I did, and what I do speak, I know is according to the will of God. And he enables me to baffle the assaults of wise, reasoning men, by simply declaring, "I love the Lord with my whole heart, mind and soul."

I was thought to be stepping into eternity last week. But the Lord spared me, to go up with my children and servants, to Jerusalem, to worship. He was there of a truth: I rejoiced exceedingly, that ever I was born. I delivered my children into the Lord's hands, with all I have, and all I am. I find my love to the Lord, deep and solemn, and can always rejoice in him. It is not in my power to describe the blessings that are showered upon us. I trust the Lord will enlarge my powers, and that I shall employ them all for his praise. I think, he is willing to give me as much as any daughter he has on earth. O pray, that I may so use the grace received, as to gain souls for him. Do not think I boast, I feel myself a scrap of dust. But the Lord has lifted me up. And for his own glorious name's sake, he will sustain me to the end. I am not able to stir, unless Jesus help me: I am nothing! Christ is all in all!

Before you left town I was agonizing with excess of desire to love God alone. I knew the power was ready, whenever I asked for it in faith. I found it was like throwing myself into a rapid stream, where I must swim or perish. The Lord gave me faith, and a sweet serenity. Satan assaults; but Jesus keeps the citadel. Yet as I get strength, my inward trials are stronger, and stronger. But I rejoice, knowing they shall all work

work together for good. To love Jesus is heaven upon earth. But I know no greater pain, next to hearing his name blasphemed, than to be debarred from declaring his mercy, wherever I am. O what a day will that be, when we shall see his face, and live with him for ever!

Pray that I may be steady. I carry much sail, and need much ballast. But the voyage is short. My Pilot commands the winds, and I do not fear gaining the wished-for port.

I remain yours, &c.

M. W.



L E T T E R X X I .

[From the same]

Dear Sir,

May 30, 1761.

I Cannot tell how often I have been prevented, when I have intended to answer your encouraging Letter. Indeed, Sir, I must praise the Lord Jesus. O he is lovely, and is more precious to me every day. Glory be to his name; he fulfils his promises to my happy soul every hour: and I am in pain, when I am not some way employed to his honour. His tender care of me, melts me down, till I lose myself in him. And when I think, how near the time is come, that will deliver me to my Beloved, my soul grows too big for my breast, and I almost faint for joy. O what a calling is ours! To live with Christ Jesus my Lord, and that for ever! And does he not give us a foretaste of our bliss? Because my bodily strength was little, he has renewed it. Instead of creeping out of bed at ten, I am now waked by my Spouse, and rise at four, and all my family meet

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before

before five. Prayer is sweet. I would not accept the empire of the world, to keep me from that food of immortal souls. When temptations harass, till my body almost faints, my Lord is present with me. And glory be to his name, I can count it a blessing, when I am the most tried. I know it comes through him, to me his child, whom he eyes with earnest tenderness.

My son is much blest. He cries aloud for a clean heart, and attends the ordinances with keenness. *Harriot* is a proof of what the Lord can do in a child. Her prayers are indeed surprising. Many are struck at her confident petitions and boldness, in declaring her love to the Lord. My house is a heaven upon earth. Hallelujah to the Lord.

I am yours, &c.

M. W.



L E T T E R. XXII.

[To the Rev. J. Wesley.]

Dear Sir,

May 30, 1760.

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, yea,

yea, 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 anothers 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 fulfil 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.

L E T T E R XXIII.

[To the same.]

Honoured Sir,

May 14, 1757.

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 fulness 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

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 stampt 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—



L E T T E R II

[From the same.]

Honoured Sir,

June 18, 1751

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 fulness of the Godhead bodily. O I long to be

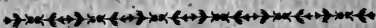
“ Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea,
And lost in his immensity!”

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.—



L E T T E R XXV.

[To the same.]

Honoured Sir,

London, Dec. 31, 1757.

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! 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.

I am not insensible of my present trial. It is the heaviest and closest I have ever met with: and had

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." Neither am I as they who wandered in sheep-skins and goat-skins, and lodged in dens and caves of the earth. But I am ready. My spirit is resolutely fixt, "To suffer all his righteous will."

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."

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Whatever is amiss in this, you will forgive :
and continue to instruct, reprove, and pray for
your ever affectionate Child,

S. C.



L E T T E R XXVI.

[From Mrs. S. R. to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.]

Bristol, Feb. 1, 1758.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I Am thankful if my 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 fixt 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. 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 mean time, having our eye single, our inten-
tion pure, determin'd 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

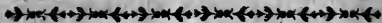
I am sometimes tempted, because I do not labour more with my hands. But O! the thirst I feel for souls! I know not but the Lord lays his hand on my body in mercy, or I should have little time for retirement: for I could be speaking and going about all the day. O Sir, let us make haste to live!

The Lord grant you the desire of your soul upon me! O that I may be 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 has purchased all for *me*. Pray help me by your prayers.

O my Father, look up! The chariots and horse-men of Israel! O for faith to lay hold on all 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. R.



L E T T E R XXVII.

[To the same.]

Dear Sir,

May 14, 1763.

I Have wrote nothing more concerning *Jenny Cooper*. Nor has she wrote any thing of her last six months experience, except what may be found in her Letters. I have often wished she had: for during that time she ripened apace. She was favoured with much of the divine presence; and obeyed that command, "Hear ye him." She attended to the voice of her Shepherd, and her conversation

fation was in heaven. She lived as one redeemed from the earth, and of all the christians I ever conversed with, I never observed such fervent love to all, as I saw in her : and in the acquaintance I had with her, particularly the last six months, I never saw any thing that had the appearance of evil.

It is a mercy that we are enjoined to be followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. They overcame through the strength of him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. And the same Lord who is rich in mercy unto all that call upon him, has also undertaken our cause, and he who has delivered, and doth deliver, will continue to deliver to the end.

I praise the Lord I feel peace, and understand more fully the love of the Father, in giving his only-begotten Son, that whoever believeth on him may not perish. Jesus has truly opened a new and living way into the holiest. — An open door is set before us ; we may enter in and find pasture. I rejoice in that word, It hath pleased the Father that *in him* should all fulness dwell, and from his fulness we receive grace for grace. O how sweet a life is the life of faith, which teaches us to depend on Christ alone for all we want : which saves the soul from all confidence in the flesh, while it enriches and fills it with love, peace, joy, long-suffering. It debases, empties, and sinks it into nothing, so that all boasting is excluded. There is hardly any thing so blest to me as reading the word of God, and sometimes I think I never believed the Bible till within these last nine months ; every word seems so spoken to my heart ; I so feel, *All is yours.*

May the Lord abundantly bless you, and fill you with all his life and love, I often think that I
do

do not enough love and honour you, or see the use God makes of you in his vineyard.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

J. C. M.



L E T T E R XXVIII.

[From the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.]

Philadelphia, Sept. 25, 1764.

Rev. and dear Sir,

YOUR kind Letter, dated in January last, through the negligence of those that received the parcel, did not reach me till within these few days. It found me at Philadelphia, just returned from my Northern Circuit; and waiting only for cooler weather to set forwards for Georgia. Perhaps that may be my *Ne plus ultra*. But the Gospel range is of such large extent, that I have, as it were, scarce begun to begin. Surely nothing but a very loud call of Providence could make me so much as think of returning to England as yet. I have been mercifully carried through the summer's heat; and, had strength permitted, I might have preached to thousands and thousands thrice every day. Zealous Ministers are not so rare in this New World as in other parts. Here is room for a hundred Itinerants. Lord Jesus send by whom thou wilt send. Fain would I end my life in rambling after those that have rambled away from Jesus Christ.

For

your understanding a mere lamp of light, always shining with light from above! I want you to be full of Divine Knowledge and Wisdom, as Jordan in the time of harvest. I want your words to be full of grace, poured out as precious ointment. I want your every work to bear the stamp of God, to be a sacrifice of a sweet smelling favour. Without any part weak, earthly or human: all holy; all divine. The great God, your Father and your Love, bring you to this self-same thing! Begin, Soldier of Christ, Child of God! Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith thou art called! Remember the Faith! Remember the Captain of thy Salvation! Fight! Conquer! Die—and live for ever!

I am yours, &c.

J. W.



L E T T E R X X X .

[From Mrs. S. R. to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.]

Bristol, March 20, 1758.

Rev. 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."

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done." I often examine, Whether my Affections do not start aside, 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 pretence 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 shew 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 Free-man: 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 than conquerors through him who hath loved us.

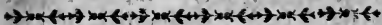
When I thought I should die, I longed to be gone. But when I found I should live, I was resigned.

signed. I had no power to chuse any thing; but I was often ashamed before God, for his goodness to me: most of the time I was much tempted, which shewed 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 any thing 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, &c.

S. R.



L E T T E R XXXI.

[From Mrs. E. M. to the Rev. Mr. Wesley.]

Rev. and dear Sir,

Potto, Nov. 4, 1769.

I Find the greatest reason to adore my dear Redeemer, for his love towards me, who gives me the sweet experience of the increase of his life in my soul. I find the Lord always before me; yet by different operations of his spirit. I see an infinite fulness in Jesus, and feel my heart drawn out with a strong desire for greater degrees of his love. I see myself the most unworthy, weak, and ignorant of all his creatures. My path is exceeding narrow, and my dangers daily great, yet the Lord is always sufficient, and I can trust him at all times. At other times I find my spirit lost in his fulness, and swallowed up in the ocean of his love. My

fool lies in the dust before him, while I desire all his creatures to praise his name. After such strong consolations I often find myself much assaulted with men and devils. In which moments I hear my Saviour whisper to me, "It is given to thee not only to believe, but to suffer for my sake." - I then feel such a patient resignation of myself, and all things, into his hand, that I do not find a wish in my heart, but what I can sacrifice to him, which gives me constant happiness, and a power to rejoice in all things. I often find the greatest danger in my most prosperous moments, both for body and soul; at which times the enemy is sure to whisper, now take thy ease; but I look to Christ for strength, to despise, and fight, and conquer all my enemies. As to my conduct, I desire to shun every appearance of evil, both in word and work. I thank the Lord who so keeps me, that I know nothing by myself; yet by this I am not justified: for I look to be daily plunged into that fountain which is opened for sin and uncleanness; to be washed from all my pollution I cast myself entirely upon him, who saves me for his own name's sake, and trust to be swallowed up in his fulness every moment, for I know no end thereof.

I am, Rev. and dear Sir, yours, &c.

E. M.

L E T T E R XXXII.

[Found in the Study of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Belcher, late of New-England.]

Dear Brother,

YOURS I received, and thought on that question, being *How to live in this World so as to live*

live in Heaven? It is one of the common pleas of my heart, which I have often occasion to study, and therefore takes me not unprovided. It is hard to keep the helm up against so many cross winds as we meet withal, upon this sea of fire and glass. That man knows not his own heart that finds it not difficult to break through the entanglements of the world. Creature-smiles stop and entice away the affections from Jesus Christ; creature-frowns encompass and tempestate the spirit, that it thinks it doth well to be angry. Both ways grace is a loser. We had all need to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. The greatest of your conflicts and causes of complaints, seem to have their original here. Temptations follow tempers. As there are two predominant qualities in the temper of every body, so there are two predominant sins in the temper of every heart. Pride is one in all men in the world—I will tell you, familiarly, what God hath done for my soul, and in what trade my soul keeps towards himself. I am come to a conclusion to look after no great matters in the world but to know Christ and him crucified. I make best way in a low gale: a high spirit and a high sail together will be dangerous, and therefore I prepare to live low. I desire not much: I pray against it. My study is my calling, so much as to tend that without distraction, I am bound to plead for, and more I desire not. By my secluded retirements, I have the advantage to observe, how every day's occasions insensibly wear off the heart from God, and bury it in itself, which they who live in care and lumber cannot be sensible of. I have seemed to see a need of every thing God gives me, and to want nothing that he denies me. There is no dispensation, though afflictive, but either in it or after it, I

find, I could not be without it, whether it be taken from me or not given to me; sooner or later God quiets me in himself without it. I cast all my concerns on the Lord, and live securely on the care and wisdom of my heavenly Father. My ways, you know, are in some sense hedged up with thorns, and grow darker and darker daily: but yet I distrust not my good God in the least, and live more quietly in the absence of all by faith, than I should do, I am persuaded, if I possessed them. I think the Lord deals kindly with me, to make me believe for all my mercies, before I have them, that they will then be Isaacs, sons of laughter: the less reason hath to work upon, the more freely faith casts itself on the faithfulness of God. I find that while faith is steady nothing can disquiet me, and when faith totters nothing can establish me. If I stumble out amongst means and creatures, I am presently lost, and can come to no end; but if I stay myself on God, and leave him to work in his own way and time, I am at rest, and can sit down and sleep in a promise when a thousand rise up against me; therefore my way is, not to cast beforehand, but to work with God by the day: 'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.' I find so much to do continually with my calling and my heart, that I have no time to puzzle myself with peradventures and futurities: as for the state of the times, it is very gloomy and tempestuous. 'But why do the heathen rage?' Faith lies at anchor in the midst of the waves, and believes the accomplishment of the promise, through all these overturnings, confusions, and seeming impossibilities. Upon this God do I live who is our God for ever, and will guide us to the death. Methinks I lie becalmed in his bosom, as Luther in such a case, I am not much concerned,

let

let Christ see to it. I know prophecies are now dark, and the books are sealed, and men have been deceived, and every cistern fails, yet God doth continue faithful, and faithful is he that hath promised who will do it, I believe these dark times are the womb of a bright morning. Many more things I might have said, but enough.—Oh! Brother, keep close to God, and then you need fear nothing. Maintain secret and intimate communion with God, and then a little of the creature will go a great way. Take time for duties in private, crowd not religion into a corner of the day: There is a Dutch proverb, ‘Nothing is got by thieving nor lost by praying.’ Lay up all your good in God so as to overbalance the sweetness and bitterness of all creatures. Spend no time anxiously in beforehand contrivances for this world; they never succeed: God will run his dispensations another way. Self-contrivances are the effects of unbelief. I can speak by experience, would men spend those hours they run out in plots and devices in communion with God, and leave all to him, by venturesome believing, they would have more peace and comfort. I leave you with your God and mine. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Pray for your own soul, pray for Jerusalem, and pray hard for your poor brother.



L E T T E R XXXIII.

My dear Friend,

YOU ask me what I “think are the genuine properties of an humble man.” The question is very important; it deserves a serious consideration, and a full answer. You know I have not the advantages

vantages of age, and long experience, yet nevertheless I will tell my friend freely what I think are the marks and properties of one who is humble: and though I will not say but humility may discover itself in other ways, yet I will venture to affirm wherever the following properties are found in any one; he is an humble man.

He forgets not his former sinfulness, and outward meanness under the highest spiritual discoveries, or the greatest advancement in fortune and worldly circumstances.

He overlooks his own righteousness, and depends intirely upon that which is of God, by faith.

The lowest and meanest good work, is not below him.

He is forward to submit to every truth God has revealed, even those which flesh and blood are most averse unto.

He lives neither from, nor unto himself, but unto and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

He highly prizes the least favour from God, deeming himself less than the least of all his mercies.

He never thinks himself good enough.

He smites and chides himself for small faults, as for great ones. He quietly bears burdens, and takes affronts without a noise.

He labours more to glorify God in afflictions, than to get out of them.

He seeks not after great things. He says a little will satisfy nature, less will satisfy grace.

He rejoices in the graces, and success of others, as well as his own.

He will rather bear an hundred wrongs, than revenge one.

Tho' he may be of the very best abilities, he will

will not disdain to be taught by the meanest persons.

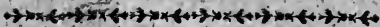
He deems himself to have no wisdom to direct, or power to defend himself, without the light and power of grace.

He prefers every one, (that in truth he can) unto himself; thinking *soberly of himself as God has dealt unto him the measure of faith.*

These are some of the properties of an humbleman. And my dear friend, who can forbear admiring the amiable character! who can avoid wishing himself the happy owner of these blessed qualifications? Here give your heart full vent! Let all your soul desire this precious mother Grace. May the good Lord give you an abundant measure thereof; then will your holiness and happiness also, be such as is wished, and heartily prayed for, by

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother, and humble Servant.



L E T T E R XXXIV.

June, 24th, 1766.

I Hope my dear Sister is pressing forward, still going on to perfection. The crown of eternal life is just before you. Jesus saith, *be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Compared with this, what are all the toys of this life? What are the riches, gain or honours? yea what is life itself? Account it dung, for so it is, compared with Christ. O who would not love such a Saviour! "Jesus all the day long is my joy and my song." My life is hid with Christ in God: And

And when Christ who is my life shall appear, then shall I also appear with him in glory! I cannot express how weak, helpless, and unworthy, I feel myself; yet Jesus careth for me, and helpeth me to cast all my care on him. His love is better than wine! O that he may fill your soul therewith! my dear, contend not about a name, but pray that your soul may be filled with the simple, humble love of Jesus.

I trust dear * * * * is growing in grace likewise, may the Lord make her simple and humble, and fill her with all the mind that is in Christ. Advise her to retire with Jesus, from the multitude: for he is the bridegroom of the soul, and the chiefest among ten thousand: that he would ever look on us, may give occasion to our crying out, Why me; Why me? O amazing depth of Love divine!

Lost in wonder gaze no more,
Fall and silently adore!
Peace be with your spirit.

I am your affectionate Sister.



L E T T E R X X X V .

My dear Sister,

ON Tuesday last I received yours, and do greatly rejoice that you desire to partake of that holiness, without which you cannot see the Lord with comfort. O that you may ever account all things but dung, that you may thus win Christ! Hold fast the beginning of your confidence stedfast unto the end; forgetting the things behind, reach forth to those before. It hath never entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things God hath pre-

pared for them, that love him. But thus much you can conceive, that they are far, incomparably far superior to all earthly blessings. O that your heart and mine may be abundantly more sensible of their worth!

I find daily need to pray unto the Lord, to give me a deeper sense of the greatness of his mercies towards me, and of my utter unworthiness of the least of them. Accordingly I find my blessed Lord Jesus, doth answer my prayers. I know not how to declare his goodness! Let silence speak his praise! Meet me my dear love, at the throne of grace at ten in the forenoon, our Jesus will certainly meet us both, and all our friends who will join with us. I shall be glad to see you all, when Providence makes my way plain.

I am your affectionate Sister.



L E T T E R XXXVI.

My dear,

Nov. 22d. 1758.

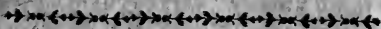
PR AISE God for what he hath already done: let those give thanks, whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered, from the hand of the enemy: but you know a greater deliverance is at hand. What have you to do, but to fight your way through against the world, the flesh, and the devil? It is a good, though painful fight. Unless you yield, you cannot but conquer. It is true, you will first conquer by little and little: for "more of his life and more you have, as the old Adam dies." But there is also an instantaneous conquest: In a moment sin shall be no more. You are gradually dying for a long time: but you will die in a moment.

thoughts will answer very valuable purposes; otherwise, if you saw all the weakneses and folly which attend me, in the same disagreeable light I see them myself, you would never think of me, without pity and commiseration.

I have had a very evident proof lately, that the Lord Jehovah reigneth, and doth what ever seemeth good in his sight: one would have thought that the doctrine which we preach would have met with a very cold reception in the place where I have been, and of consequence the Preacher of it the same, but, contrary to human probability quite the reverse has happened unto us both. The doctrine distilled as the dew, and sunk into many hearts; while many are enquiring *what shall we do to be saved?* some are saying, *what shall we do to be more abundantly holy?* Blessed enquiries! surely the Lord will save, viz. justify the penitents, and give more, yea, fill them with righteousness, who *hunger and thirst* for it.

My own soul has often been watered from the inexhaustible fountain: but along with these happy times of refreshment from the Lord's presence, I have had many severe trials, and assaults from the enemy of my own soul; but I believe that all his malice shall devolve upon himself, and only make me more cautious, and awaken in my heart a more implacable resentment, and lasting indignation to him, and all his wicked ways. Let me have an interest in your nearest approaches to your Redeemer, and I hope I shall not sin against God in forgetting to pray for you: while I remain, Your ever affectionate Brother

and inviolable Friend.



L E T T E R XXXVII.

My dear Friend,

June 23d, 1760.

I Was just ready to think you had slighted me in not answering mine, when your acceptable epistle came to hand, and happily prevented such a surmise.

It gives me great pleasure to hear from my friends, whom I love: but the accounts you gave of yourself, gave me more than ordinary satisfaction. When you can leave all unto the Lord's disposal, doing your duty, you are certainly safe and happy. Resignation to the will of God is a blessed grace. The sure way to hell, is to follow our own will; but the sure way to Heaven, is to follow the will of God in all things. Our dear Redeemer says unto all his followers, *learn of me for I am meek, and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.* But we cannot learn this excellent lesson without making his will our law at all times. We should labour daily to die more and more to sense, and all sensible objects and enjoyments, retiring more into ourselves into the centre of our souls, and there worship God who dwelleth in us, in spirit and truth. I know, my dear, you cannot have much outward solitude, and therefore you have more need of inward retirement, and recollection, that the hurry of business and company may not hinder your inward prayer, and mental worship of God. While your external senses are attentive unto, and employed about the affairs of your station; let your soul attend to an indwelling God, and always hear him
speak

ſpeak unto you. Then it will participate more and more of the divine nature, and feel the moſt ſenſible enjoyment of the divine preſence: And as this will be extremly delightful, ſo it will be morally perfecting above any thing elſe.

The laſt week but one, the Lord gave me opportunity to learn obedience by the things which I ſuffered; the laſt, he gave more health, and much of his loving, ſweet, and powerful preſence. Theſe are the two ways he hath of purifying ſouls to himſelf; by the fire of affliction, and inward burning, and by the fire of divine love. The latter is more pleaſant, but the former is more like the way in which he led his beloved Son: But it is not for us to chuſe, let the Lord lead us in which way he willeth.

My dear Friend, aim at all that height of holineſs which Chriſt hath purchaſed for, and promiſed to beſtow upon you. The dear Lord will bleſs you, if you uſe that grace you have already received. I hope to keep you company in the heavenly journey. I am reſolved through the grace of God that nothing ſhall hinder me. I long for all the fulneſs of God.

“ Oh! what is virtue, why had I,
 “ Who am low, a taſte ſo high ?

Sure that God which has inſpired this deſire, will alſo fulfil it, in my poor heart, and in my friend's. When you are favoured with free acceſs to the King of King's, think of, and ſpeak for him, who is unalterably,

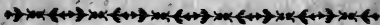
your faithful Friend, and humble Servant.

joy and there seems comparatively some distance between my beloved and my soul, then it spends itself in strong desire, and never ceaseth pleading, till I lean again on my Redeemer's breast.

I constantly desire to do and suffer something for my Lord; but alas! I am not able, without his help, to bear one cross, withstand one temptation, nor do one good work, so that he must give what he commands, and then I say "Command what thou wilt and it shall be done."

I imagine my friend to be growing in grace, and in the knowledge of God daily, I hope I have not thought amiss. Tell me, my dear*** *When saw you him whom my soul loveth? Do you go forth and grow up as a calf of the stall?* Is there more melody in your soul, from the sweet Turtle's voice that entertains your ears in the neighbouring groves, than from the inhabitants of the burgh? I conceive you answer, yes. But this is an unsatisfactory conjecture: put me out of suspense, as soon as you receive this, and be assured I am,

Your affectionate Brother, &c.



L E T T E R XXXIX.

My very dear Friend,

May 12, 1760.

I Received your kind, and Christian Letter from the hand of my good Friend***. It gave me joy to hear from you, and more especially so, in that it brought me intelligence of your spiritual prosperity, which answers my desires and prayers. As I have made mention of you in my supplications to God, so I shall now have more abundant occasion to thank him on your account.

As you observe it is an inseparable property of grace, always to excite our thirst for more. When our Lord said, "He that drinketh of the water which I shall give, shall thirst no more," He meant he shall not any more inordinately desire the perishable things of time and sense. But whosoever drinketh of that blessed life-giving water, shall ever say,

"Infatiate to the spring I fly,
I drink, and yet am ever dry :
Ah ! who against such charms is proof,
Ah ! who that loves, can love enough !"

Accordingly, they who have the largest and fullest communications of his divine goodness, and blessed presence, see, and feel most of their own littleness, helplessness, and unworthiness, and so do ever cry,

"I loath myself when God I see,
And into nothing fall ;
Content if thou exalted be,
And Christ is all in all."

I believe you have now learnt the happy art of devoting all you do to God, by a pure and single intention : and therefore continue in the service and worship of your Saviour, even when you are discharging the duties of your station, as when you are more immediately employed in devotional exercises. Yet nevertheless, get every moment you possibly can from your business to spend in private ; for this is for ingathering, the other for expending. Privacy is for exercising more immediately the graces of prayer, love and thankfulness, and enjoying the closest communion with the dear object

object of your affections; and the incumbrance of business, for employing faith, patience, watchfulness, self-denial, and resignation, which are as necessary in their place, and altogether as acceptable to God as the other. In both let this be your motto, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.*

Your not having at all times the same degree of joy, may be accounted for, from the alternate exercise of the graces above. It is doubtless more joyous to commune with God in secret than to be more immediately employed in watchfulness, and self-denial among a multitude. But it is an unspeakable blessing, and comfort, that in both circumstances, God stands in one relation unto you, even that sweet and endearing one of a father.

I thank God I am yet in the number of the living, whose names are written in Jerusalem, and my life is hid with Christ in God. I have had a tolerable state of health; how the report of my death was spread, I cannot tell: but had it been true, it would have been my unspeakable gain; and it will, (Oh! blessed prospect) be true e'er long! Lord hasten the desirable period! Mean time let us in patience possess our souls; and live by the day, the hour, yea the moment with God, not knowing what may be on the morrow: always standing prepared for that last and best scene of human life. When our spirits shall stand upon our quivering lips, ready to launch out into an untried eternity. May they publish as they fly, *the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.*

I am inviolably yours, &c.



L E T T E R XL.

My Dear,

Nov. 3, 1760.

I Received your kind and welcome letter, I give you hearty thanks for your love unto and care of me: I shall always think it my duty, and an addition to my happiness, if I shall so behave as to deserve the continuation of your favour. I think the least I can do, will be to give you love for love.

The design of our correspondence being improvement, in the divine life, what will be most to the use of edifying, will therefore be most agreeable to our intention, and I know it will be most pleasing to my friend. I have thought sometimes that nothing is more likely to obstruct or hinder our rising higher into the life and love of God, than too great activity of thought, or too liberal use of the imaginary powers. The enemy it may be has the greatest access unto us at this avenue, and has most command of this faculty. If the things are quite innocent about which we think, yet that silence may be disturbed in which the soul ought, with composed recollection, to wait for the manifestation of the love of God: unrestrained excursions of the imagination, keep the soul too much in action, unfit it for those divine impressions, which seldom come down but when the spirit is profoundly calm and silent. Seeing then there is so great loss in indulging our imagination, even on these innocent subjects, we shall find it very requisite often to cease from those thoughts which are only the images of external things and extend not to spiritual objects. This practice excludes not that thinking which is natural

ral to the soul, nor that general, constant sight, and apprehension which it has of God.

It is certainly of great use in the divine life to retire from the irregular workings of our fancy, into that silent awe that dares not move before the Almighty: this fits the soul for divine enlightenings, and spiritual embraces; for the more quiet we are, the less resistance we make to any supernatural impression; and the easier we perceive the beginnings of divine attraction, and so yield ourselves unto it. When the soul hath attained the power, frequently to throw itself into this silent state, (which power must be attained by habitual practice,) it will then come to clearer internal manifestations, and intellectual sights of the invisible world: many times receiving quickening glances from eternity, with those strong infusions of love, which often bring the soul into a rapture. The enjoyments of this state fully recompence the self-denial necessary in the attaining it.

Again, in this recollected and silent waiting on God, we come more fully to perceive the true ground of our union and oneness with all the children of our heavenly father; and the reason of our having more close and intimate communion with some, than others. The general ground of the union of saints, is that likeness which they have one to another, being all partakers of one, even a divine nature, and being cast all into one mould, by one spirit actuating them. The reason of special communion with some more than others, is, 1st. By being begotten unto the divine life by one instrument. Had we lived among the primitive christians, we should have seen something of this: those who were brought to the knowledge of God by St. Paul, had a peculiar endearment to him, and to one another; and so, no doubt, it was with

with those who were converted by Apollos, Cephas, and others. But even among these we shall find some, who are still more particularly endeared to each other. The reason of this is, 2dly, Their having an agreement in their natural dispositions. It is not improbable, that this was the reason of our Saviour's peculiar union with St. John. The whole bulk of believers are called the body of Christ; now as in the natural body, some bones are joined unto, and locked in one another in a peculiar manner; so in the mystical body of Christ, some of the living members are united, and their spirits locked, or mingled in one another, as they all are not. This flows from the superior harmony, and singular agreement of their nature and spirit. Grace does not destroy our natural dispositions, but rectifies them by that heavenly principle, which reduceth our spirits unto the highest perfection, by bringing them to their primary model and frame. The more also we arise above the animal life, into the divine, and the nearer we are both to God and one another; the fitter instruments we become to convey the pure streams of the heavenly life, with whom we are so united.

My subject having detained me so long, I have not time to say any thing respecting myself; but that I feel something of this happy union with you, and heartily desire to improve it. Believe that I love, think of, and pray for you. I hope I shall see you once again here, or else hereafter for ever.

I am unalterably your's, &c.

L E T T E R XLI.

My dear Brother,

Oct. 17th, 1760.

THE christian union and fellowship I have often found with you, does not depend upon local situation, but can subsist even when the subjects of it are remote from each other. Though I am now absent from you in person, I am intimately near you in spirit, rejoicing to think of your union with, and enjoyment of Christ Jesus. I hope my dear friend stands fast in that blessed liberty where-with Christ hath made him free, and is not in any measure entangled again with the yoke of bondage. O prize liberty! Often think, now you have grace, how miserable you was wont to be without it. Only desire one thing on earth, to make your calling and election sure. Be a man of one business, and intention. Let Christ be all in all unto you: let him be your bread to feed you, and your wine to cheer you: your sun to warm and enlighten you, and your shield to defend you: your rock to stand upon, and your hiding place from the wind: the source of your happiness, the centre of your spirit, and the object of your undivided affections. Let heaven be full in your eye, Christ in your heart, and the world, (where it should be) under your feet. Be a companion of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, in your contemplations; a friend to christians in your conversation, and an imitator of the lovely Jesus in all your tempers. Be covetous of grace, ambitious of glory, and voluptuous in spiritual enjoyments. Be timorous of yourself, fearless of men and

and devils, and undaunted in faith. Be little in your own eyes, high in the favour of the saints, and great in the esteem of God. Be so great an enthusiast as to prize an infelt Christ, and so weak and silly as to seek all your happiness in God: though in your own esteem environed with involuntary infirmities, yet in the eyes of your spectators unproveable. Such as none but devils and wicked men can hate, as none but envious and malicious creatures can malign, and as God, angels, and good men will never fail to love. Be an incarnate angel, a living instructor, and a friend of God. In a word, be a pilgrim on earth, a free man of the new Jerusalem, and a candidate for the highest glory in heaven.

You may easily perceive that I have a singular respect for you, in that I would have you singularly good: and that I may contribute all I can toward it, I intend through the grace of God, to help you by my prayers, and animate you by my example. God forbid that I should recommend any thing to you, which I do not purpose to practice myself. The dear Lord Jesus help me to love his name, and people, and service, abundantly more than I ever did. Ruth's behaviour to Naomi her mother, shall be my conduct to Christ Jesus, I say unto him, "I will not leave thee, nor return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Though death might part Ruth and her mother for a time, yet even that shall, (I steadfastly believe) be a means of bringing me more immediately into the presence and enjoyment of him whom my soul loveth. The Lord make his face to shine continually upon the head, and heart, of my dear, dear friend; and give him
peace

peace in this life, and everlasting joy in that which is to come.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R XLII.

My very dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you from God even our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I have often thought of you since I saw you, and have also made mention of you in my prayers to God. I believe the Lord Jesus will abundantly bless you, if you ask enough, and waver not. You have exceeding great reason to thank God for what he hath already done, and as great encouragement to expect more. What a blessing it is, you were not lost among the riches of the earth, but are saved among the tents of Judah. What shall I say to induce my dear friend to be thankful? Ponder the loving kindnesses, and tender mercies of God in your heart. Think, O! think, what scenes of mercies have, interspersed shall I say? Nay: have filled, in one uninterrupted succession, your whole life! Let your heart, your lips, your hands move only to his praise. Think meanly of yourself, and that every thing God does for you, is infinitely more than you deserve. When you do good, and the subjects of your beneficence are unthankful, or even make ungrateful, or unkind returns, commend the deed, and them unto God, who judgeth righteously, and who will not be unfaithful to forget your labour of love. Pray to Jesus to discover all the subtle, and secret workings of pride, self-will,

and unbelief, that may yet remain in your soul. Let not the least uncharitableness have any place in your heart; no not even toward your worst enemies. Be much in the exercise of love to God, and all men; and in resignation to the will of God. If men speak evil of you, you are never the worse; or if they commend you, you are never the better. We are no more, or less, than we are before God, always consider yourself standing before him, as a stone before the carver, entreating him to make of you his holy image.

Beware of the world. Be suspicious that it is intending to do you mischief, in one respect or other, if it possibly can: and therefore stand prepared, and fortified against it, as you would against a formidable enemy.

I thank God I have had sometimes pain, and sometimes ease, since I left ***. I am in the arms of Christ: He putteth his right hand beneath me, and his left hand embraceth me. I love him, and will not go from him.

I cry, "Tis hell from thee to part;
" Press me closer to thy heart."

I shall be glad to see you again. Oh! that we may meet improved in grace. The good will of him, who dwelt in the bush, and who accompanied the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, preserve and bless you for ever.

I am, &c.

its end in worldly consequences: The motives unto it could be no higher than the low things appertaining to the present time, such as beauty, gain, or pleasure; and it would of consequence ebb and flow, as they had, or had not, a good aspect upon it. Whereas the friendship of true believers is founded on the infinite love of God, fixed upon an immoveable basis, the similitude of their souls; and conducted by inviolable integrity, to the end of mutual edification. It is not bound by time, nor subject to decay: firm, and lasting as its foundation, the love of God. It is kindled in holy souls by the breath of God, and preserved in life and vigour by the same, and so of the most noble, and excellent nature. A celestial plant growing on earth. The soil is indeed too barren, and the climate too cold, for its arriving at full maturity; but e'er long it will have its entire consummation, and perfect completion, in the heavenly soil, in the blaze of the Sun of Righteousness, and in the climate of immortality. It is not dependant on the caprice and uncertainty of outward circumstances, and a local situation. There are now many high mountains, broad rivers, and extended plains between us, but they are unable to stop the flight of our spirits, or prevent their mingling with each other. Oh! that our souls may cleave more closely to the dear Lord Jesus, and in him to one another.

If I might be permitted to suggest any thing by way of advice, I would say, read the best books, keep the best company, and hear the best preachers you possibly can. Secure God for your Father, his children for your companions, and heaven for your portion. Let your heart be full of Christ, your conversation seasoned with grace, and your eye stedfastly fixed on eternal glory. Let this world

with his creatures; to reject every thing as enthusiasm, cant, or delusion, merely for having some extraordinary and uncommon circumstances attending it. You know well that the divine Being hath his ways in the whirlwind, and his footsteps in the great deep, where we cannot trace them, and is as unconfined in his beneficence and grace, as in his might and power. If therefore what I am going to relate, bears the essential marks of his grace and goodness, and is consonant to his promises, we need not fear an unpardonable provocation in ascribing it unto him; but on the other hand, we may justly fear the worst of crimes, and the greatest of punishments will be the consequence of our slighting, or especially ascribing unto another cause, what is so worthy of God.

About the middle of last month, a few honest people in a neighbouring town met together, as they had often done before, upon a religious occasion, to improve their acquaintance with their Redeemer, and (using all diligence) *to make their calling and election sure.* God who always countenances every well designed undertaking, and never fails to meet with his people in the way of his mercy, when they are found in the way of their duty, was present in a very remarkable manner, where these two or three were assembled together. They began their blessed exercise with singing an hymn, and in joining their fervent petitions, and offering them to the throne of grace, which is always easy of access to every faithful approacher. After deep recollection, complaints of the depravity of their nature, and their deep revolt from God, with intermingled thankfulness for their free justification through faith in Christ, broke the solemn silence. Convincing light from heaven shone upon their minds, and discovered at
once,

once, both the present defects and impurities of their hearts, and the necessity of their being *cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit*, and of their *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. Though an astonishing sight of indwelling sin, made them tremble, yet moved by an internal principle of grace, and the sacred influence of the Holy Ghost; and encouraged by the great and precious promises of God; through the mouth of one, they poured the full stream of their desires, in the attentive ear of their compassionate Redeemer.

And he who hath said, *ask and ye shall receive*, was present, and faithful to fulfil his promise. Upon the occurrence of these words in prayer, "Thou God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, hear for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ," one said, (unable to confine the joy he felt, in his own breast) "Blessed be the Lord God for ever, and ever more, for he hath cleansed my heart! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name!" More like an inhabitant of heaven, than earth, he cried "Glory, Glory! Glory! be to God, he hath *cleansed me from all unrighteousness!*"

Another, being in agony of prayer, spoke to this purpose. "I hold thee with a trembling hand, but will not let thee go: I see by an eye of faith, my Saviour turn to his Father, to his God, and my God! Now he turns his face to me!" &c. And in a little time he burst out in the same ecstasy of joy and praise, as the former, saying; "Blessed be the Lord for evermore, he hath cleansed my heart!" Repeating the same many times over.

A third was heard to say, "To my own apprehension, I am hanging over the pit of hell by a slender thread;" while another cried with a loud

loud and dismal cry: "I am in hell! I am in hell!
"Save me! Save me, or I perish."

A fifth was quite differently affected, and with a voice full of melody, a countenance full of joy, and a heart full of happiness, cried "Glory be to
"God for evermore, for he hath pardoned all
"my sins!"

This continued for the space of two hours, some praising, extolling and magnifying God, in more exalted devotion than is common to the present state of things: others praying to their Creator and Saviour with unusual earnestness and fervour. Some in the simplicity and warmth of their hearts said, as is natural for persons in such circumstances, "O that my husband, O that my children had been here to night! Others, O that my wife, O that my friends, O that all the town had been here to night!" This was a time indeed of refreshing from the presence of the Lord: (To compare little things with great) A second Pentecost.

If all the world our Saviour knew,
Sure all the world would love and praise him too!

The night following, the same persons assembled together again, and the power of the Lord was present to heal the wounded, to comfort the disconsolate, and to deliver those which were bound. As the God of all grace, whose mercies are new every morning, and repeated every evening, had greatly purified and enlarged the hearts of three the proceeding night, so he did the same for three more this night, and unto one he gave the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of his sins. Lord how wonderful are thy blessings, how stupendous are thy works! Here we may say with as great propriety and with far greater wonder, than when we view the works of the creation:

"These

“ These are thy works parent of good :” You may easily perceive that notwithstanding my natural prejudice, (unto which you are not a stranger) against every thing which has the appearance of disorder, or is in the least irrational; this has *baffled my carnal wisdom*, and fully gained the approbation of my faithless mind. It would do my dear friend good to see what a surprising change there is in the tempers and conversation of these highly favoured people. You cannot converse with them, but (if invincible prejudice prevents it not) you feel all your spirit exhilarated and your soul glowing with heavenly ardor, every grace quickened and all your powers strongly gravitating to the God of your salvation. The humility and meekness, the seriousness and gravity, the love and gentleness, which you discover in their artless behaviour, come with greater energy, and much better recommended to your conquered heart, than all that the most able orators can say from the pulpit, upon these graces. You are constrained to acknowledge *that God is with them of a truth.*

I have already transgressed the usual limits of a letter, and trespassed upon my friend’s patience, but I yet beg his indulgence, while I offer my hearty petitions to almighty God, in behalf of my friend and myself, for these divine favours.

“ O! thou author of being, and of all blessed-
 “ nefs! Thou inexhaustible treasure of goodness!
 “ Who didst create man in thine own blessed
 “ image, and likeness, and has given us indubita-
 “ ble proofs of thy willingness, yea desire that we
 “ should be recovered unto our unfinning state; and
 “ who, for the same, hast made the most ample pro-
 “ vision, in thy well beloved Son Jesus Christ;
 “ look upon thy helpless servants, and for the
 “ sake of him in whom thou declarest thyself well
 “ pleased, fulfil in us all that which thy own self
 intendest,

God over all, blessed for evermore. My freed and enlarged heart, enjoyed his sweet, and precious peace. This state I have been in ever since, my happiness increasing daily more and more. Blessed be my adorable Redeemer, I have nothing to complain of; all is glory, happiness, and heaven! I have neither fear, nor care but how I may live unblameably in the presence of my Beloved. Now I every moment find, not only union, but communion also, with the Father, and the Son, through the Holy Spirit. I am so elevated that I forget to eat my necessary food: Even now while I am writing, my soul is expanded to grasp the infinite. O if we were now together, how should we extol, adore, and praise our ever living, and ever loving Jesus! But alas! how barren is human language, let silence speak his praise.

How my dear Lord will deal with me, or dispose of me for the future, I know not, but I say,

“ Jesus, I come thy will to do,
 “ I come thy will to suffer too.”

But for this I have need of all the light and strength, and wisdom God will give me. O help me, help me all you can: Do not withhold from me any advice which you believe will be useful to me. I find retirement, solitude, and stillness to be very helpful, and now, (I thank God) I have better opportunity for the same than usual.

But while I speak of the goodness of God, how shall I describe my own helplessness, ignorance, weakness, and infirmity! I cannot describe it, but you can tell a little, by what you feel in yourself. I am lost in thought! how can it be, that such infinite wisdom, goodness, love, mercy, and power, can join themselves, to such vileness and poverty!

Yet God is my strength: he enables me to go on day by day; living upon him, and looking up unto him. I have been tried since I came here, by God, men, and devils; through all I cry, *Thy will be done.* O my dear friend, it is well there is a day coming, that will make amends for all. While we look to the captain of our salvation, we need not fear what men can do, or say unto us. Pray for me, I have need thereof, having a weak body and soul; but my sure trust is in the God of strength, and power. Give my love to all friends, accept the same yourself,

From your affectionate Sister, &c.



L E T T E R XLVII.

My Dear,

March 28th, 1760.

I Expected to hear from you much sooner than I did, however your letter was welcome when it came: you have greatly the advantage of me, you always know where I am, but I do not know where you are; yet nothing can part us but sin, and surely that shall never do it. Since I heard last from you, I have been very ill in body, and much tempted and grieved in spirit. I often look with longing eyes to my FATHER'S house, and groan to be cloathed upon with my house from heaven: Yet I can always say, My dear Father, *Thy will be done.* I find I am more an inhabitant of heaven than earth; few understand me, or are willing so to do; however I am determined to stand or fall with Jesus, and not with the multitude. He is the life of my life, and the soul of my soul; I find such a friend in him, as my tongue cannot express.

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O my dear friend, I bear the burden of the Lord; I am pained to see so few willing to be conformed to Jesus. One is of Paul, another of Apollos, and another of Cephas, but who of Christ? how many make their religion to consist in outward things? how true is that parable of the sower! only one sort of ground brought forth fruit, though four received the seed of the kingdom. These things, with many more, are the causes of my trouble daily. But what shall I do? labour to live to God (in a wicked world) in heart, and in all my conversation, and be ready to hear that welcome word, *arise, my love, and come away*. My soul at present, rests in God, and daily labours to be approved of him: in all I do, I look to him alone, I live on him alone, and I live to him alone, and so am happy in him alone. This is the present state of my mind. Jesus loves me, he tries, and proves me, and leads me a way I know not: but it is enough that I remain in the Lord's hands, as clay in the hands of the Potter. As to the sight I have of myself, words cannot express: how weak, how feeble, how poor, how helpless, how ignorant! I seem to be: sometimes I think I do not know what I am good for! O love and mercy! O free grace! O infinite compassion! what shall I say! it is God; it is Jesus; it is the friend of sinners!

My dear love, labour, suffer, die and conquer! soldier of Christ, go on, and win the well-fought field. Keep your garments white and clean, fit for eternity. I pray God that this may be the lot of my dear correspondent, and your hearty friend, who inviolably loves you.



L E T T E R X L V I I I .

My dear Friend,

Jan. 12th, 1761.

THOUGH we are absent in body, yet I trust we are present in spirit; and may the Lord Jesus give us more abundantly that mark of our being his little children, viz. our love one to another. God is love. When we are like our divine master, we shall be eminently loving also. Love indeed alone, I see, can conquer this rebellious heart. O that I could truly say, "I yield, I yield at last, o'erwhelmed by love, and fall, and own thee conqueror!" you bid me write freely; I will endeavour so to do. Indeed when I am writing it seems always, as if I was talking to my own heart, and restraint is intirely banished; but when I am in company with God's dear children, I find myself greatly unable to open my mouth, and so oftimes I refuse,

" His righteousness to impart,

" By hiding it within my heart."

I find there is no other way of going on unto perfection than by laying aside every weight, and especially the sin which most easily besets us, and steadily looking unto Jesus. He who is the captain of my salvation, does go before me, and would, (I know) quickly destroy all his, and my foes, if I did but follow him fully: but, alas! how often does Satan either divert, or drive me from Jesus. The croud of my enemies are mightier than I, my courage fails, and I lose sight of my great high priest: Yet I have good reason to say, there is

mercy in Christ for every returning sinner. Though my heart is prone to wander from, and to leave the God I love, yet no sooner do I return towards him, than I find my Lord willing to receive me. I have been this last week past, much beset with wandering imaginations, and this, and the other was represented unto my mind: When I was faithful, and resolutely turned from the representations, the temptations wrought together for my good; but if any wise I gave way unto them they brought hurt and condemnation to my poor soul. I find it very hard to give up my whole heart to God, and it seems to me that if God was to command me to give it to any creature in the universe, it would not be half so hard as to give it to him, who is altogether worthy of it, yea and altogether lovely. What a proof is this of the depravity of our nature, and total apostacy from our original rectitude, that we should be so prone to forsake him who is the fountain of light, life, and love, and hew out unto ourselves broken cisterns which can hold no water! In Jesus there is a fountain of living waters, ever full and ever flowing; there we may drink, and yet no fear of its being exhausted. O! the riches of Jesus's love! may I, and you be wholly taken up therewith.

I find at times, that my eye is evil, because God is good. O! how deeply am I fallen from all that is good. Lord give me to feel it yet more abundantly, that I may cry more earnestly to thee who art the giver of every good, and perfect gift; then wilt thou assuredly supply my wants. Thy promises are made unto those who believe, and pray; O that thou wouldst seal them all to my poor soul.

I design to set apart some part of the Saturday, every week, for close examination of myself, that
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by the light of God's spirit I may discover what faults I have been guilty of, or what progress I have made in grace the proceeding week.

Though we may never meet more on earth, yet shall we, (I trust) join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, which shall never have an end, but employ a whole eternity. O blessed expectation of living for ever to praise Immanuel's dying love! Pray remember me at the throne of grace, reprove freely whatever you see, or fear amiss in me: probe the wound to the bottom; that any evil which lies concealed may be brought to light, that so I may come to the good Physician to be healed. O may you sink deeper, and deeper into God, till you be wholly lost in his fullness.

“Till he more of heaven bestow,

“And let the vessel break

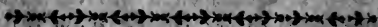
“Let your ransom'd spirit go,

“To grasp the God you seek.”

So prays your affectionate Sister,
and humble Servant.

Tuesday

P. S. Mr. P.—was this morning struck with a palsy, which prevented our friend meeting with us: M. M. supplied the place: GOD gave me to see myself very proud, and foolish; and that instead of falling at the feet of all, I wanted them to be at mine. O the preciousness of that blood which can blot out sins of so deep a dye! But I want to be made inwardly clean: nothing I find but a new heart will do. I can truly say I loath myself, but this does not bring humility into my heart; nothing but JESU'S love can do that. Pray much for me, and the good LORD grant I may be earnest for myself. Adieu.



L E T T E R XLIX.

My dear Friend,

Jan. 20th, 1761.

I Heartily thank you for writing so soon: I trust to follow your advice. Sure my compassionate JESUS will not suffer me to stop short of the mark, for the prize of our high calling, but his powerful arm will support, and help me, I trust to go toward perfection. I feel more and more I can do nothing, and that all my strength consists in hanging on JESUS. I feel often my own will as a mountain which seems to stand between my soul and GOD; but I know, if my spiritual Zerubbabel shall appear, it shall, before him, become a plain. I find power to carry my diseased soul to JESUS, for him to heal it, and I believe he will perfect his strength in my weakness: I feel such a testimony of the faithfulness of GOD, that I cannot help believing he will seal all his promises to my soul. I see the word of GOD so firm and steadfast, that it seems indeed I have sure ground to build upon. How can I have surer, since JESUS has sworn to destroy, and drive out all my foes before his face?

“ My captain leads me forth

“ To conquest and a crown.”

I find I come far short of being what I ought to be; and yet indeed I stand astonished at GOD's mercy to one who is so prone to leave him as I am! Whensoever I return unto him, I find him willing to receive me; when I fall at the feet of his mercy, I find free boundless compassion for ever roll in his adorable breast. He is the friend of sinners,

ners, and blessed be his dear name, he is my friend.

I had a very great blessing on Saturday at Brother G—s. In the morning while at prayers, I felt such a witness that I should stand on Sion's Hill, and behold the fair beauty of the Lamb that died for all, as made me amazed! O what a blessing is it, that there is an eternity, wherein to enjoy GOD, and ascribe praises unto him! Lord tune, and prepare my heart now on earth, that I may be more fit to join the blessed quires above. Take away every jarring string, then shall all be harmony and love.

I have just now joined a few moments in prayer with my sister, and both our souls were greatly refreshed: Our Jesus was with us indeed, and his power rested on our hearts. She seems to be rather better, though still in pain and feverish.

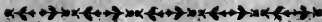
M—— has great confidence that God will give her a new and sanctified heart: she found on Saturday, while at prayer with Mrs. *** a surprising change in her whole soul, attended with an uncommon degree of happiness; and on Sunday at public worship, these words were spoken to her heart with great power, *my will shall be thy will, and thy will shall be my will.* Afterwards she found power to give herself wholly unto her Maker, to be disposed of as he pleased: all her idols were taken away from her, and all those things which entangled her soul, are beneath her feet: she is brought into a submissive patient waiting for all the blessings her Saviour has to bestow upon her. Blessed state! amazing goodness! and all these blessings flow from the cross of Christ: 'tis his dear, and precious blood which purchases all things for us.

On Sunday Mr.*** preached from Gal. vi. 14, 15, 16. From which he took occasion to shew us, that by what CHRIST did upon the cross, he not only paid our debt, and made satisfaction for our sins; but also procured that power, which when communicated unto us, from him, enables us to bear all the calamities, crosses, pains, and sufferings incident unto us in this vale of tears; and to crucify and destroy every lust, motion, and sinful desire of the flesh. He also observed that all our temporal enjoyments were purchased thereby, which observation has since greatly endeared to me the necessaries and conveniences of life which I enjoy. This I think is the purchase of my Saviour's BLOOD, the blood of him who is GOD, the blood of him who is the object of my love. O that I might feel this precious blood, which has procured my food, and raiment, and every other blessing of life, always sprinkled upon my heart. I find much want of simplicity of spirit, for tho' I can rejoice with those who do rejoice, yet I cannot, (as I desire) mourn with those who mourn. I feel pity, and love to them, yet I have not that deep sense of their sufferings, which I apprehend I ought to have. O that this self love was turned into the love of God, then would it flow more freely to my fellow creatures. O that I might cease from all self seeking, and seek only to know Jesus Christ, and him crucified. May he bind my spirit to his cross, and subdue my will, and make it subject to his own and unite my soul unto himself. I bless God, I see his hand more abundantly in all things, and therefore in some measure can in all things resign myself unto him. I know by that little, little taste I have had, what a rest there must be, when there is a constant freedom from inordinate care, evil desire,

desire, and every other sin: when all is solid joy, firm peace, and stedfast rejoicing in hope of that day when faith shall be swallowed up of sight, and death in immortality. Glory be to God that you, my happy sister, enjoy this perfect liberty; but do you go on also toward your full consummation of bliss! there is still much behind! reach forth unto the whole mind which is in Christ; till you have grown up into him your living head in all things.

I give God thanks, that he does make the barren wilderness, a garden of Eden unto you. Behold the holy Jesus! see he holds out for you the crown of righteousness, which e'er long your Lord will give you the full possession of! O that we may both meet in those realms of bliss! this is the unfeigned prayer of

Your affectionate Sister, in Christ.



L E T T E R L.

My Dear Sister,

IRRETURN you hearty thanks for yours: and it is matter of praise that our dear Jesus made you useful unto any one soul, and that his gospel is likely to take place in that barren town.

I bless the Lord for carrying on his work in my soul. On Thursday the fifth instant, the Lord did manifest himself unto me in such a manner as I never experienced before: it appeared to me as if I had been taken up into heaven, and the spirit peculiarly opened the scriptures unto me. My heart was abundantly filled with peace, and love and praise. These words were powerfully imprest upon my mind; "I will water thee every moment,
and

and keep thee night and day." And indeed from that time my soul has been as a watered garden: the Lord has broke down the wall of partition which stood between my soul and him; all that day I could truly say there was nothing stood between God and my believing heart, for I saw the LORD, as it had been face to face. Ever since I find that the LORD has subdued all things in me, unto himself. O that he may destroy all that is, or ever would be capable of offending him, and I trust he will. I find CHRIST exceeding precious to my soul. In every action I can say, I do this unto the LORD: evil has not any power to hurt me, it would, but grace is superior, and JESUS is love.

I find much happiness at this time, and a willingness, that GOD should bless every soul before me, if it seemeth good in his sight. Not that I can be in the least contented without any of the blessings he hath to give: all my cry is, let the LORD be glorified, and my JESUS exalted, and I ask no more. In a low degree I can say, thy will be done. And I do steadfastly believe it will not be long before he will bring my soul into the perfect liberty of his children. Bear me on your heart, up to my dear Redeemer's throne. GOD has answered every prayer, but that for purity of heart, and he will surely answer that, LORD I do believe, help my unbelief.

Glory be to GOD only, for it is he who hath trod the wine-press alone, it is the LORD of hosts, the great JEHOVAH, the Almighty GOD, the Prince of Peace, that alone can do this thing. LORD, thy arm alone can bring salvation! O let the angel of the covenant descend, and roll away the stone of unbelief, and let me behold a rising GOD in my heart; that when the sin of Israel, and

of Judah is sought for, it may not be found. LORD say amen to my hearty prayer. Help me SAVIOUR, speak the word, and perfect me in love.

My dear friend, go forward, I bless GOD for what you are, and what you do. Love JESUS yet more abundantly, for *he is altogether lovely*. See he offers you a whole eternity of love. He has made you *a royal diadem, a crown of glory in his hand*. He has numbered you among the happy few, who have washed and made their garments white in the blood of the lamb, and who shall walk with him in white, being worthy. You have thus far overcome, hold on a little longer, and you will sit down with our dear REDEEMER on his exalted, and blissful throne! the LORD give you all the mind which is in himself, and purify you, even as he is pure.

I am your inviolable Friend,
and humble Servant.



LETTER LI.

My dear Friend, Feb. 20th, 1761.

ON Tuesday last we had a happy meeting, the power of the LORD was most amazingly present: he did indeed sit on my soul, *as a refiner's fire, and was unto me as fullers soap*. I was assured he was destroying the man of sin.

On Wednesday I wept tears of love and joy, most of the day: and in the evening I seemed stript of all self-sufficiency, and self-will; and felt such propensities in my soul to cling to CHRIST, that I could compare myself unto nothing, more fitly, than a drowning man, who catches at every twig in his reach.

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On Thursday morning as a few of us were at prayer, I felt my soul emptied of whatever defiled and burdened it, and a change passed upon all its powers, then I rejoiced greatly in the LORD, but I could not say I had a clean heart. Yet I believe I shall never more feel those evil tempers in my soul, which in times past have had a being in it. Since then at times it has seemed to me, as if I had been surrounded with the powers of darkness, yet though, in this sense, in floods of temptation, I find power to trust God, and cast myself upon him. I have had at some times more happiness and meltings of heart from infusions of love, than I have had these few days; but I think these have been abated by the pain, I felt from the surrounding temptations I just mentioned. I have surely tasted of my Lord's cup. It seems, as if my Saviour has given me an estate, but has not yet put me in full possession of it. I cannot think my soul has yet entered into the fullest rest which *remains for the children of God on earth. I cannot yet rejoice ever more, pray without ceasing and in every thing give thanks.* Yet I do say, *thy will, O Lord, be done.* I cast my soul on Jesus, and though I have sometimes questioned myself, whether I was not angry, or proud, yet upon the most solemn approaches unto the throne of grace, and the most unfeigned desires offered up to God, to shew me how it was, I cannot find, that in these instances he doth condemn me, though the devil doth.

Saturday Evening.

Glory! Glory! Glory! be to my God, I can now say the Lord has established my soul in his grace and favour more abundantly than ever! While I was conversing with one of my friends upon the deep things of God, and excellent privileges of the gospel, I was strengthened to believe

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the great and precious promises, and felt the virtue of them, or had them accomplished in my soul.

In our little meeting, one asked me if God had fulfilled, that blessed promise unto me, EZEK. xxxvi. 26. *A new heart will I give you.* I durst not, could not say but he had. While we were at prayer I was still farther convinced of the truth thereof. I could appeal unto my dear Redeemer: *Thou hast cleansed my heart!* That blessed promise was powerfully and sweetly applied to my joyous soul. *Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* And ever since I have been enabled to rejoice greatly. O blessed Jesus, he is a precious Saviour! *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindneses, and tender mercies: who forgiveth all thine iniquities and healeth all thy diseases.* The good Lord is also greatly pouring his spirit upon many of your friends and mine. They are on the full stretch to eternal life. O what glorious gospel days do we live in! May our lives be spent in praise and obedience, may our latter end be full of peace and triumph, and our eternity blissful. So prays

Your affectionate, but unworthy Sister in Christ.



L E T T E R LII.

My dear Friend, Feb. 28th, 1761.

I Have nothing to tell you, but more and more of the goodness of God! amazed I stand! O wondrous love! my soul lies humbled in the dust! I can truly say I think myself the meanest of all; but

but Jesus has, (in me) destroyed the works of the devil, and brought in everlasting righteousness, and the effects thereof are quietness, and assurance for ever.

At our meeting to day the mighty power of God overwhelmed us! Sister K. sunk down in her chair and then fell to the ground, crying, " Lord this day seal me thine abode for ever! Destroy my enemies for they are thine also. O come Lord Jesus! surely thou wilt come, and wilt not tarry. We then kneeled down to prayer; she continued still to call on God with all her might for some time, till the Lord heard and answered. She then said " praise God for me, he hath sealed me " to the day of redemption! The Saviour has " made me, *all glorious within, my name is written in the Lamb's book of life, and his name is written on my forehead!* I am the bride, the *Lamb's wife!* O my Christ! Lord! I the vilest of " all, but thou hast blotted out all my sins! O " thy great power! I never did any thing but sin " against thee till now, but I shall do thy will, I " shall now glorify thee in all things! Lord! save " all my friends, ! Lord save all the world!

My soul was truly affected with this, and sunk down into deep humility before God. I said, Lord, how hast thou raised up unto thyself, children even of these stones! O that I should be a witness of thy love! indeed my soul stands amazed! four in one house, who know Jesus, and the full power of his resurrection! O that we may adorn the gospel in all things, and be fully like our master, in meekness, and lowliness of heart. I see at a distance, there is such a height and depth in his love, unto which I have not attained, that it makes me long to improve in every circumstance, and thirst for more of that mind which is

in Christ: even for perfect holiness as much as ever I did for freedom from evil tempers.

I frequently feel a painful sympathy with those souls which are awakened, but not joined unto Christ by one spirit. And such a love to all the members of his mystical body, that I think I could willingly lay down my life for their sakes to bring one of them to the knowledge of Jesus. My soul is perfectly resigned unto the will of God, though I feel the strongest desire to depart, and to be with him, whom my soul loveth. I see by faith a crown of glory held forth unto me, and the Lord bid me fight for it, and assures me of a conquest over all that shall oppose me. I am like a new born babe hanging every moment on him in whom my great strength lieth. Satan is continually tempting me, but I see clearly when he approacheth to bring the temptation, the door of my heart is shut, and the enemy cannot enter in. I also discover, as the soul grows in grace, it gets farther out of the enemy's reach. My foot is set on Satan's neck, and salvation is appointed for walls and bulwarks. O that I may ever stand on an high hill, and have (as you express it) my enemies, as crawling insects at the bottom thereof. I desire to follow your advice and learn of all who are taught of God, and are simple of heart. When any doubt arises in my mind, whether such a thought or word, or action, was sinful; for a speedy, and sure solution of this, I turn from all things, unto God, and desire him to shine upon my understanding, and conscience, and convince me truly of what quality my actions are, and what spirit I am of; and he has always graciously answered to the great satisfaction of my soul.

On Saturday at morning preaching, I was telling the Lord that there was nothing but what I

would willingly give up for him; I had a strong impression that so it was, for, the spirit suggested, "thou hast given me all, for thou hast given me thy whole heart." It was also applied to my mind in the morning, *arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* Lord! what am I! I am nothing; but thou art all in all.

I am very glad, that God gives you to drink into his loving spirit, and that you rise higher, and higher into his life and likeness. O my dear, he has abundantly more to bestow! let us join in blessing and praising our dear Jesus, and meet at some hour in the day, at the throne of grace. Glory be to God, we shall meet, e'er long at his right hand, and see his lovely face, without a dimming veil; we shall join that enraptured number, *which came out of great tribulations, and washed and made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.* We shall cast our crowns before his feet, and ascribe, salvation, glory, honour, and praise to God, and the Lamb for ever! Precious Saviour! O how rich, that grace which is so freely bestowed; how amazing that love, which induced him to leave the bosom of his father, and empty himself of his glory, yea, and suffer death, even the death of the cross, that we, vile creatures, might be brought into the favour, and restored unto the image of God! O that we may both love him more abundantly, until we rise to all the glorious height of humble love. And what will be the end? O rapturous prospect! *corruption, will put on incorruption, and this mortal, will put on immortality,* and prayer shall be swallowed up of praise! then will all be unfading, never ending bliss: sorrow and sighing shall flee, and trials, and temptations be no more! the dear Lord Jesus be
near

Thirdly, I desire to fast, or use abstinence, as my bodily health and constitution will admit.

Fourthly, I desire to communicate at all proper seasons, but earnestly long for sanctified altars, holy ministers, and living communicants: Lord how long?

Fifthly, I desire to do good unto all men, friends and enemies, according to my little ability as the word of truth directs; and lay out my strength in his service at home and abroad, in the way and manner he shall point out, according to his unerring providence.

Sixthly, I desire to hew Agag in pieces; to put away every Dalilah, and to sacrifice every Isaac: If required, to pluck out every right eye, to cut off every right hand, to spare none, though ever so near and dear unto the old man: and I hope all this without partiality. In a word, I desire to put on the whole divine panoply, whereby I shall overcome all the infernal powers of hell and death: and after I have done all this, I desire to look over, and through all shadows, unto the eternal Saviour, who died on mount Calvary, with all the faith he has given me, *till I be rooted, and grounded in love, and able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; that I may be filled with all the fullness of God.* What can a worm do more to gain the prize? If my friend will take notice of any means I have omitted, or shew me better than I have mentioned, I will comply with his directions. I want to save my soul, and that God's own way. I have already seen his wonders in the land of Egypt, in the red sea, and in the barren wilderness; and shall I not see his glory

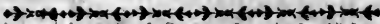
who are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night.

I have found a daily cross since I came unto this place, from a quarter I least expected it, but it has been a greater blessing to me, than I can conceive the want of it could have been: so that I have had true rest, and more of the loving powerful presence of God, than for some time before. O let us praise the Lord with every breath!

I doubt not but my dear friend has had much communion with Jesus, since we parted. Is he not fairer than all the children of men? Yes: *he is altogether lovely!*

My desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may sink deeper into him, and still be less in your own esteem: and be filled with the truest tenderness and long-suffering to all the children of God, yea all the children of men. Our meeting again, I hope will be to our advantage; till then may the God of peace be with you.

I am your affectionate, &c.



LETTER XLV.

My dear Friend, May 2, 1760.

I Heartily thank you for your profitable letter, it has been of singular use, and great comfort to my soul. I see the more I have of the presence of God, and the more I desire to have: the more I see of his goodness, and less I think of my own, which humbles me to the dust before him, while I am lost in wonder, filled with love, and tears of joy. If business calls me in the midst of this sweet and blessed communion with my dear Saviour, which is often
the

the case, I leave you to judge how disagreeable company is at such a time, yet even then I feel my will entirely resigned to that which is my duty; I cast all my care on him, who careth for me, and I find him all-sufficient, a present help in time of need.

I have not always the same degree of joy, for at sometimes I feel all my soul carried unto, and centered in God, that I am wrapt up in his embrace; but at other times I hang a dependant creature upon him, and say in myself, it is a thousand times more than I deserve, that I can now call God my father and my love.

When news came that you was dead, I thought what can I want for him which he now hath not, or for myself, but that I may be like him. I could not indeed think it a crime to drop an indebted tear for one God had made so useful to my soul.

But blessed be God you are spared a little longer: and ask the unworthiest of human creatures: "tell me, when saw you him whom my soul loveth." He is present with me, my dear friend, whom your soul loveth: I should think myself the most miserable wretch living, even in the midst of the greatest confluence of worldly blessings, if he was absent for one hour.

His voice "O 'tis hell from thee to part, Press me closer to thy heart!"

And I thank the God of my life and salvation, I can answer to your other enquiry with satisfaction, "Do you grow in grace?" I believe I do. But O Lord, give me, give me to grow more abundantly like unto thy blessed self.

Pray for me, and if I may not see you, write to me as often and as plain as you can. God bless you, farewell.

I am, &c.

L E T

L E T T E R LVI.

My dear Brother, Feb. 9, 1760.

WHOM, for Christ's sake, I love, and esteem, wishing grace, mercy and peace, may attend you all your days. I have often thought of you since I had the happiness to see you; and I hope you have not forgot poor me, who am less than the least of all saints. You knew when I was with you, my weakness, and the many trials I laboured under. 'Tis true, I have changed my place, but I have not changed my company. I still carry my wicked heart about with me; which I find to be deceitful above expression, and desperately wicked beyond comparison: the devil, and it, are causing me continual trouble: I groan, being burdened. Oh! that Jesus would soon end this war within. Never did chafed hart pant more eagerly for the cooling stream, than my weary soul for the perfect liberty of the children of God. Hope deferred, makes the heart sick. Oh! what a happy moment would that be, when I should be able to say, I live no longer, but Christ liveth in me, the sole monarch of my pure, and simple heart! as for all other things, I do indeed count them but dung and dross, so I may win Christ, and the prize of perfect holiness. I have too much sought water in broken cisterns, I now desire to go to the fountain. I count money, and honours, and pleasures poor, little, empty, insignificant things: a dram of grace is worth a thousand worlds. Oh! give me grace, I ask no more.

I hope

I hope my friend is going on towards perfection, forgetting the things behind, and the things present, which would alienate his mind from God, and stop the intercourse between the lovely Jesus, and his soul.

I was exceeding glad to hear the comfortable account you gave Mr.***, of the success of the gospel in that part of the vineyard where you are labouring. The good Lord increase it more and more.

I am entered into another man's labours in this place, he hath prepared the way before me. The Redeemer is carrying on a glorious work in this city: you would be pleased to see what a large congregation we have; on Sunday evenings it is computed there are four thousand hearers, and the society encreases weekly, and I hope these are but the beginnings of good days.

I beg you would pray for us, that in all things we may approve ourselves the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. I kindly thank you for the last advice you gave me, when you left me in London, and I thank God he hath preserved me from falling into the temptation. I hope you will not fail to pray for me in particular; I am sure I do love and pray for you, who am

Your affectionate Brother, &c.

L. E. T. T. E. R. LVII.

My dear Friend, May 3, 1760.

THE questions you desire me to resolve, are undoubtedly respecting one of the most important

affairs

affairs of human life; and therefore deserves a solid consideration, and an ingenuous answer.

1st. "Is it lawful for a believer to marry with an unbeliever?"

2d. "Is it expedient for a believer to marry with one of a different opinion in religion, and who worships God in a different place and mode though a child of God."

With regard to the first: let it be carefully observed that nothing can be lawful which God has directly or indirectly forbidden: now I cannot conceive but he hath forbidden this: be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, therefore it is unlawful. The first proposition will be granted. If it is said with respect to the second, that the apostle only forbids christians to marry with heathens, and his words affect not the present case. It may be answered they do affect the present case notwithstanding: for there can be no real, and specific difference between an unconverted person, though baptized in the name of Christ; and an heathen. The difference can only be in the name, and external things, which change not their nature and disposition, nor their real character with God, who judgeth not according to appearance, but according to the heart. Is an heathen an enemy to God by wicked works? So is an unconverted christian. Is an heathen an idolater? So is an unbelieving christian. He is either covetous, or a lover of pleasure, both which are idolatry. The heathen, and the merely nominal christian, act both from the same principles, and with the same intentions. Whereas there is a real and specific difference between a child of God, and a child of satan; the former is a partaker of the divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4. Has the Holy Ghost abiding within him.

him. John xiv. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 12. And Rom. viii. 16. His body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and God dwelleth and walketh in him. 2 Cor. vi. 16. But an unconverted person with all the refinements of birth, education, and the form of godliness, is at enmity with God, being only born after the flesh, for the carnal mind is enmity against God. Rom. viii. 7. The devil worketh and reigneth in his heart. Luke 11. 24. Yea himself lyeth in the same, without God in the world. Eph. ii. 12. Now nothing can be more certain than that all are unlawfully married, whom God does not join together: and can we think that God will join a partaker of his nature, unto one possessed of the devil, or that Christ will unite one of the members of his mystical body, unto a limb of satan? Can any thing be more unlikely, or more contrary to the nature and wisdom of God.

Besides let us consider the evils which have followed such unequal marriages, both in the antient and modern times, and we may easily read the unlawfulness of them in the punishments entailed upon them. In the old world: the sons of God: i. e. the posterity of righteous Seth; saw the daughters of men; i. e. the descendants of wicked Cain, that they were fair, not that they were pious, and they took themselves wives which they chose, not which God chose for them: and what was the consequence? By and by, we read of an universal defection from God, and godliness. Gen. vi. 5. *Then God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil, and that continually.* And what was the end and issue of all? An universal corruption, brought on an epidemical desolation: God determines to de-

stroy those who would not mortify the lusts of the flesh, but joined themselves with the daughters of Belial. *Therefore the Lord said I will destroy from the earth the men which I have created.*

Though Sampson's wife, who was a daughter of the uncircumcised, pleased him hugely for a time, yet his affections were soon alienated from her, and what was the end thereof I need not inform you. Judges **xix.** Moses himself, scarcely escaped being slain of the Lord; for hearkening unto his Zipporah, and deferring the ordinance of circumcision. **Exod. iv. 24.** And you find Solomon, of a wise king, become an apish dotard, and of a pious worshiper, becomes a gross idolator; and all by means of strange wives. **1 Kings, xi. 4, 5.**

When the old serpent is in the heart of a wife who lyeth in your bosom, he has a fair opportunity of winding himself into yours also. Faithful Abraham had such a sense of this matter, that he could not die, and go to paradise contentedly, until he made his steward take an oath in the name of the God of the whole earth, that he would not take a wife for his son Isaac, of the Canaanites where he dwelt, but from among his own kindred. **Gen. xxiv. 3, 4.**

How very few instances have we among ourselves in the present day, of the believing husband or wife, converting the contrary party; but how many melancholy examples have we, of the unbelieving husband or wife, reconverting the other party to the world and the devil? and no wonder, that the serpent, and Eve twisted together, should be a cord strong enough, to draw any of Adam's posterity to eat of the forbidden fruit, as it did their father: neither is it to be wondered at, that God should withhold his blessings from matches of Satan's making.

I therefore

the more earnest they will be to have their own sentiments regarded. Though the work of God is for the substance of it, the same in the minds of all men, yet it is not easy to say, what a difference, different opinions may make in many circumstances of it. They who are brought unto God by one system of doctrine, have a vein of enjoyments, a turn of experience, and a method of speaking peculiar to themselves; which does not so exactly agree with any other. And what an inconceivable loss must it be, if but some part of that help, which they might give to each other, is wanting. Nothing else can possibly make up their loss. If they are loving, good natured, and generous people, they may possibly live together without outrageous quarrels; yet alas, this is but a little matter toward that good they should do to one another, in the great affair of their salvation!

If you was to form an idea of the happiest couple in the world, you would conceive them to be of one heart, and of one way in all things, if possible, but especially in the matter of religion. A want of this, would give a notion of their want of happiness in each other, and you could not avoid thinking, but as far as they were wanting in agreement in their opinion, they would be wanting in their felicity.

2d. Another thing which makes it inexpedient is an hindrance in their private devotion. Mutual prayer is most prevalent. *If two, (says our Saviour) of you, shall agree on earth, as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven.* Matt. xviii. 19. But how much of the energy, and profit of prayer will be lost, when perhaps they think it right only to pray with a book, and the other judges it quite preferable

preferable to pray as the spirit shall assist, and give him utterance. How uncomfortable is this disagreement: how many sweet and excellent blessings are lost, for want of mutual prayer. It is a sorry condition for a woman, in a married state, to receive little, or no benefit from her husband's prayers in private: would not every woman which makes religion her business and happiness think it the greatest loss she could sustain? and the disadvantage would be equally great on the man's part.

3d. Again; the same inconveniences would also occur in family as in secret prayer. There would be continual hinderances to the performance of that duty, without which every family must live miserably, and exposed to the displeasure of God. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, and upon the families, which call not upon thy name.*

4th. Let it also be observed, how uncomfortable and unseemingly it would be in public worship, for those whom God hath made one flesh, and who live as such on the week day, to part on the Sunday: and as soon, it may be, as they go out at their own door, to their public devotion, turn their backs and go different ways, as though they were utter strangers to each other. Who could bear the thoughts of this? if they love not one another they are most wretchedly miserable; if they do, it renders this separation more difficult still. But,

5th. What must become of the education of the children? this hereby, will be rendered almost impracticable. If they are both of them conscientious in their profession, they will be loth that their children should not be educated in the same way which they judge to be the best in the world, and in which they place, and find their supreme happiness. How hard will it be for a tender mother to see her children, brought up, before her eyes, in

a way she disapproves? and will it not be equally hard for the loving and obedient wife, to thwart her husband's counsels to his children, and caution them against that, unto which he warmly advises them? and yet one of these she must do. She has but this alternative either to disoblige her husband, or offend her conscience. It will be equally difficult to the husband to see his children trained up in the way he would not have them to go; and yet he will find it difficult to grieve a loving and tender wife. So that between the two, the children will remain uneducated, or taught in their tender age, to halt between two opinions, and in their advanced years have no religion at all. These things are of great weight with me, and I believe will be with every one who thinks of them. They will I hope ever deter me from taking so indirect and dangerous a step. And I pray God they may have the same weight with my dear friend. I heartily commend you to the providence and direction of Almighty God.

While I remain your affectionate Brother, &c.



L E T T E R LIX.

My dear Friend,

June 14, 1760.

I Received your very agreeable letter; it was Benjamin's mess indeed, and so full it was running over when it came to hand; yet I believe there was not any lost.

The last, and the former favours of which you speak, and for which you so heartily thank God, and me, are, in my esteem few and insignificant, the reason of this is, I look at them in love, which

which never thinks it does enough, and you look at them in gratitude, which never thinks it makes sufficient returns : both are blessed dispositions.

That, my dear friend, is the happiest way of deceiving others which you mention ; to be better in reality, than in appearance.

I never fear you being habitually unkind, or ungrateful, if it is at all so, it will be only when you are more so to yourself, by groundless reflection, than to any others.

You desire me to help you all I can. The love I have for your soul, together with my own interest in doing good, are motives sufficient to induce me thereunto, without my dear friends solicitations. Next to my own growth in grace, and personally giving glory to God, nothing is more desired by me. Nor would any thing, besides the enjoyment of God, give me greater happiness, than to be capable of doing it.

“ You think the being grieved, when those you love, behave unkindly to you, argues a defect in your holiness.” If we would see this in a clear light, we must, 1st. Enquire into the nature of the unkindness, 2d. Into the nature, and degree of your grief, before we can say whether it argues a want in, or is a branch of holiness.

If the unkindness of your friend, dishonours God, brings a scandal upon religion, and guilt upon his own conscience ; then you have the dear Redeemer for the pattern of your grief. *He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.* Mark 3. 5. But if it only effects your own private character, or interest, or especially your humour and inclination ; to be grieved to a degree of unhappiness, cannot but argue want of resignation to the will of God. For such an unkindness may be permitted

mitted by God Almighty for some good purpose, to you, and should not only be submitted unto, but thankfully chosen: 2d, If the nature, and degree of your grief is only such as arises from that sympathy you have with your friend, and which you would have had upon the consideration of so ungenerous an action done by him to any other, you could not be without this grief, but you must be without an hatred to sin, and affection to the sinner, which will not consist with holiness.

But if it greatly wounds your quiet, disturbs your peace and hinders your enjoyment of God; it argues too great an attachment unto, and, it may be, dependance upon your friend: which cannot be without the soul, less, or more being drawn from its fixedness, and full complacency in God; and inclining more unto other spirits than it should. In this case there is great need of mortification to the refined pleasure of particular friendships, and to know no man after the flesh, that the soul may more closely adhere to Christ Jesus, its true and proper centre.

Though you have been, without reason, kept from the benefit of assembling with your brethren in that particular way you mention, yet if you are hereafter permitted, I would not have you refuse to go. For 1st, it would have too great an appearance of captiousness, which you should be entirely free from: 2d, it would be in effect slighting an excellent means of improving in holiness: and 3d, it would look like resentment.

The best way of making the calumnies, and aspersions, falsely cast upon you, disregarded by others, and profitable to yourself, is to offer them up to God in a sacrifice of pure thankfulness, that you are accounted worthy to suffer any thing

thing for his sake: and by letting all your observers see, by the whole tenor of your conversation, that there must be a strange force committed upon your pure mind, before you could be guilty of the things ascribed unto you. When this is the case, hard words will not break your head, but gladden your heart: and that dirt maliciously thrown at your character, will return upon those who cast it; while it will make your name more sweet in the ears of all who know you better, and love you more justly; and will also brighten your crown in the realms of immortal glory.

You see how I have unawares forgot myself; and almost consumed my paper, before I have said one word about my own soul.

I have lately had a great deal of pain in my head, which has brought me very low in my spirits, and greatly diminished my stock of strength: But I do not urge this by way of complaint, nor yet as an apology for any defect in me. No: I thank the dear Jesus for all the pain I have felt; I dare say, if I had wanted any part of it, it would have been a loss to me. I know assuredly that *all things work together for my good*; even by this token, I love God.

I believe I have grown in grace lately, but not in the same respects, I did some time since: not in joy and transports; but in humility, patience, and resignation: these graces I have had occasion, in a peculiar manner to exercise; which, tho' they do not so immediately usher in the harvest of joyous extasies, yet they will, they already do return with some degree of joy, and bring their sheaves of spiritual advantage with them.

This is my last, best, and most determinate resolution, to die, through the grace of Christ strengthening me, rather than intentionally grieve

here, that are not ashamed of him, and of whom he is not ashamed, both among the poor and among the rich. There are not many of the last, though blessed be God for any one! 'tis a great miracle if one camel passes through the eye of a needle; or, in other words, if one rich person enters into the kingdom of God. I thank God that none of you are rich in the things of this world, you are freed from a dreadful snare, even from Dives's portion in this world. May you know the happiness attending your state! it is a mercy to be drove to the throne of grace even by bodily want, and to live in dependance on divine mercy even for a morsel of bread.

I have been sowing the seed that the Lord hath given both in Bath and Bristol, and I hope your prayers have not been lost upon me as a minister; for though I have not been able to discharge my office as I would, the Lord hath in some measure stood by me, and over-ruled my foolishness and helplessness. I am much supported by the thought that you bear me upon your hearts, and that when you come to the throne of grace to beg a blessing for me in the name of Jesus, the Lord doth in no wise cast you out. With regard to the state of my soul, I find, blessed be God, that as my day is, so is my strength to travel on, without minding much either good or bad report.

My absence from you answers two good ends in regard of me: I feel more my insufficiency, and the need of being daily ordained of Christ to preach his gospel; and I shall value the more the worth of my privilege with you, please God I return safely to you. I had yester day a most advantageous offer made of going free cost to my own country, (i. e. France,) to see my mother, brothers, and sisters in the flesh, whom I have not
seen

seen for near eighteen years, but I find my relations in the spirit are nearer and dearer to me than my relations in the flesh; I have therefore refused the kind offer, that I might return among you, and be comforted by the mutual faith of you and me.

I hope, my dear brethren, that you improve much under the ministry of that faithful servant of God Mr. B. —, whom Providence blesses you with; make haste to gather the honey of knowledge and grace as it drops from his lips, and may I find the hive of your heart so full of it at my return, that I may share with you in the heavenly store. In order to this, intreat the Lord to stir up your hunger and thirst after Jesus' flesh and blood, and to increase your desire for the sincere milk of the word. When people are hungry they will find time to go to their meals; and a good appetite doth not think that a meal a day is too much: as you go to spiritual meals forget not to pray all the way, and to feast your souls in hopes of hearing some good news from heaven, and from Jesus, the faithful loving friend which you have there; and when you return home, be sure to carry the unsearchable riches of Jesus's dying and rising love to your houses, in the vessel of a believing heart; let light be attended with warmth of love. Be not you satisfied in knowing the way to heaven, but walk in it immediately, constantly, and joyfully; be all thoroughly in earnest. You may impose upon your brethren by a formal attendance on the means of grace, but you cannot deceive the searcher of hearts. Let him then see your hearts struggling towards him, and if you fall through heaviness, sloth, or unbelief, do not you make a bad matter worse by continuing hopeless in the ditch of sin and guilt. Up and away to the fountain of Jesus blood, it will

will not only wash away the guilt of past sins, but strengthen you to trample all iniquity under foot for the time to come. Never forget that the soul of the diligent shall be made fat, and that the Lord will spue the lukewarm out of his mouth. Get therefore that love which makes you diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

You know the way to get this love is, 1st. To consider the mercy of God; 2dly, be frequently, if not continually, plying this faith with all the attention of your minds, and fervour of your hearts, "Lord, I am lost, but Christ hath died!" 3dly, to try actually to love as you can, by setting your affections on Christ whom you see not, and for his sake, on your brethren whom you see; 4thly, to use much private prayer for yourselves and others, and to try to keep up communion with God, and with your absent brethren.

I beg, in order to this, that you will not neglect the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is; and when you meet in society, be neither backward nor forward to speak; esteem yourselves every one the meanest in the company, be glad to sit at the feet of the lowest; if you are tempted against any one, yield not to the temptation, and pray for much of that love which hopeth all things, and puts the best constructions even upon the worst of things. I beg for Christ's sake I may find no division and no offence among you at my return. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercy, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself. I earnestly beg the continuance of your pray-

ers for me, both as a minister, and as your companion in tribulation; as in particular, that the Lord would keep me from hurting his cause in these parts, and that when Providence shall bring me back among you, which I hope will be this day fortnight, I may be thoroughly furnished for every good word and work. That the blessing of God in Christ Jesus, may crown all your hearts and your meetings, is the earnest prayer of, my very dear brethren,

Your unworthy servant in the gospel
of our common Lord,

J. F.

P. S. I had not time to finish this letter yesterday, being called upon to preach in a market town in the neighbourhood. The dragon shewed some of his spite and venom to little purpose. A gentleman churchwarden would hinder me getting into the pulpit; and in order to this, cursed and swore, and took another gentleman by the collar in the middle of the church. Notwithstanding his rage, I preached; may the Lord raise in power, what was sown in weakness.



L E T T E R L X I.

Oakhall, Suffex, Sept. 23, 1766.

*To those who love or fear the Lord Jesus at M——
——, ——, grace, peace, and love, be multiplied
unto you, from our God and Saviour Jesus
Christ!*

PROVIDENCE, my dear brethren, called me so suddenly from among you, that I had not
time

time to take my leave of you, and recommend myself to your prayers; but I hope the good spirit of our God, which is a spirit of love and supplication, hath brought me to your remembrance, as the poorest and weakest of Christ's ministers, and consequently as him whose hands stand most in need of been strengthened and lifted up by your prayers. Pray on then for yourselves, for one another, and for him whose glory is to minister unto you in spiritual things, and whose sorrow it is not to do it in a manner more suitable to the majesty of the gospel, and more profitable to your souls. My heart is with you nevertheless I bear patiently this bodily separation for three reasons.

I. The variety of more faithful and abler ministers which you have during my absence, is more likely to be serviceable to you than my presence among you, and I would always prefer your profit to my satisfaction.

II. I hope Providence will give me those opportunities of conversing and praying with a greater variety of experienced christians, which will tend to mine own improvement, and I trust in the end, to yours.

III. I flatter myself, that after some weeks absence, my ministry will be recommended by the advantage of novelty, which (the more the pity) goes farther with some than the word itself. In the mean time, I shall give you some advice, which it may be, will prove both suitable and serviceable to you.

I. ENDEAVOUR to improve daily under the ministry that Providence blesses you with: be careful to attend it with diligence, faith, and prayer. Would it not be a great shame, if when ministers come thirty or forty miles off to offer you peace and pardon,

don, strength and comfort, in the name of God, any of you should slight the glorious message, or hear it as if it was nothing to you, and as if you heard it not? See then, that you never come from a sermon, without being more deeply convinced of sin and righteousness: in order to this,

2. Use much prayer before you go to church: consider that your next appearance there, may be in a coffin; and entreat the Lord to give you now so to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that you may be filled therewith. Hungry people never go fasting from a feast. Call to mind the text I preached from the last Sunday but one, before I left you. *Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisy, and envies, and all evil-speaking; as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby,* 1 Pet. 2. 1.

3. When you are under the word, beware of sitting as judges, and not like criminals; many judge of the manner, matter, voice, or person of the preacher; you perhaps judge all the congregation, when they should judge themselves guilty of eternal death, and yet worthy of eternal life, through the worthiness of him, who stood and was condemned at Pilate's bar for them. The moment you have done crying to God as guilty, or thanking Christ as reprieved criminals, you have reason to conclude, that this advice is levelled at you.

4. When you have been at a means of grace, and do not find yourselves sensibly quickened, let it be matter of deep humiliation to you. For want of repenting of their unbelief, and hardness of heart, some get into a habit of deadness and indolence, so that they come to be as insensible, and as little ashamed of themselves for it, as stones.

5. Beware

5. Beware of the inconsistent behaviour of those, who complain that they are full of wandering in the evening under the word, when they have suffered their minds to wander from Christ all the day long. O! get acquainted with him, that you may walk in him, and with him. Whatsoever you do or say, especially in the things of God, do or say it, as if Christ was before, behind, and on each side of you. Indeed he is so, whether you consider it or not; for when he visibly appeared on earth, he called himself the Son of Man which is in heaven; how much more then is he present on earth, now, that he makes his immediate appearance in heaven. Make conscience then, to maintain a sense of his blessed presence all the day long, and all the day long you will have a continual feast; for can you conceive any thing more delightful, than to be always at the fountain of love, peace, beauty and joy; at the spring of power, wisdom, goodness and truth? can there be a purer, and more melting happiness, than to be with the best of fathers, the kindest of brothers, the most generous of benefactors, and the tenderest of husbands? now Jesus is all this, and much more to the believing soul. O! believe my friends, believe in Jesus now, through a continual now; and until you find you can thus believe, mourn over your unbelieving heart, drag it to him as you can; think of the efficacy of his blood shed for the ungodly, and wait for the spirit of faith from on high.

6. Some of you wonder why you can't believe; why you cannot see Jesus with the eye of your mind, and delight in him with the affections of your heart. I apprehend the reason to be one of these, or perhaps altogether.

I. You are not poor, lost, undone, helpless, despairing sinners in yourselves. You indulge spi-

ritual and refined self-righteousness; you are not yet dead to the law, and quite slain by the commandment. Now the kingdom of heaven belongs to none but the poor in spirit; Jesus came to save none but the lost. What wonder then, if Jesus is little to you, and if you do not live in his kingdom of peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

II. Perhaps you spend your time in curious reasonings, instead of casting yourselves as forlorn sinners at Christ's feet, leaving it to him to bless you, when, and in the manner and degree he pleases. Know that he is the wise and sovereign God, and that it is your duty to lie before him as clay, as fools, as sinful nothings.

III. Perhaps also, some of you wilfully keep idols of one kind or other: you indulge some sin against light and knowledge, and it is neither matter of humiliation nor confession to you. The love of praise, that of the world, that of money, and that of sensual gratifications, when not lamented, are as implacable enemies to Christ, as Judas and Herod. How can ye believe, seeing ye seek the honour that cometh from men? Hew then your Agags in pieces before the Lord; run from your Delilahs to Jesus resolutely; cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye that offend you: "Come from among them, and be separate," saith the Lord, "and I will receive you." Nevertheless, when you strive, take care not to make yourself a righteousness of your striving; remember that justifying righteousness is finished and brought in, and that your goodness can no more add to it than your sins diminish it. Shout then, "the Lord your righteousness;" and if you are undone sinners, humbly and yet boldly say, "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

When

7. When I was in London, I endeavour'd to make the best of my time; that is to say, to hear, receive, and practise the word. Accordingly, I went to Mr. Whitfield's tabernacle, and heard him give his society a most sweet exhortation upon love. He began by observing that when the apostle St. John was old, and past walking and preaching, he would not forsake the assembling himself with the brethren, as the manner of too many is upon little or no pretences at all; on the contrary, he got himself carried to their meeting, and with his last thread of voice, preached to them his final sermon made up of this one sentence, "My little children, love one another." I wish, I pray, I earnestly beseech you to follow that evangelical, apostolical advice; and till God makes you all little children, little in your own eyes, and simple as little children; give me leave to say, my dear brethren, love one another, and of course, judge not, provoke not, be not shy of one another, but bear ye one another's burthens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; yea, bear with one another's infirmities, and do not easily cast off any one, not for sin, except it be obstinately persisted in.

My snect is full, and so is my heart of good wishes for, and strong longings after you all. I have just room to tell you, I hope to be with you in three or four weeks time. O let me have the comfort of finding you all believing and loving. Farewell, my dear brethren: the blessing of God be with you all; this is the earnest desire of

Your unworthy minister,

J. F.

LET-

L E T T E R L X I I .

To Miss H————.

YOU seem not to have a clear idea of the happiness of the love of Jesus, or: at least of your privilege of loving him again: your dullness of private prayer arises from the want of a familiar friendship with Jesus; to obviate which, go to your closet, as if you was going to meet the dearest friend you ever had; cast yourself immediately at his feet, bemoan your coldness before him, extol his love to you, and let your heart break with a desire to love him till it can actually melt with his love; be importunate, and get your Lord to avenge you of your adversary, I mean your cold heart.

You ask some directions to get a mortified spirit; in order to get it, get recollected. Recollection is a dwelling with one's self, and being abstracted from creatures towards God: it is outward and inward: outward recollection consists, first, in silence, which cuts off superfluous words, speaks of necessity, and that for the glory of God: secondly, in solitude, or a being wisely disentangled from the world, a keeping quietly to one's business, or a shutting the door of one's senses; in an inward deep attention to Jesus' love, and in a continual care of entertaining holy thoughts, for fear of spiritual idleness. Through the power of the spirit, let recollection be steady even in the midst of hurrying business. Secondly, let it be calm and peaceable. Thirdly, let it be lasting: *Watch and pray, lest you enter*
into

into temptation. In order to this, beware of engaging too deep and beyond necessity into outward things; of being captivated or entangled in heart by any troublesome worldly desire or affection; of wilfully committing small faults. Recollection appears vastly necessary; because for want of it, prayer is useless, imagination and wanderings prevail, the heart gets loose and roves every where; whereas we pass easily from recollection to delightful prayer again. Without recollection, we cannot find out nor crush sin in its first risings; therefore it will break out in every unmortified person. To this I might add, that without recollection, we cannot know or deny ourselves to any purpose. In recollection, let your mind act according to grace, it will probably lead you, either to contemplate on Jesus crucified, dying, rising, interceding. Fourthly, watch your senses, suppress your passions. Fifthly, keep before God, in respectful silence of heart. Sixthly, watch and follow the motions of grace, and feed on the promises.

But take care here, 1st. To be more taken with thoughts of God, than yourself. 2dly, To consider, how hardly recollection is got sometimes, and how easily lost. 3dly, Not to use much forced labour to raise a particular frame. 4thly, Not to fret, tire, nor grow impatient, if you have no comfort; but meekly to acquiesce and confess yourself unworthy of any, determining quietly to wait for the smiles of Jesus. The following motives may stir you up to the pursuit of recollection: 1st. We must forsake all, and die to all first by recollection; 2dly, Without which, God's voice can't be heard in the soul. 3dly, It is the only altar on which to offer our Isaacs. 4thly, It is instrumentally a ladder (if I may so speak) to ascend

fouls present. Our Lord was with us, and it made the place where we were assembled the house of God, and the gate of heaven indeed. *Oh! how amiable are thy tabernacles, thou Lord of hosts!*

Most that were present had reason to thank God for the great consolation, and one received remission of sins! we parted on Monday morning with tears, tho' in expectation of seeing one another again shortly. That was fulfilled in us. "See how these Christians love."

It greatly rejoices my heart to find a revival of the work of God in this place also. Brother M. is very lively, and preaches christian perfection with all his might, and several are stirred up to seek more holiness. On Saturday evening we had a private meeting with those who desire to go on to perfection. Some present spake largely of receiving the accomplishment of the promises of God, by a simple act of faith; and said believe, believe, altogether: I spoke my mind freely upon the necessity of waiting for the fulfilling of the great and precious promises, in a diligent use of all the means of grace, in mortifying the deeds of the body, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts: and vigourously doing good to the utmost of our power, and patiently suffering evil, at the same time having all our expectation from Christ, and our faith steadily fixt on the promises, I offered this to their consideration as the most scriptural, and safe way of growing in grace and arriving at the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ.

I find much comfort and edification in the company of your friend. I thank God for her example, and advice. The dear Lord Jesus bless and reward her.

My soul is at present thirsting for more of God: I long for all his fullness: I pray for your abundant

then drawing me to my Saviour: for sometimes, when I was under the word, which I constantly attended, especially when delivered by you, I have been in great joy, and thought well of my state, that I had faith and forgiveness of sins, at other times I doubted of it, yet was deeply convinced of my vileness, and deserving nothing but God's wrath and eternal damnation: yet I reasoned with some of our brethren that I might have forgiveness, and not have that feeling sense of it. Lord how prone man is to justify himself! I wanted them to think me in a good state, which only discovered my pride.

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

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

One time I argued with my brethren against being delivered from evil thoughts; but this the Lord was pleased to reveal to me the same night before our little company broke up. The words of our Lord came with power into my soul, even in a moment, by which I was convinced of this part of my mistake: *Make the tree good, and its*

fruit will be good also. I immediately acknowledged the same, and shall never again have reason to doubt of that.

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

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

“ Now I have found the ground wherein,

“ Sure my soul’s anchor may remain,” &c.

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

I went in the forenoon to White Chapel church, where I met with an explication of what I had received. The whole service contributed to the confirmation of my faith. The Psalms for the day began, *O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon*

his

his name, tell the people what things he hath done. Never was my heart more lifted up! never did I read these lines in this light before! O let your songs be of him, and praise him, and let your talking be of all his wondrous works! The collect of the day greatly concurred, "Grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reprov'd." The epistle also made me reckon myself no more a *stranger and foreigner*, but a *fellow citizen with the saints of the household of God*. The gospel also confirmed me in the words of St. Thomas, I said *my Lord and my God*.

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

"Gifts alas, cannot suffice,

And comforts a'l are vain;

While one evil thought can rise,

I am not born again:

Still I am not as my Lord,

Thy holy will I do not prove," &c.

I know my Saviour is able to help me, and I firmly believe he will carry on the work he has begun in my soul. I desire to wait his time and manner till I have full redemption, till I arrive at the *mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*: 'till I am fully renewed in the image of God; till I am made a partaker of the divine nature, till all old things are done away, till I am so born of God, as not to commit sin in any mea-

sure, till I am *sanctified wholly in spirit, soul and body.*

And may the God of glory preserve and bless your precious life long among us, and give you a double portion of his spirit; that after you have been the happy instrument of bringing many, very many sons to glory, you may shine as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom of your Father for ever, is the prayer, Rev. Sir,
Of the unworthy A. I.

L E T T E R LXV.

Rev. Sir,

Dec. 27, 1742

I Received your kind and pious Letter, and should have wrote sooner to acquaint you with my state, since you was so good as to desire it: but the reason why I deferred it was, my being out of all hope of receiving any benefit from any means. I have wearied all my friends and correspondents with my vain complaints, and am now myself tired of complaining. The Almighty does not regard my languid sinful prayers: he hath hid himself from me, and shut me up in thick darkness. My heart is hardned from his fear, nor can I see my want, nor mourn my misery. I have not even a notional faith, nor any will, or endeavour to turn. The little spark of grace I once had is totally extinguished, I have not any concern at all. I cannot see sin, nor can I pray from my heart, either for myself or others: yet do I make a constant use of all the ordinances of Christ: I would not willingly commit any sin, nor can I allow it in others, and am unwilling to bring a scandal upon
the

the people of God. I should not think any duty too hard if my heart were but affected. But alas! woe is me, I am tyed down by a thousand, yea ten thousand chains, and can no more lift up my heart to God, than I can reach heaven with my finger. My soul is quite dead.

I was sometime ago wishing to be in this or that place, and still as my desires for God grew weaker, would wish I was but as I was the year, or month, or week before: but now I cannot have any sense of my loss. The brethren here have prayed for me, but I am still more hard and more blind. I have no notion of death, or hell, or judgment, or eternity; nor have I any sense of the law of God. If at any time I have a faint remembrance of the grace I once had, how I was affected some years since, and find some sorrow for the loss of my Saviour; or if a verse of an hymn affects me, and forces a tear from my flinty heart, yet it continues not, but is like a flash of lightning immediately gone.

I greatly long to see you, or your brother here: perhaps the word might come again with power to my soul. I am yet alive, therefore I will not say it is impossible for God to change even me: some miracle of grace may make even me a monument of mercy; I would fain see my wants, and mourn my sins, and grieve under the burden of my woe: for I cannot conceive it possible I should love Christ without extremity of need compels me to it. O wretched soul, this is thy sad condition! I cannot find any way of returning, for I cannot repent; I have several times fervently prayed for one beam of light, but have found no answer.

In short, I have taken a great deal of pains to destroy myself; the more I strove, the more I

was entangled. I know I formerly sought God sincerely, but when I endeavoured to give up my whole heart unto him, the devil laid all his snares for me, and I am now his captive: I have betrayed my soul by endeavouring to preserve it. Their condition is preferable to mine, who live in open profaneness: for were they once convinced of their danger, they would gladly embrace the Saviour; but I have a double vail upon my heart: and if I perish my punishment will be far greater. When I look upon myself in this light, I do think there is not a more wretched creature breathing. I wander about like a desolate exile. I have lost my reason, and my understanding is taken from me. I have no peace, but a fearful expectation of judgment. Oh! that the Son of God would look upon me in my lost estate, and force me to be saved by grace! if I should be restored again I will prize his mercy; and surely then I shall serve him all the rest of my days. But, O'tis a sad thing when one cannot repent, or even sincerely desire it! my hands hang down.

I have a thought sometimes to cast off the form, since I have lost the power of religion. I would fain die, if death would set me free; but I am not willing to quit all hopes of heaven.

I beg you will enquire of the Lord for me, and wrestle with him in my behalf, and if my day of grace is not yet over, O beseech him to give me the comfort of his help again, and that his spirit may strive with me. I sent a letter to this purpose to Mr. M— a fortnight ago, but received no answer. Perhaps the Lord shewed him I was lost, and he might be unwilling to tell me so. But I beg Mr. W—s would join with you in prayer, and let me know what the Lord will say concerning me. I shall impatiently wait the answer,

swer, for I would fain know the worst. I will yet wait upon the Lord, if I perish, I will not perish for want of asking: I will draw near unto God with my lips, tho' my heart is far from him.

Thus I have given you a description of hell upon earth: but I am confident you will not think much to labour for my soul, or angrily reproach my unprofitableness, notwithstanding the good advice you have often given me, seems to be lost upon me. I have spun this to an unreasonable length, but I hope you will excuse my weakness,

Who am your most unworthy Servant, A. N.

P. S. I have just received a most comfortable letter from Mr. M-----d; it has given me hope that I, even I shall yet know and love Jesus Christ.



L E T T E R LXVI.

Rev. Sir,

I Know your love and care for our souls is great, and therefore I send you these few lines to inform you how the blessed Jesus deals with us: I find my soul grow stronger and stronger in the Lord daily. He hath given me to eat of the *hidden manna*, and the *tree of life*, and given me the *white stone*, with the *new name written therein*, which none know save those who receive it: and hath revealed himself unto me, in the manner he doth not unto the world. My soul is joined to Christ. I can pray without ceasing. The love of God is abundantly shed abroad in my soul; yet I continually hunger and thirst for more. O how I desire to do the will of God on earth, as angels do it in heaven! the Lord hath given me to believe
that

that whatsoever I ask the Father in the name of Jesus he will do it for me. I feel his word and promise applied: he does give me what I ask. O that I could express the love I feel to God, and all mankind; I could freely lay down my life for the salvation of any one sinner in the world. Great and inexpressible is that love wherewith Jesus loveth us. Sweet to my soul are all his commands. If at any time I have any temptation to break any of them, my whole heart riseth up against it; and for the love I have unto the law-giver, and to the purity of his law, I would rather die than break the least commandment. How can I offend so loving and gracious a Saviour. I would not do any thing which might displease my heavenly Father. In all things wherein I see the will of God, he enables me to do it joyfully.

I am always less or more happy in the Lord. Indeed sometimes I think there is something like a veil which covers that great glory of the Lord, which at other times I see: but I then lie at the Saviour's feet, and wait till he gives me that sight of his glorious face again. I am never without him, but sometimes he does fill my soul so much with his lovely presence, that my body can scarcely bear it, and I cannot at all express it.

Within these few days I have had a peculiar sense of my unworthiness, and such a sinking into humility as I have not always; so that I think myself utterly unworthy to lie at the feet of Christ: if I could find any place near unto him, lower than this, I would lie there. But he has honoured me with a place at his dear feet, and his wings overshadow me, and keep me from all storms. O that I could praise him sufficiently!

Dear Sir, remember me in your prayers, and praises: and may Jesus Christ continually bless you.

you. I believe he will. O faithful shepherd of the flock! your feet are beautiful wherever you carry the glad tidings of peace. Blessed be your goings out, and comings in; your rising up, and your lying down. May Jesus be with you for ever and ever.

From your unworthy Friend in Christ Jesus,

E. V.

L E T T E R LXVII.

My dear Brother,

I Received your Letter, and I heartily wish the Lord may manifest himself unto you this day, and give you his Spirit to bear witness with your Spirit that you are a son of God. I beg of you, rest not night or day, till you rest in Jesus Christ. Let me also entreat you to hear and cleave unto Mr. W. for I assure you he is a good man, and I, and many souls in this country were greatly blessed in hearing the word of the Lord from his mouth.

When I came down here, I found the people running from town to town, and not one in fifty knew what they went for: but when I told them what God had done for my soul, they cried, *away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live.*

Mr. I—— sent for me, and seemed much offended that I was so bold, but the Lord put words in my mouth that he could not gainsay: and indeed all that came to dispute with me, whether Pr——ns, or still ones, were not able to confute what I said, though they would not be convinced by it. And though there was not a man in these parts

parts that would agree to what I said, even when I proved it agreeable to the word of God, yet he has given me such a witness of his love that if all men in the world were to oppose me, they could not shake my soul. I rest on my Lord's words, for he has said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Seeing that the Lord hath made use of such a weak worm as me, and has given me to love all his creatures; so that I cannot desire the death of a fly or worm, and a burning zeal for all men's souls, I will run and not faint.

When Mr. W. began to preach out of the churches, in Moorefields and Kennington-Common, I was deeply convinced of my lost condition, and felt in myself the sentence of condemnation, when the dear Saviour of sinners spake peace to my soul: and ever since he has continued unto me some sight and sense of his love; though for a year or more I was sometimes brought very low, and at other times I have been so full of love, that tears of joy have flowed from my eyes, to think that Jesus would love and look upon such a wretch as me. A little before I came from London I was at St. Paul's, at the sacrament, as I kneeled before him, the love of God was so great in my heart, that I thought I should have fallen to the ground, and from that time I have had a steadfast confidence, and a lasting peace: and no other doctrine than that I heard from the beginning, hath any place in my mind unto this day.

I desire that you, and all the brethren would pray that I may stand fast unto the end. The Lord works very visibly and powerfully among us: we have fresh tokens of his grace every week, yea in some weeks six or seven are brought to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins; and many who have been despisers, are now thank-
ing

ing God who hath opened their eyes. The Lord generally maketh a short work among us; some have found the glad tidings experimentally true in three times hearing.

At my coming into this country, no man stood with me, but my name was cast out by professors and profane, so that I was like an owl in the desert; but a few who were bruised by the hand of God soon heard of, and received the doctrine of conscious pardon, and in a little time seven of them found it verified in themselves: but Mr. I—m reproved them for confessing it before the world: accordingly he sent for me, and desired me not to speak so boldly, it would make the country use us ill. I told him if every man in the world was to cast stones at me, I would tell what God had done for my soul, and what he is willing to do for others: for I loved all mankind, and feared no man.

The people of the neighbouring towns have frequently sent for me, to hear of this new doctrine: for they were quite sure that no man could know his sins forgiven in this world. But I proved it from the written word of God, and from the doctrine of the church of England. In a little time many cried out, "Lord grant this thing unto me!" Our number of believers soon increased to thirty; then I found I must speak publicly among them, for the people thronged, and filled my house. In this I found cowardliness in my flesh, and craved for death, or that God would take my speech from me rather than call me to it: but still I found my mind full of matter, and when I spoke, the people started as if I had thrown fire-brands at them. So the Lord setting to his seal, and owning the word, I had not any excuse; then I said, Lord, if thou sendest me to hell to preach to devils, thy will

will be done. At the people's request, I now preach every night in the week in general, and the work increases much, and yet I am (in a sense) alone. I want to have some correspondence with Mr. W—y, my heart is knit to him, as the heart of one man, and so are many of the children which God has called by my mouth. Some of them indeed falleth into stillness, and they say I have the spirit of conviction, but not the gift of building up of souls: but however those who stand fast as they received Christ, they are more holy and happy, and so I think as well built up.

I beg you would let Mr. W—y know how all is with us, and desire him to pray for me, for I owe myself unto him: entreat him to send me a letter, and let me know his mind of these matters. Give my kind love to all friends with you: I should be glad to hear from you.

I remain your unworthy Brother in Christ,

J. Nels.



L E T T E R LXVIII.

Rev. Sir,

May 4th, 1742.

WHEN you left Bristol I had a great sight of the promised land, and surely I did taste of the fruit thereof: but now it seems at a greater distance, yet I cannot doubt but my Lord will appear the second time, without sin unto salvation, and it may be very suddenly. O that I may be found watching! sometimes I find my soul so poor and heavy, so dull, and naked of spiritual comfort, that I have nothing left but a sense of pardoning love: Yet at such times I have found a greater resignation

resignation to the will of God, than at some others.

I earnestly long to do the will of my heavenly Father. None but the searcher of hearts knows how my soul thirsts to love and obey him. My spirit groans to be delivered from the bondage of corruption: I want to be nearer to Christ and to become one spirit with him, in a fuller sense of the word, than I have yet attained.

Since the beginning of last week I have had, almost continually, a sinking and depression in my spirit, attended with an inward trembling, which so affects my body, as if my life was departing from me. O that it might be a symptom of the old man's death. O that Christ might be fully formed in me. This close exercise of mind brings such a lowness of spirit, and inward mourning, that my heart seems to bleed with contrition, and I could be content to weep my life away at the feet of Jesus: in the midst of this I find settled peace, and solid comfort.

In this state, I do not find I can ask, or desire joy or grief, light or darkness. but to be kept from offending God, and empowered to use, as I ought, the talents he gives me, that they may answer the ends of his glory, my advantage, and his people's good. I never see the power of God more visibly, than when it is perfected in my weakness, in doing the least good to any other: for many times I cannot help asking pardon of my Lord for my poor, yea sinful manner of performing my duty in any respect; and especially in admonishing and reproving others: and yet the Lord doth frequently bless to others, those labours I have need to repent of myself. At the present I find such self-abasement, as makes me hateful to myself when others speak well of me.

I find I can now declare my mind unto you with great freedom, as frequently I can in writing unto others; and though I speak from the overflowing love, and great abundance of my heart, yet I am afraid least this should be a means of their thinking of me above what I really am. I am so full of weaknesses and infirmities, that I fear least my conversation should rather be a stumbling-block, than an agreeable example. I have often reflected upon myself for my being less watchful at some other times, than when in your presence. If I always saw myself as seen by my maker, I should not be liable to these changes. I could at this time tell you the inmost secrets of my heart; and I could be willing that there were a window opened in my breast, that all the children of God might see every thing which passes there.

It is not so easy a matter to discover the state of another, by the strictest personal examination, as by a daily observation of their behaviour in their respective callings, how they spend their time in private, and whether they buy up every opportunity of doing good. If our soul is but yet partly renewed in the image of God, there is not any time for trifling; and if it is wholly renewed, there is not any inclination unto it, but an insatiate desire of doing every thing for God. They say, my Father worketh hitherto, and I work. O that none of us who have received grace, may ever be guilty of wasting our Lord's goods, or neglecting the improvement of the talents we have delivered unto us. But, O Lord, grant that we may be burning and shining lights, and adorn thy gospel in all things. O that I may be a pearl in your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

I am your unworthy Friend in Christ,

S. D.

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I had such glorious thoughts and apprehensions of God as I never had in all my life before: and surely I had a taste of that perfect love of God, with which I hope to be filled to all eternity. O how I long for the meek and lowly mind which is also in Christ! then, only then shall I find rest to my soul.

I have many trials and temptations, and sometimes I am afraid I shall fall by them. *Without are fightings and within are fears*; but I pray to be delivered from the plague of my own heart, which is worse than any thing else to me, and I find help. I beg you would also pray for me that I may not faint in the end, but that I may run with steady patience, the race set before me; always looking unto Jesus who has been the author until he become the finisher of my faith.

My master's behaviour is often a very great burden and trial to me, yet even in this, when I look to Jesus, I am a conqueror. One or other of the still brethren are often with him, and I think he seems to incline to their way very much, he says there is much sweetness and love among them. When I tell him what I think of him, he tells me, I cannot see all things clearly yet, and what is sin to me may not be so to him: I think by this rule one might have an excuse for the breach of any commandment. That which is sinful in itself, is sinful to every one who does it. But I leave them to their own master to stand or fall; although I know by experience, to be in their company, is hurtful to me.

I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and simply to love and follow him whithersoever he goeth, through fire and water, and all trials he may permit to come upon me till he brings me into the wealthy place. I trust he will

will give me power to deny myself, and take up my cross daily. I have yet many foolish, and hurtful desires; but the strongest is that of following Jesus; and I say of the other, *these shall he destroy by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his appearing.* I am less than the least of all my father's children, yet I trust I shall be a jewel in the Lord's cabinet, and your crown of rejoicing in that day which is approaching. I should be glad of a few lines from you, if it was the Lord's will, if not, his will be done. May the Lord direct and bless you in all you do and say, and fill you with the blessing of the gospel of peace.

I am your unworthy Sister, &c.

E. H.



L E T T E R L X I .

My dear Friend,

Hitherto God has helped me! I still desire to be inwardly, and perfectly, sanctified, united to Christ, filled with God, and guided by the Holy Ghost. I delight in God above all temporary good, yet I have not perfect love, I have not received the little child in the name of Jesus! My conceptions of christian perfection; may be sometimes too high, and at other seasons too low. The more I know of God and myself, the more I am sensible that I know little of either! Love is that by which I understand most of his nature. Light is that whereby I conceive best of his glory. O! what need of faith, to cast down reasonings! and of divine love to satisfy the empty and hungry soul! Christian conversation has been eminently blest to

me; and now that I am in a great measure deprived of it, I pray that Jesus would manifest himself to me more than ever. May he convince me of what is wrong in my heart, and manner of life; and yet if he did not sustain me, this conviction would be intolerable! I hope you, and my other dear friends pray for me. O! that I may be found faithful. My kindest love to — &c. peace, be with you; and may I see you again that we may praise the Lord together.

I am your affectionate Brother, &c.

T. W.

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L E T T E R LXII.

My dear Brother,

THE late conversation we had, together with your favour in writing caused much unity of spirit with you. I have often thought the wisdom and understanding which God has given you, will prove in effect a misfortune, unless you are careful to join with them the simplicity of a little child; since you must necessarily lose much of the sweet conversation of the simple followers of the Lamb from the very notion they have of you.

I know you clearly see that all gifts without charity will profit you nothing, and I trust your continual prayer to God is, that with all his other blessings, he would increase in you abundantly even this grace of the Spirit.

I know the will of God concerning you is that you should be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. With respect to your present trials, you may remember I told you I was not altogether a stranger

to it, from the apprehension of its being e'er long in my own case, and therefore I have inured myself to the loss of any or all things if the Lord call me to it.

One day in my retired moments, the language of my heart was, " Lord I cannot bear such and such a trial with the grace I have, I pray thee give me more;" and that scripture was applied with great clearness, " I will be a father to the fatherless, and defend the cause of the widow. " O may the Lord give you to feel from those blessed words what he did to unworthy me: I had not the least scruple left, but was enabled fully to cast my care upon the Lord. I know my God shall supply all my wants out of his abundant fullness! doubt not my brother, but that he whose you are, and whom you serve, will be with you, and when you pass through the fire it shall not burn you, neither shall the waters overflow you: this dark and cloudy day shall e'er long end in sunshine! only be faithful, be obedient.

At present my husband and child are in a bad state of health. The Lord is visiting both your house, and mine; and this I am certain of, it is in great love to our souls! he will have us pass thro' and thro' the fire, till we leave all our dross, and come forth more pure than fine gold! May the gracious designs of a dear Redeemer be answered upon us for his names sake!

My kind love to your dear wife, if in the land of the living: tell her she has reason to bless the Lord from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.

He is cutting short his work in righteousness. He is about to take her from the evil to come! the angels are hovering round her, to do their last and most delightful office! to convey her soul
into

into Abraham's bosom! then all will be broad eternity! all light! all love! then her happy spirit shall sweetly mingle with those around the throne, and sing hallelujah to God and the Lamb, for ever and ever. I trust our prayers to God for you will not be wanting,

From your affectionate Sister in Christ.

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 L E T T E R LXIII.

Dear and worthy Sir,

July 27, 1742.

I Very heartily embrace this opportunity of writing my mind unto you, to inform you what the Lord has been doing for, and in my soul. Since I was with you in Branford, we began our march, and such a one I never had before. When I came to my quarters the first night, I had not any place of secrecy for prayer: but I made a closet of the necessary place, and Christ made a paradise of it unto me. Here I met my divine master. He is no respecter of places, more than persons. I could have been contented to have made that place which was my closet, and my paradise, my bed also, for the inexpressible sweetness I felt in the presence and love of my Redeemer.

The next night when I came to my quarters, I was, if possible, many times more happy than before. O the sweet presence of Christ which I there found! I cannot forbear to speak of it, and yet an angelic tongue cannot describe it. What wondrous work is this he hath done in my poor heart! I am as if I was filled with the love of God, and swallowed up with the thoughts of God, and his love towards me! when I think of

his having fixed his love on such a vile unworthy creature as me, who by nature was as black as hell, I am melted into tears. O the love of Christ to poor sinners! He is fairer than the sons of men: yea he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I was going on in the broad way to destruction, but he prevented me by the blessings of his goodness: if he had not had compassion on me, where should I have landed? surely I must have landed in hell. O my dear Lord, how shall I mourn for my sins; how shall I praise thee for the pardon of them! consider O my soul the countless multitudes of benefits thy God has bestowed upon thee, and be thou confounded and ashamed of thy ingratitude.

I entreat almighty God to give me help, that I may press forward toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. For I am not to rest in any thing, or in any measure of grace attained on this side of heaven; but still be seeking after farther discoveries of Christ, until I enter within the veil, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary enjoy an everlasting rest. O for perfect freedom from sin! yet it cleaves unto me in all my duties; I cannot get rid of it, however I shall one day be free.

I had only one in the whole troop, who would converse and pray with me, and he is gone after the other: the dog is returned to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire; so I am left alone among a company of bears and lions. But God is all-sufficient: he adds proportionate strength to my faith, for which I thank his dear name. I hope, dear Sir, you will excuse me in writing unto you, and take the trouble to read this, for I had no body to break my mind to. I would have got some body to have wrote for me,

self. I told him, if he was a preacher he would lead men to hell, not to heaven: his mouth was stopped, and he looked confounded, while all in the room looked one on another. After the evening service I spent my time in reading, singing, and praying: my heart was in great peace, yet I could but mourn as a dove in my solitude. I seemed as a sheep wandered from the fold, or as a branch cut off from the vine, or a member from the body: my heart is so united unto my sisters in band, that when I am from them, I think part of myself is wanting. O the blessedness of the communion of saints! I often think of the happiness my brethren and sisters enjoy, and it causes me to grieve that I am absent from them; which sometimes makes me fear that I love the children of God better than their Father, and the means of grace better than the will of God. It is enough that Jesus loveth me, and beareth me up in his arms. This sight and sense of God's presence made me ashamed of my grieving, and comforted me greatly: my heart was as melted wax, and my soul was much humbled before God.

On Monday I spake freely to two women in the waggon, one of which was a Scotch woman; she told me the people of Scotland loved God, and kept the sabbath so strictly that one must not carry water through the streets on that day. Indeed she had a good desire to be saved. I exhorted her to pray, and not faint, not even for wandering thoughts, of which she complained. When I desired the other not to swear, she told me I should quarrel with my husband, if I would not let him swear.

When I met my husband he could not speak for joy to see me; I was also very glad to see him, but did not feel that great flutter in my breast, as I did
upon

upon any sudden joy, before I was united to God. Many came to welcome me to Portsmouth, and professed to be glad to see me; but when I opened my mouth to reprove them for swearing, they all fled away from me.

As soon as I was alone with my husband he told me he had been in very great dangers at sea: I asked him, if he had been killed then, what would have been his everlasting state? "If I had died I should have been saved for the sake of Christ who died to redeem all men." I said, do you think you deserve hell? "No, my dear, for I do not swear "and game as bad as my companions." I told him, your heart is just the same with theirs, only the grace of God restrains you more than they; you have never done one good thing in your life, but has always sinned against God, continually: he was greatly struck at that expression, his heart condemned him, and he began to relent, and asked if I had any petition to ask of God in his behalf. I prayed with him with great freedom and enlargement of spirit, and confidence in God; his eyes were melted into many tears, and he said, "I am "very wicked indeed. If I could live with you I "should love God, but it is impossible on board "a man of war." I said, all things are possible with God, *He is able to save unto the uttermost*, either by land or sea. When he asked me to see the Victory man of war, I told him if all the curiosities of the world could be brought together in one place, I would not lose the time to see them, I could spend it better. In short, I spake very freely unto him of the things appertaining to the kingdom of God.

He said, he once read so much till he was almost melancholy at the sight of his own wickedness, and had like to have gone into despair; he told the

chaplain of it, who bid him leave off reading so much, and he would be well again: I told him the chaplain was not his friend, for that God was striving to bring him to a good state. He revealed his sins unto him that he might through penitence, and faith in Christ be forgiven. He said also, you once told me in one of your letters that you did not know till lately the nature of true religion, now you do: O that I might know the same, but if we so much as go to prayer here, we are laughed at and reviled; and how should one know religion, and be acquainted with God, if one has not opportunity to enquire of him in prayer? I answered, my dear, you should not be kept from prayer for the fear of being laughed at, for this would be the case if you were not on board a ship: I, you know am in London joined unto a society of people who are seeking the Lord, and the men of this world say all manner of evil of us falsely. So it was ever since the fall: persecution began in Cain, and it has been continued, in one way or other, ever since. If you was in London, and rose at five o'clock every morning, as I do, to hear the scriptures expounded, the men who know not God, would think you mad, therefore I say we must not be kept from religion by a little foolish laughter, or if we should suffer greater inconveniencies.

I was at Portsmouth only one day, and then set out for London again. I was in many temptations, but I prayed unto the Lord, and he strengthened me. First, satan tempted me to think my friends did not love me, but I thought if God loves me, it is enough: then he tempted me to laugh at idle things, and to say light words, I cried unto the Lord, *Lord save me or I perish*, and I found help in time of need. There were but two persons in company with me, I speak of their swearing
 Q again

again and again, but with little success. A stage-player came in by the way, when I reprov'd him, he said nothing, but seem'd in much confusion.

When I came home my spirit rejoic'd greatly. O how I love the ordinances and people of God! I have a small trial, in want of work, but the trouble of it does not tarry long, I fly unto the Saviour, and he taketh it away. Yet the thoughts of my poor husband's condition return upon me, and so oppress me that I am well-nigh overcome. My soul is wonderfully drawn out in agonizing prayer for him. It may be the Lord will have compassion on him. Cries, and tears, and prayers shall not be wanting in his behalf.

Finally, the Lord, sheweth me that my heart is polluted with all manner of sin; I draw near unto him as a man full of diseases to a physician from whom he expects help. I doubt not but his blood will heal all my maladies, and make me throughly whole. Now, when I pray my heart appeareth so unclean, compared with the holiness of my Maker, that I am ashamed, and blush before him, while I remain in profound silence, quite helpless at his feet. Here I desire to be, here I am determin'd to wait, till the Lord maketh me, as he will.

Dear Sir, pray for

Your weakest daughter in Christ,

M. C.

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 L E T T E R LXV.

Rev. Sir, London, July 5, 1742.

THE following lines are the result of great joy which I almost continually feel in my heart:

the Lord is now reviving and carrying on his work in my soul. I know that my Redeemer liveth, I feel that I have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins. His Spirit is continually bearing witness with my Spirit, that I am a child of God. I have not any doubts or fears respecting my state. I feel a continual hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that I might partake more and more of the divine nature, of the power and fulness, and presence of God. God's presence on earth, is heaven begun; it is sweet indeed to my soul, as marrow and fatness, sweeter than honey or the honey comb. O that I might always enjoy the light of his countenance! O that my soul might always be enflamed with divine love! I do always love him in some measure, but I wish to love him more abundantly. I would have my soul changed into the nature of love. I want to be like the angels above. My continual prayer is, that I may not commit sin, but that the Lord would accomplish in me his will, by restoring me *unto the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ: by creating me after himself; and sanctifying me wholly in body, soul, and spirit.*

At intervals I find some hidings, some withdrawing of God's presence from me: but O what an aching void do I then feel in my soul! I am then restless, and importunate in my desires and endeavours after God till he return. At such times I feel as if it was a worm gnawing my soul; and nothing in the universe can give me any ease or satisfaction. The effect this has upon me is, I see the emptiness of the whole creation, without the Creator; I feel myself to be nothing but a heap of vanity and confusion. I find no remedy but crying, *God be merciful unto me; and help me a poor sinner.*

I desire to give glory to the grace of God, I now feel much power over outward and inward sin: far greater power than I have had for some years, even from the time I was in my first love. "O my Lord and my God, do thou continue to bestow on me thy poor helpless creature, this power continually: yea, do thou augment and encrease it day by day."

I am deeply convinced of the necessity of a pure heart, a single eye, and a new creation: yea rather I am convinced of the impossibility of my soul being happy without it. For indeed I can relish no other happiness, but what consists in the love of God, and in being like unto him, and in acting conformably to his will. None of the trifling vanities, or little perishing things of this world, can satisfy the great desires of my immortal spirit. The Lord hath given me a foretaste of heavenly delight, in contemplating the amiable perfections of the divine nature, and feeling my soul exalted by his loving presence, which has kindled such a flaming desire in my spirit for God, as can never be satisfied but with all his fullness. There is something in me continually craving. There seems to be an emptiness in me, a lack of something essential to my soul's happiness: which lack, I well know is the perfect stature of a man in Christ. It is that alone can make me happy. The want of which is the cause of these pantings, these desires, these achings and strong appetites, which do perpetually put me upon crying unto the Lord that he would transfer his image to my soul. That he would destroy all my sin, both outward and inward, both original and actual: that he would purify my heart, by restoring me unto perfect righteousness and true holiness, and making me a partaker of the divine nature, by lifting up the light of his coun-

countenance upon me, so that I may continually sit under the droppings of his sanctuary, and his shadow with great delight.

These are the desires the Lord has given me, and sure I am he will fulfil the desire of my soul according to his promise. *He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* I have already obtained the salvation which some, who are of little minds, speak of. I am saved from guilt, from fear that giveth great torment, and from the dominion of sin. I do not commit sin in St. John's sense. I am almost continually looking unto Jesus. I almost pray without ceasing, and am thankful for the glorious manifestations of the Lord. I rejoice frequently. But will this satisfy the mighty desires of my soul? no, it cannot, it will not, it does not. I am not yet swallowed up in God. I am not yet without intermission in a flame of love. This, this is, dear Sir, the thing I aim at. Help me by your prayers. I very much long to see you at my house. It is the very great love I have unto you, and the expectation I have of being profited by you, has made me so bold.

From yours in Christ, J. A.



L E T T E R LXVI.

Rev. Sir,

April 24, 1742. Bristol.

I Rejoice at this opportunity of writing unto you. At first, indeed, I found an unwillingness unto it, but I prayed unto the Lord that he would shew me if it was right I should. I find my soul does rejoice in God my Saviour. I feel a peace which passes all understanding, and which surmounts all doubts and fears. I have power over all sin, for

when I feel it stir in my heart, I directly look up unto the Lord Jesus, and he takes it from me: yet the enemy tells me that I am under a delusion, because I do not reason, that therefore I resist the spirit: and when he would convince me, I will not permit him: but I commend my cause to Jesus, and he shews me it is my business to live unto him from hour to hour, and from moment to moment. Glory be to my Saviour, for he is nothing but love; I could praise him till I could speak no longer. I feel burning desires, and hungnings, and thirstings which are stronger than death. I look for the Lord Jesus coming into my heart to seal me his abode, and make me one spirit with himself. I have a sure hope that he will accomplish his work. I hear his voice, and feel his love. I cannot tell what Jesus does for me, for it takes away my strength. I think I shall not be long in this world. I find my outward man decays more and more. I could rejoice greatly to meet death this hour. Come Lord Jesus! but he knows best. My time is in his hand, and I know he will finish the work of holiness in my poor heart. Now, even now I feel my heart in great peace.

Dear Sir, pray for me, that I may have no will but that of God's, and that I may be faithful to death. O that I may to the utmost improve the talents God has bestowed on such an unworthy sinner as I am. What matter of praise it is, that I am alive to hear the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ! What shall I render unto him for all his benefits. The name of Jesus is more to my soul than all the world. Every moment he gives me fresh tokens of his love. *He creates all things new.* Every moment opens new scenes of spiritual pleasure. What shall I do to love Jesus? I long to love him with my whole heart. O Lord give me strength

But the great question is, how, dear Madam, you and I may grow in grace by using the means of grace? for nothing is more visible than that many do this, who do not profit in holiness: and yet nothing is more certain than that the fault lies not in the means, which are well calculated to answer the end. 1. We must take special heed that we do not make the means, the end, and so rest in them as if they were the last thing we have to aim at. We should ever keep in mind that right tempers, and right affections towards God and man, is the thing in pursuit and not the mere praying, hearing, or reading, &c. 2. We should carefully avoid wanderings, slothfulness, and formality in duties: for the heart in duty, is the heart and soul of duty. Without this, our praying and reading, &c. are no more devout and spiritual performances than the motion of a clock is a vital action. But if we always look to Christ, and holiness in duties, and perform them with fervour, life and earnestness, we shall not fail to profit in righteousness and true holiness.

A clean heart is entirely desirable, and necessary; and in order to it, my dear, the more you consider that all your trials are appointed or permitted of God, the more will you be helped toward it, by them. Deadness to this world, and especially to our own will and desire, is quite necessary to the life of Christ. Desire always to feel the love of God shed abroad in your heart, and be not too easy without it: and desire this, not only for the ineffable sweetness it gives, but chiefly for the property of it, which is to kill sin, and the nature of it, which is holiness. Without this, you may love yourself, but you cannot love God for his amiable perfection, and infinite holiness, which is the right way of loving him.

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I should think myself very happy, and be very thankful, if I am made of any use to my dear friend; let all the glory be given unto God, it is his due. I am not incapable of getting good from you. Do not think too highly of me, it would lessen my profitableness to you. I am a worm of the earth, (though not an earth-worm) and am encompassed with many infirmities, which, the more you are acquainted with me, the more you will discover: nevertheless, I love the Lord Jesus Christ; and I believe with all the capacity I have at present, but have need to increase therein day by day. Pray for me, as I do for you: who am
 Your affectionate Sister and Servant.

LETTER LXVIII.

My dear Friend, Feb. 25 1761.

I Received yours with joy, I thank God, who has raised you up again, as also on account of Mr. — surely our God heareth, and answereth prayer. O how good it is to commend our cause unto him! "His ear attends the softest prayer."

Indeed, my dear, as you observe, it is a very difficult thing for a generous and gracious heart, to love enough, and not too much. I have not found any other way to keep clear of this extreme but by walking closely with God, and earnestly commending myself, and them to God: praying fervently that the Lord would more abundantly bless them for all their kindness to me, and at the same time endeavouring all I could, to lead them nearer to God. The wounds you got from the unkindness of others, and that sinking of your soul
 into

into idolatrous fondness, of which you complain, is occasioned by the want of more inward spiritual strength. My love, you want a more watchful spirit, that you may, in the midst of these hinderances you meet with, keep your attention fixed on the blessed Jesus; so shall his love flow into your heart, and be your continual strength.

I hope it is not a name you aim at, as it is abundantly more than a name, even a new nature which you want. I think you will find it best, not to reason about what God has already done for you, but rather pray him to pour out his spirit more and more upon you, which is the only thing you want, and this will help you to believe all the promises of God, while the spirit applies them with power to your heart. I am greatly desirous indeed of your prosperity, and so is your Lord: Jesus loves you, but you do not come to him so freely, and constantly as you ought, or you would have more abundant life. But now take up your cross, and after your dear master go. Be a faithful witness for him, among his enemies, and he will witness clearly to your heart that you are all his own. O may the dear Lord Jesus bless you with an increase of his love.

My God is still my guide, and his arm is my sure defence, I have seen much, very much of his goodness, since I wrote last. And I remain,

Your inviolable Friend,



L E T T E R LXVIII.

My dear Friend,

Nov. 16, 1760.

THE two questions you ask in your last, are very weighty, and deserve to be duly considered.

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“ Do you, now, believe you love God with all
 “ your heart ? ” “ Are you nothing ashamed
 “ among the opposers of this glorious truth ? ”

If I can answer to the former, I certainly can to the latter: for I could not love God with all my heart, if I was ashamed of this, or any gospel truth; and if the latter as necessarily includes the former, I can answer heartily in the affirmative to both. I know not that I have, in the least, been ashamed of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, nor of professing my humble confidence in Christ, of my unfeigned love unto him, nor of my belief that he had and would save me from sin. And with regard to the present state of mind I am in, though I have been variously tried from every quarter, from pretended friends, and professed enemies, and from the prince of darkness, yet my heart stands fast believing in, cleaving constantly unto, and ardently loving the Lord Jesus. He is the sole monarch of my devoted soul. I desire nothing beside him: I have his loving, sweet, and powerful presence generally with me, and when he is not so sensibly and delightfully present, I am in an agony of prayer, and cease not 'till he returns; at the same time I can say from my heart, *thy will be done*. This is the language of my naked heart.

“ Oh ! 'tis hell from thee to part,

“ Press me closer to thy heart.”

Since I came here I have had great freedom, and sweetness both in preaching and prayer. It is my only design, and delight to do my Saviour's work and will. This I do at present in some small degree; but I cannot tell you how much I long to love God more abundantly than ever I did, that my obedience flowing from love, may be exten-

ive as my powers, and delightful to my soul. And yet I have already, very frequently, such love to Jesus Christ, it is so shed abroad in my heart, that it fills my soul with heavenly comfort, and makes me ready to lay down my life for Christ, or the brethren.

I think this is a short sketch of the situation of my mind, as near as I know it. I should be glad if you would favour me with the best advice and help you can give me.

I remember the happy moments we once enjoyed, with gratitude to God, and affection to you: and if ever Providence shall indulge us with a return of the same opportunities, it will be our duty to give thanks, and I heartily pray we may have wisdom from God to make the best use of them we possibly can.

You know it was not my constitutional, or besetting sin by nature, furiously, and suddenly to resent those who opposed me; neither am I in much danger from that quarter yet: I am in vastly more danger from those who love me, and so think, and speak too well of me. Delicate praise, nicely administered, is hard to withstand: it steals imperceptibly into the heart, and does mischief, before the unwary person suspects any harm. Yet even from this doth the Lord preserve me, with much application unto him.

There are several persons here, who are deeply sensible of the necessity of an entire change of the tempers and dispositions of their souls, in order to their glorifying God on earth, in a holy conversation; and their being capable of being in his presence for ever hereafter. They now perceive their grand mistake lay in this, in thinking, that altho' such a full renewal of soul, in the image, and likeness of Christ, might be necessary to eternal

nal glory, yet that God would effect it before he removed them from this life. Too great, or rather too false a dependance on this, betrayed them into present indifference. And it is to be feared, this is too common a case. The holy scriptures bid us fight, and wrestle, and run; *to use all diligence to make our calling, and election sure*: and when we do this, we may safely leave the time when, and the manner how, God will accomplish his great work in us, to his sovereign will. But when we relax our earnestness, upon a mistaken presumption of our being made holy sometime, we are in the way to foul apostacy, and not in the way to final salvation: From this, and all the devices of satan, good Lord preserve thy people, and my dear friend in particular.

I am, with much affection,
your unworthy brother.



L E T T E R LXX.

My very dear friend,

July 20, 1760.

IT is now Sunday evening; and after the labours of another sabbath, I am weak and weary, but in a happy situation of mind, and a very good humour, going to write to my friend. 'Tis to be hoped I shall make some amends in this, for my short comings in the last. It is true, I was not overcome of openness, and expressions of freedom, yet the Lord knoweth, I had not, neither have I any thing at present, in my heart toward you, but love, and good will. I believe I have very few such friends. I heartily desire our friendship may be continued, and our usefulness

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to each other increased much more than ever. I think it is founded on a sure basis, the love of God. And I doubt not but it will continue through this life, and be renewed in distant worlds, to continue to all eternity.

My meaning, with regard to particular friendship, was this: we may desire the favour, and help of one, or more christian friends, and for the sake of the spiritual profit we expect from them, we may do, and forego many things to continue in their esteem, without betraying pride, a want of humility, or seeking the honor which cometh of men: but we cannot indulge a desire of esteem and favour from people in general; especially when our desire is warm and importunate, and favour and esteem the end of our pursuit, without discovering an unmortified affection to the things of this world. There is no good, or ill in men thinking highly, or meanly of me, farther than I am enabled to do less or more good unto them, or receive less or more good from them. If they think me the best saint on earth, it does not make me at all better; it may make me abundantly worse, if I learn to think more highly of myself, than I ought to think thereby: on the other hand, if they think me an ungodly hypocrite, or an incarnate devil, it does not make me either more unholy, or unhappy, if I am not angry thereat. Let us always consider ourselves, neither more or less, than we are before God, and it will cure us of this disease.

Your measure of doing good, may not always be adjusted by your desire of it, but by your power to do it. Your desire may exceed your circumstances, and if followed, would involve you in evils

evils which would over-balance the good. However, there are very few who err on this hand; and where they do, a little discretion will put them into the way again.

I have, this morning, just been preaching from Heb. 13, xiii, xiv: *Let us therefore go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.* How indispensibly necessary, thought I, is it, that I should be fully determined to take this advice myself, who am going to enforce it upon others. I lifted up my heart to him, from whom I receive every good gift I need, and he gave me power to resolve upon this great enterprize. I went forth, and exhorted my brethren to the same, and, (if I knew my heart) was as willing to go before them, as to have them follow me. So I now look upon myself, as enlisted under the banner, and among the sufferers of Christ. I cannot desert this post, or fly from any danger I am lawfully called unto, without shameful dishonour to my profession, and great prejudice to my soul. But I hope to stand in the might of my glorious Captain.

My soul was very much affected with joyful expectation, when I came to consider, "We have no continuing city here, but we seek one to come." It put new life into all my powers, and courage into my heart. Said I, am I in quest of a city which has foundations, whose Builder, and Maker is God; which has no need of a temple, the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, being the temple of it; nor of the sun, and moon, the glory of God, and of the Lamb being the light thereof; how can my heart languish? how very transient is the season of reproach, and then I shall be advanced to durable honour; how very short the time of suffering, and then I shall be raised to everlasting happiness.

happiness. Oh! my dear friend, what a blessing it is, that we are only sojourners here: I would not have otherwise for a thousand worlds.

I cannot neglect to give you some little account of the undeserved favours, I receive from God daily. My cup of consolation frequently runs over, and my springs of comfort never cease altogether.

“ So many wonderful gleams of light,
 “ And gentle ardors from above,
 “ Have made me fit like seraph bright,
 “ Some moments on a throne of love:
 “ Oh! what is virtue, why had I,
 “ Who am so low, a taste so high?”

I say, and say it from my heart, before my Maker, who knoweth me better than I know myself, unto all-created good, thou art not my God: thy presence, with the absence of my beloved, would be a state too intolerable to sustain: the enjoyment of thee, without the fruition of the blessed Jesus, would be a destitution not to be borne. When I see my dear Redeemer, and the beauty of his grace and holiness, and the glories of his kingdom, all that the world calls great or good, appears as nothing in my eyes: when his love is shed abroad in my heart, as it usually is, in some considerable degree, I can wink all-created beauty into deformity, and all sensitive enjoyments lose their relish.

“ Lord! I love thee, thou knowest, who knows all things; else why do all the faculties of my soul thus clamour after thee, and cleave unto thee? if I do not love thee, why would I die rather than offend thee? Why do I fear hell less than thy frown, and desire heaven less than thy smile? why do I continually long more for thee, than for my daily food?”

I thank God my health has lately been a little better than usual. My soul is solidly happy. I hunger and thirst after righteousness, and I believe the Lord will fulfil my largest desires. I wish I was more abundantly humble, and watchful. If I had a thousand times as much strength, and ten thousand tongues, and all eternity before me, I should think all vastly too little to praise my Redeemer with. Help me to praise him; and pray unto him that I may be more faithful, and fruitful, unto death.

M. D. died on Thursday was fortnight, very happy, in full assurance of faith, with a clean heart, and clear prospect of eternal glory. I preached her funeral sermon on the Sunday following, to a large congregation, from Gen. 49. xviii. *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.* And last Sunday I performed the like service for Mrs. H. There were a larger company than before. After sermon, we bore her relicks to the church yard, attended with several thousand hearers, and an incredible multitude of affected spectators, while we sung the praises of the Lord, and the happiness of those who die in him. So solemn a sight I never saw before! Lord, when shall I be the occasion, and subject of such a solemnity? the portion of scripture she made choice of for this occasion, was the language of her mind, and the picture of her state, in the latter part of her life, and at her death. Psalm 119. lxxv, lxxvi. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.*

Time flies, and the post cannot stay: eternity is just at hand, and the world going to conclude its slabbard tale. The Lord give us a safe, and speedy

and, less or more, *be baptized with the baptism, which he was baptized with. Every one that is perfect, shall be as his Master.* You are called to be conformed to a suffering, as well as a glorified Saviour: and must have fellowship with him in his suffering, that you may partake of his glory. Through much tribulation all the saints enter into the kingdom of God; and especially those who enter deepest into the spirit of it on earth, and highest into the glories of it in heaven. Yet blessed are they who follow Christ in the painfully pleasant path of regeneration, and abide with him in all his temptations. Their crown shall be as much distinguished for its brightness in heaven, as their sufferings were distinguished for their blackness on earth. The way of the cross, is the sure way to eternal glory.

Do not think that a bare freedom from evil tempers, is the highest christian perfection you can possibly arrive at; but aim at perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Neither expect, when you shall come into this state, to appear in your own eyes, a fine, wise, and glorious creature, no: expect to be like a little child, that has to learn to walk, and almost every thing to ask of its parents. Expect to be astonished, as well at your ignorance, simplicity, littleness, and meanness, as at the infinite blessing bestowed upon you, and the inconceivable change wrought in you. An unutterable depth of humility, teachableness, and mildness, is the supreme height of that perfection, which none can conceive but those who arrive at it.

You cannot follow your master, and fight under your captain, unless you are clothed with all the armour of God. And then you will find many, and hard battles to fight; but victory, sure victory will ensue. Do you now walk in white with Christ?

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If you do, praise your loving Lord, and look to Jesus every moment. Go forward, and may the Lord teach you by his blessed spirit, and refresh you by his love. If not, now dare to believe, lay hold on the hope set before you; the glorious hope of perfect love. Jesus will give you all you stand in need of. The Lord will bury you in his grave, that you with him may rise. Then, when he who is your life may appear, you also may appear with him, and be for ever with the Lord. Even now behold the fair beauty of the Redeemer, lie at the feet of the ever living, ever loving Jesus: let your soul rest in his mighty hand, that he may form and mould it into his own image. He waiteth and wanteth to be gracious, cleave unto him, and lose yourself in him.

The Lord does work, and who shall hinder him? A week since, a few friends came to see me, we joined together in prayer, particularly for Nancy's deliverance; the Lord poured upon us the spirit of grace, and of supplication, in which we continued an hour and an half: the Lord, the great deliverer, heard and answered us. He gave her the desire of her heart. These were some of her expressions. "Lord, I do believe! My soul hangs on thee! thou wilt seal me to the day of redemption! O blessed Jesus, thou wilt keep my soul for ever! glory be to thee!" In such phrases as these she abounded for a considerable time: she since remains happy. Our God is indeed, a God that heareth prayer. Whatever we ask according to his will, he will do it for his own name's sake.

I bless the Lord, I feel my soul lying safe in his mighty hand, and I am kept in perfect peace. While I am in a multitude, my soul is retired with Jesus from the noise and shew thereof. Yet how little is that I have received, in comparrison of
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that I see before me, and at which I aim. Grace is of a growing and encreasing nature, and wherever the encumbrances of self-indulgence, pride, evil-desire, unbelief, &c. are cleared away, it will not fail to ripen into perfection. Many, it may be, have received a larger stock than I have, but it is my duty, and I believe, ever will be my care and pleasure, to be thankful for what I have, and to pray for what I want. I want to have my life more sensibly hid with Christ in God; and to believe, love, and obey in a fuller manner, and larger measure, than I do at present. Yet a little, a very little while, and eternity will be here, and land us safe in the wished for port. We shall meet in the realms of endless day. We shall then see the glorious face of our beloved Jesus, without a veil. The painful distance shall subsist no more. We shall, even we shall behold him on his great white throne, and delightfully cast our crowns at his feet, and hail the Lamb who died to redeem us unto God, in endless songs, which angels cannot learn. I am his by twice ten thousand ties, which bind me to his heart. He is my God, and my all. Is he not your God? surely he is. Do not you love him with all your heart? "He is altogether lovely. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Can you hold out any longer? will you yet refuse to give him your heart, who has bought it with blood divine? O! now let redeeming love make an entire conquest of your yielding heart.

I am, your affectionate Sister,

in the dear Lord Jesus.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

My dear, dear friend, Sept. 2, 1760.

I Received yours, and am heartily glad, and unfeignedly thankful to hear you speak in so heavenly a strain. I think a joyful spirit lives, and breathes in every line. Thanks be to my God, who is all-sufficient to fill the largest desires of our immortal souls. Are our desires of holiness, boundless? so are the promises of God; and boundless also is the promiser. Who can find out the Almighty to perfection? his being is an ocean of infinities, where all our thoughts are drowned; a fountain of living waters, where our thirst is quenched, and our souls refreshed; an inexhaustible store, where all our wants are supplied; and a blessed centre, where all our wishes, desires, and affections meet.

O! how I long to rise higher into his divine image, and sink lower into the humble mind of Christ. Lord, when shall I appear before thee? what shall I do to set forth thy praise? If I had ten thousand tongues, I would praise thee with them all: if I had ten thousand hearts, I would love thee with them all: if I had ten thousand bodies, I would gladly sacrifice them all to thy service. O blessed Jesus, what can possibly be too dear for thee, who has not spared thy precious blood, but has shed it freely for so unworthy a creature! my demerit exalts thy boundless grace.

Thy love sent thee into my nature, and the world wherein I dwell; and shall it not draw my heart into thy image and glory? Be gone, ye earthly trifles, and every creature enjoyment,
which

which would detain me from my Lord's embrace: you shall not flatter my affections; you could not recompence my lo's. O Lord, thy name is as ointment poured forth, more exquisitely delightful than the richest perfumes of the apothecaries, or the powders of the merchants, yea, than the most finished pleasures of sense. How sweet it is to love Jesus! Oh! that I had a more simple, humble, loving, and teachable heart. I long to be all like Christ, for the love I have unto him.

But I forgot myself, that I am writing to one who knows Jesus, and his charms better than I do. My dear friend, teach me how to know and love him better. I have had some happy interviews with S. R. which put me in mind of the Yorkshire times: Lord, when it is good for us, thou wilt restore and repeat them; till then the absence of them will be for the best. Farewell for ever, in the Lord Jesus.



L E T T E R LXXIV.

My dear Brother,

IF administers matter of joy, and thankfulness to me, and all who look upon themselves as strangers, and pilgrims, here below; to hear that one, and another, is landed safe upon that happy shore, where the wicked cease from troubling; and the weary are at rest! what is there worth living for? to die to behold his blessed face without a veil, is a blessing indeed!

There we shall see his face and never never sin. There from the rivers of his grace, drink endless pleasures in. I pray God this dispensation may
have

have a sanctified effect upon you. May the great teacher of Israel teach you; and may I be a simple learner at your feet.

I find it is with some difficulty I write to you on any subject save that of desiring your help and advice for my own soul. I abhor myself in dust and ashes. I am weak as helpless infancy. I find the desire of my soul is to gain by every loss, to keep my eye on the mark. I would chuse the most excellent way. I desire ever to see God in all, and all in God. I would be so fully certified of the wisdom and goodness of God in every dispensation, as to say from the ground of my heart, "Thy will be done." Let us be thankful for the measure of these graces we find in ourselves, and press forwards till we experience all that the Lord has promised to give.

Let me give you a hint with respect to your children. You know the Lord hath entrusted you with their souls as well as their bodies: it should be matter of great moment with you to take heed into whose family they are cast.

The Lord be with you on your journey: if Providence should cast your lot in our circuit I believe many hearts would rejoice. Remember me affectionately to all friends.

From your affectionate Sister in Christ,

R. H.

L E T T E R LXXV.

Much esteemed Friend,

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

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

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

I remember in my first letter to thee, I observed if thou couldest shew me a religion more holy, or more lovely than our own principles lead to, I would readily embrace it. So far I must confess; it has

pleased

pleased God through thy ministry, to give me a more perfect view of the glorious law of liberty, than I had ever conceived before; yet he has not in the least convinced me, that any outward ordinance I have not yet complied with, could be acceptable to him, but shews me my whole heart is what he requires of me; and if I may so say, I am more established in primitive Quakerism, than I ever was in my life before. My heart is enlarged. My faith is encreased. Often after hearing you, my soul has been filled as with new wine. But I could not remain long here. My own unprofitable thoughts have returned upon me; and indeed at present, these seems to be the greatest enemies I have to encounter with. O! when shall I be able to say? I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me.

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

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

I cannot help desiring to see thee, or thy brother, and I hope Providence will permit me to hear one of you a few times before I go into H——shire, and if thou hast leisure, I should take it as a favour to have a few lines from thee, whilst I remain in this barren place, friend C—— will convey them to me.

May the great God of truth, bless thee in all thy undertakings. Mayest thou dwell in the secret place of the most high; and abide under the shadow of the Almighty; is the sincere desire of thy real, though

Unworthy Friend,

S. P.

L E T T E R LXXVI.

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

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

I fully

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

When I am writing to others, I mostly feel such divine comfort, and heavenly joy break in upon my soul, that I cannot forbear confessing how good my Lord is to me; but when this fervency of spirit is abated, I am ready to reflect upon myself, and say, perhaps I shall make my friends think I have attained to more than I really have. I would fain be without guile. I often wish I could discover my heart as it is; Lord, shew me the depth of evil, that is in me, is my sincere cry. The things of this world, give me no delight. At times, I seem as one who has nothing to do with them; and I long to get home, that I may enjoy my Beloved without intermission; for it seems to me, as if the end of my days would be a time of great rejoicing. And yet, when I consider how many have tasted of the good word of life, and longed as I do to dwell with Jesus, and have nevertheless forsook him, it fills me with strong desires, that he would speedily finish his work, and take me to himself. But I know this is wrong; I ought to have no desire, but that his will may be fulfilled in me. Surely it is his will, that I should be without carefulness; therefore, I trust he will preserve me from the cares of this world, and in his own time prepare my soul for his abode. It seems to me, as if he was emptying me, in order to fill me with the riches of his love; but alas! self is still alive: I feel, and abhor it; for I know I cannot enter into Canaan until this grand enemy is slain. When I think on what I once was, a great change seems

to be wrought in me; but when I compare what I am, with what I ought to be, I find the work is but begun! I am filled with admiration, at the goodness of God to me: of all his servants, I seem to do the least for his glory; and yet his banner over me is love! O! that I may be faithful. If works were to justify us, where must I appear? Lord! thou knowest none can love thee, but those who desire to serve thee; and thou acceptest of the little mite which is offered up in pure love to thee; and if I abide in thee, thou wilt purge me, that I may bring forth fruit to thy praise.

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

I have been constrained (since I have been in this place) to vindicate your doctrines: I sincerely wish, that all who hear you, would do you the justice not to condemn what they do not understand.

In the love and fellowship of the Holy Ghost, my soul tenderly salutes thee.

I remain thy unworthy Friend.

S. P.

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L E T T E R LXXVII.

Esteemed Friend,

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

I still

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

I long to know the will of my heavenly Father more perfectly, that all my time may be spent to his glory. The profits and pleasures of this world, appear in my eyes, altogether lighter than vanity. I think I may safely say, my treasure is in heaven. My affections are not set on things below. I am sure, the strongest desire of my soul, is, that Jesus would make his abode with me, and fulfil his will in me. I feel no other desire at present, as to my temporal affairs, but that Providence may order them most for my spiritual advantage. One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. I have found a great change in the fruit of my imagination, since I first heard you; which encourages me to hope, I shall witness the thoughts of my heart to be good continually: when this blessed change comes, I shall be at rest; for “Lord, thou knowest my desire is to awake with thy likeness, hasten the time, I beseech thee; for nothing can satisfy me, but thy having full dominion over me! O! quicken me with thy spirit, that I may call upon thee.” I know it must be my corruptions, which hinder me from constantly enjoying my God. O! may I receive faith,
to

to overcome all things. Our Saviour bids us *be of good cheer*; he has overcome the world; and I believe, all that follow him, shall obtain the victory. I know my Lord often breaks bread to my hungry soul, and hands forth to me the wine of the kingdom. He himself creates in my heart, a grateful remembrance of his love to me, by pouring into my soul thanksgiving and praise.

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

Yet am I still ungrateful, to this best of benefactors! I know, I do not love him as I ought; nor serve him as I desire. I find great reluctance in reproving sin; yet it grieves me when I behold it. I would fain persuade others (by being holy in all manner of conversation) to seek after the good which I enjoy. O! may I thus attain to be a preacher of righteousness. I have often wished my heart were laid open for all the world to behold it; for I am sure, they would see my affections are not set upon it, nor any thing in it.

I know

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

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

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

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

I believe thou hast reason for not letting me hear from thee; but I do not think it is to prevent my writing to thee, and therefore take this freedom. I can truly say, I hold no man's person in admiration; but I know 'tis the will of my Father, that I should highly esteem those in love, whom he has made instruments of good to me; for which reason, it would be a refreshing to me to hear of thy welfare.

fare. I am sure it is my fervent desire, that the people over whom the Lord has made you overseer, may become a church without wrinkle or spot, that the desire of thy soul may be satisfied. In the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,
I remain thy unworthy Friend.

S. P.



L E T T E R LXXVIII.

Dear Friend,

THY Letter I received, and have long thought to answer it. At times, my soul has been full of love; but I have not had opportunity to write to thee at those seasons; yet I cannot refrain telling thee, I still retain a lively gratitude, a sincere thankfulness to the Almighty, for bringing me acquainted with you; and I earnestly desire, that I may not be a forgetful hearer. I hope it has not only been a blessing to my own soul, but has diffused itself to others also. I find a constant desire to improve, not bury, the one talent committed to me; not that I may receive any praise; no, verily. I know I gain the contempt of the world, by spending my time with poor sinners; for I already hear, that I say, and do things that I never thought of: yet, I earnestly desire I may be employed by the Lord's people, if but as a hewer of stone, or a drawer of water; for I plainly perceive no member in his church is to stand idle; no vessel in his house is to be useless. I desire no extraordinary gifts to glorify my Father: all my wish is, that he would glorify himself by me, in the way and manner he thinks best. There is no blessing, I so constantly, and
fervently

fervently desire, as lowliness of heart. Pride is the strongest hold, the enemy of my soul has in me: I abhor it most of all sin, yet I oftener feel it stir in me than any other evil whatever; but I know if I continue looking unto Jesus, I shall be more than conqueror.

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

The next evening I went to a society of churchmen, which is kept at a Shoemaker's house. They read and prayed, and then concluded with singing. When they had done, I read a letter of S—— D——'s to them, and gave them a sermon on Perfection. Some of them are very loving to me, but other's are biggotted against the Quakers, and (I believe) think I have some design upon them. But I can truly say, I have no party to set up; I have no desire to promote any thing amongst them, besides holiness. Poor creatures, they are ignorant as yet; but the Lord does not despise the day of small things.

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

I grow stronger, for I feel my own weakness every day! All sin appears exceeding sinful to me: I often think what manner of person I ought to be
in

in all holy conversation. O! that all your hearers may be heartily concerned to bring forth fruit to the glory of God; for I am sure, unless we do, our condemnation will be greater than theirs who despise us!

I find an entire freedom, when I am writing to thy brother, or thee. An unspeakable blessing it is to me, that my God has removed all party religion far from me. I cannot cry up what God has done, in opposition to what he is doing: so long as we truly love our head, Christ Jesus, I am sure we shall love his members, suppose our judgment be not convinced of the truth of every opinion they hold.

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

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

Thy Friend,

S. P.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

I Return my dear friend many thanks for so soon answering my letter. I hope I can bless God for

his

his great goodness to you; and it shall be my prayer to my heavenly Father, that he would give you all that may conduce to make you happy in life, easy and joyful at the approach of death, and meet to partake of those pleasures that are at his right hand for ever. Let us yield ourselves unto God! I hope the Lord will give you grace to stand firm to the truth, unto the end. Indeed I have ever found it good to be on the Lord's side: and though as poor, faint-hearted, blundering a creature as ever was kept in the way; yet I bless the name of the Lord, who has not suffered me wilfully and wickedly to depart from him.

I see many running the heavenly race, and I would gladly run with them; but alas! I find myself too weak to keep pace with them: yet blessed be God, I am resolved by his grace, that though I cannot run with them, I will creep after them; and I hope shortly to sit at their feet in the New Jerusalem. But I cannot be content to have my friend take my pace: I would have him a runner: may the Lord grant he may be clad with zeal as with a cloak. I believe you see many things at present that might amuse a carnal mind, there are many smooth ways to hell: how difficult it is to avoid them all! what care and prayer does it require!

“ The path of virtue far more rugged is,

“ But Oh! it leads to everlasting bliss!

My best love to all friends,
I am, &c.

E. G.

L E T

T

all your trials; and a wise Adviser in every doubtful circumstance. The Lord bless you.

I am, &c.

E. G.



L E T T E R. LXXXI.

My dear Friend,

I Have often thought of my dear friends at L— since I left you.

I have now no one to speak my mind freely and fully unto, but Jesus Christ: in his attentive and compassionate ear, I pour out my frequent prayer; and he hears and helps me speedily: so that having now no human helps or comforters, I need none;

“ Christ is all the world to me,

“ And all my heart is love.”

I had a little illness the other week, but it was acceptable to me, and good for me. Nothing is amiss my Saviour doth. I need not be careful about any thing. For I know all things do, and will work together for my good, so long as I love him, which I intend to do for ever. Oh! the sweetness of that rest, which is obtained by leaving all desire, but that of pleasing and enjoying Jesus. One day here is better than a thousand. What are all the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world, when compared with the treasures of Christ's grace, the sweetness of his love he puts upon the saints? They bare not so great a proportion to them, as the smallest grain of sand, to the greatest mountain, or a second of time to ten thou-

land ages. If we always see them in this light, and feel them make correspondent impressions upon our minds, how easy will it be to prefer them to the other! How unable will the things of time be to warp our judgments, or draw our affections to their interest! With what patience shall we bear afflictions, losses, and disappointments: and with what ease shall we deny ourselves of any thing that would rob us of our Saviour's love! How light would slander and disgrace sit upon us, while conscious we are approved, and honoured of God! What a small thing to be poor in this world, when we have wealth enough at home, in heaven! and how can we possibly want pleasure, while we rejoice in hope of the glory of God!

Let not your heart say, "But this is not the case with me." When you examine your state, put mercy and loving kindness enough in the opposite scale to your demerit, and unworthiness. When you reason; let not unbelief but faith draw the conclusion, and when you are tempted, think not of your own weakness, but of Christ's strength. God be with your spirit.

Farewell.



L E T T E R LXXXII.

MY good Friend will not be surprized if I tell him, I have been some time hesitating whether I should write or not. By the light I have I see so much darkness, and so much vileness, that I fear almost to write a single sentence, lest I should be guilty of that mockery, which is an abomination to the God of sincerity.

You

You have sometimes gently reprov'd me for complaining; but is there not a cause? I can, I must complain; but not of my Lord: He is still gracious, or my ingratitude had sunk me beyond the reach of mercy, long e'er now. These lines are a proof that he is *gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of abundant kindness*. This shews you that I am out of hell. Nay more, you must glorify the Lord with me, for he tells me "I am thy salvation." O my brother, what a good Saviour is this that saveth me! what a great Physician is he who healeth me. It is true (and I must proclaim it aloud upon the house tops) that Jesus Christ does save even me.

Since I left L—— my soul has been in prison, "Deep called unto deep, at the noise of his water spouts; all his billows ran over me." I have been indeed like Jonah in the whale's belly; yet out of the belly of hell I cried, and he heard me. I sunk down insensibly, till I became as if I had had no God: temptation poured in like a flood: and for several days, I thought I could gladly have contented myself to have been a dog rather than a man. But in a little time he returned, and with loving kindness he gathered me. Did I not think you acquainted with these things, I should wave telling, what must appear enthusiasm to a natural man. In the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, he let me see that Christ's body was broken for me; that Christ's blood was shed for me: he healed my backslidings, and loved me freely. For three whole days I found his peace and love so eminently in my heart, that I began to think he had perfected me in holiness. O how good it is "to go by the foot-steps of the flocks, and feed one's kids besides the shepherd's tents!" but now I know he hath not yet brought me forth, I have not yet attained; I

feel my heart yet impure: but pray for me, while I tell you with reverence, even I begin to feel my conscience “quick as the apple of an eye.” I do not feel that humility I want in telling this,—I fear to proceed—but pray for me.

Let me entreat you my dear friend, to press forward, and strive to believe. Leave reasoning, and come nakedly to Jesus Christ, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

I know I am unworthy to speak in my Master’s name, yet I cannot contentedly see you groping in the dark, without telling you of the Sun of Righteousness. Indeed there is no humility in saying I am a pattern of mercy: ’tis plain truth, and I feel it: if he saves me, he is not willing that any should perish. *Now is the accepted time for you.* Cast not these words behind you, for God is willing you should now be saved. I am grieved, my soul mourns, because you dare not say “*The Lord is my righteousness.*” You stand at a distance; you do not venture on him. O commit your soul unto the Lord. He is able and he will keep it, and present it spotless at his Father’s right hand. While you seek him in his ordinances, *stand still, and see the salvation of God.*

Pray for me that I may be kept from the evil that is in the world. I hope to remember you (if living) before my Father’s throne, while

I am yours, &c.



L E T T E R LXXXIII.

My dear Brother,

I SHOULD have answered your kind letter before, but soon after the receipt of it, I set off for
N_____

N——, and am but lately returned. I have been sometimes tempted to leave off writing to any one, unless I was obliged to it; because I have thought, what I could say was so useless, that my friends might spend their time much better, than in reading my letters: But it is a base humility; a plant not of God's right-hand planting; and I must not yield. Indeed, I appear as it were, a beast before God; and often wonder, that any one takes notice of me. I feel myself more than ever I did, to be poor, and blind, and naked: but poor as I am, like the widow, let me cast in my mites, and wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. Right glad am I, that you have so sweet a sense of the pardoning love of God. Glory be to him for free grace!

“ That we—Children of wrath and sin,
 “ We should be call'd the sons of God!”

O! my brother! do you not feel the power of that word? *then shall you loath yourselves in your own eyes, when I am pacified towards you.* I think I am sick of wandering away from the fountain of life: I want to be a garden inclosed. When will my Lord appear, and lead captivity captive. He hath received gifts for me, rebellious as I am; and here will I rest. He hath chosen me in the furnace of affliction. I am the Lord's; for he hath bought me with the price of his precious blood. And now,

“ My feeble soul shall win the day,
 “ Tho' death and hell obstruct the way.”

But satan thrusts hard at me, that I might fall.
 I have need to grasp my shield; to hold fast my
 confidence.

confidence. I told you before, that the enemy would most of all assault you at this quarter: therefore, Paul wisely saith, *Above all take the shield of faith.* By faith, we shall remove mountains, stop the mouths of lions, and out of weakness be made strong.

This laying hold of the strength of God, is wonderful: it made one cry out of old, "Through Christ I shall do valiantly: I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." What would have become of so insignificant a creature as me, had it not been for this? O, Christ is all in all to my soul!

"When I appear in yonder cloud,
 "With all his favour'd throng;
 "Then I shall sing more sweet, more loud,
 "And Christ shall be my song."

O learn to love a precious Christ! you can never love him too much. Look on him, 'till you are changed into his image; till you are sealed to the day of redemption; I mean, till you are swallowed up in love.

The work of God goes on at L——. Many are awakened. Many are converted. Many are added to the church of such, as I believe, shall be saved. The fields are white, ready unto harvest: pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more faithful labourers. I believe satan's kingdom has got a severe blow, the Lord be praised! I must tell you something remarkable: one that had been mourning under a sense of sin a long time, was lately taken ill. For three days and three nights she was in strong agony of body and soul. With but very little intermission, she cried out all that time, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!*

At

At last, raising her voice, she shouted aloud, "Amen! Hallelujah! Glory be to God in the highest!" and fell back, and expired.—Let us join her, and cry Hallelujah, 'till with all the glorious throng above, we more perfectly sing to all eternity, "*Worthy is the Lamb to receive honour, and blessing, and praise.*" Even so Lord Jesus. Amen.

I am, &c.



L E T T E R LXXXIV.

My dear Friend,

YOUR kindness of the 5th ult. now lies before me, and was as a cordial; for when I received it, it gave great comfort and relief to my mind, at that time under some distress. Indeed, I have suffered many things lately, for want of the spirit of Eli. I do not find my evil nature will suffer me to say, "*It is the Lord, let him do what he will.*" But upon every little cross, my will is ready to rise in rebellion against God: I am fit to murmur, complain, and become impatient upon every cross that visits me. O how different is my temper of mind, from the disposition of the blessed, the redeeming Jesus! He was meek and lowly in heart; I am peevish and haughty in spirit. His whole life was made up of a series of temptations, of afflictions spiritual and temporal, at which he repined not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously: but I am an unresigned and wretched creature, without a due conformity of temper and disposition to my Lord. O that I could always say with sincerity
and

and truth, " *Not as I will, but as thou wilt, O Lord.*

This is my present state, in which I am not without hope, that that Saviour who died for me, will, of his free grace and tender love, destroy all these works of satan which still remain in me: that he will wash me in his blood, sanctify my nature, and in his due time beat down satan under my feet. But we must patiently wait the Lord's coming, and *He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

I am your sincere friend.



L E T T E R LXXXV.

Dear Sir,

I Received yours, and can assure you it came in an acceptable time.

" O what is friendship! why impress

" On my weak, wretched, dying breast!"

You are welcome to act the part of a patient, and trouble me (as you call it) with your complaints: you may depend upon the best assistance your unworthy friend is able to afford.

I am sorry your haste of unbelief causes you to have hard thoughts of him, who is love in the abstract. Your reasons for such a conduct are not sufficient. Forget not to offer praise for the mercies you have already received: by this means will you be enabled quietly to wait, and at the same time, earnestly to contend, for an increase of that faith, which will produce in you a greater abundance

dance of all the fruits of the spirit. As a means to this great end, pray for patience with yourself. Your uneasiness many times arises, when you remember those mercies by which you are distinguished from many who are around you, from considering what ungrateful returns you have made for this waste of love.

It would be well for you to dwell more upon the loving-kindness of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. This will have upon your mind a transforming influence. You will perhaps reply, "But you little know how many are my hinderances."—I am not entirely ignorant of what hurtful impressions your mind is susceptible: and I must intreat you, if you intend to grow in grace, to set a double watch upon that dangerous avenue to your soul, your imagination. You seem very sensible of the bad effects of giving loose to this excursive faculty: and if you narrowly examine your own heart, you will perhaps find, that that insensibility to the things of God, of which I have heard you complain, is occasioned by your imagination being too much employed with things of a contrary nature.

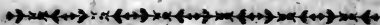
It is a great thing to keep the heart with all diligence, for truly of it are the issues of life. You will find occasion often to remember the words of our Lord; *He that will be my disciple, must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.* Your happiness will greatly depend upon a right division of your time. Your business requires many hours of the day: may the Lord help you to employ what is given up to his immediate service to the best advantage.

It is our mercy, that we have not an high-priest that cannot sympathize with our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted like unto us; and
the

the reason for it is given by the apostle, *That he might be able to succour those who are tempted.*

I am, with the greatest sincerity,

Your friend, &c.



L E T T E R LXXXVI.

Dear Sir,

LET nothing discourage you from the pursuit of that state of perfection, which is attainable to all those who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth; and then no difficulty will be found so great, as to be unsurmountable by his grace. This I have in some measure experienced: for sure there was never a son of Adam called to a sense of so many sins as I had really committed. My whole life was nothing but a varied scene of defection from God: so that my soul was spotted like the leopard, or rather infected like the leper's skin.

But yet, my friend, notwithstanding all this evil in my nature, I can say, and that with a reasonable assurance, that *the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.* My sins were as scarlet, but the redeeming Jesus hath made them whiter than snow. *I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and that his mercy endureth for ever.* With me the work of grace has been carried on in a regular progressive manner, first by strong convictions, then by justification through the blood of Christ, and now, I hope, the Lord is carrying on the work of sanctification. These states have their different temptations, and peculiar trials, under which there seems nothing so desirable as the grace of an humble, meek, and quiet spirit. When we can take up our cross daily

daily with a similar Spirit to our Saviour, and say with freedom of heart, Father, thy will be done; then shall we be able to rejoice in temptations, and experience the truth of our Lord's words, *His yoke is easy, and his burthen light.*

My trials are chiefly of the internal kind: these daily afflict me; but the Lord delivereth me out of all. And what is singular is, that in all the anxiety and distress under which I labour, I have not the least disposition to complain to man: nor can I observe that any person conceives I suffer, or is apprehensive of my trouble.

I hope the work of grace prospers in the hearts of our friends here. The Lord is loving to every man; and would we cast out the various idols which possess our souls, and by his sovereign aid destroy the antient inhabitants of the land, then would he abide with us for ever. But alas! how like the Israelites of old, do we retain too great a friendship for the former images that engaged our affections; and nothing but divine grace can restrain us from worshipping the antient idols of Canaan. How happy should we be, would we eschew our pleasures, and continually resist all self-love, then should we go on from strength to strength.

I am, with due respect, yours sincerely.



L E T T E R LXXXVII.

Dear Sir,

THOUGH it is impossible for words to express the sense I have of the many obligations I am under to you, yet I must make the attempt, by thanking you for the kind enquiry you made in

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your

your letters to Mr. *** after the state of my soul. I can say little else but *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.* He has not only saved my life, but is still crowning that life, he so wonderfully preserved, with his loving kindness and hourly mercies. I cannot distrust the tender mercy of my God, either in time or in eternity: and I can truly say, that every blessing I have experienced, or can desire for myself, I wish and pray may descend upon you. I hope you do not forget to pray that I may glorify God with my body and spirit which are doubly his. I find I cannot love him as I would; but I rejoice in the prospect of that blissful hour, when I shall cast the crown he gives at his feet, and cry without ceasing, with unwearied ardour, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive all honour, and glory, and praise.* The thought of this employ, oftentimes overwhelms me in joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

O dear Sir, praise the Lord with me, until we magnify his name for ever. I trust I shall meet your happy spirit in that day, entire and lacking nothing; without spot or blemish, before the throne. May he who sits thereon *direct your heart into his perfect love, and to a patient waiting for the coming of Christ.*

Yours, &c.



L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

To the SOCIETY at NORWICH.

Dear Brethren,

Jan. 21, 1761.

GRACE, Mercy, and Peace be to you, from God even our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ. Your past lives are a year longer, and your future lives a year shorter than when I wrote last unto you. Are you proportionably advanced in grace, and reduced in nature?

You are many of you, already born of God, washed, justified, and sanctified; and you hope to be glorified through the spirit, and merit of Jesus Christ. Thus much you experience: therefore you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, an holy nation. What for? *That you might show forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvelous light, and out of the kingdom of satar unto God; to receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among the sanctified.* Thus writes Paul, thus writes Peter. Therefore shew you the necessary and blessed effects, which result from such a state. Let all your thoughts, words, and actions, be in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ. All so done, is well done; and though undeserving of any reward; yet is so acceptable to our dear Saviour, that it has the promise, both of this life, and of that which is to come.

If the term sinless perfection be disgustful to some, sure christian perfection will be grateful to all who know Christ. 'Tis to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This is scriptural perfection. This is the word of God. This is his command. Yea; and it is natural to the regenerate to desire this. Are you the sons of God? Should you not then be followers, (imitators) of God as dear children? Is Christ your head, holy? should not you his members be holy also? Are you endued with the gift of the spirit? should you not then bring forth the fruit of the spirit? Consider all this. Why should we neglect, refuse, or object to be what is most interesting, and advantageous

vantageous in our state? And so necessary, that though we cannot be saved for it, yet we cannot be saved without it. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

Though you are in a state of salvation, yet must you strive, to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Give, my brethren, give all diligence to add to your faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; to godliness, brotherly-kindness; to brotherly-kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you, that you shall neither be barren, or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus let us see what our Lord and we shall bring it to at last. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

'Tis well known, we must go through manifold temptations into the kingdom. Our foes will dispute it with us, every inch of the ground to heaven. But what then? Greater is he, who is in us, than he who is in the world. You may, nay you must, stand in the evil day; and when you have done all stand. If you don't, the fault is your own. The effect your shame. We are not tempted above that we are able. We never fall, we never sin, through the want, but through the abuse of grace. Nor is it enough to stand our ground, but we must conquer also, or not enjoy the crown of life. Therefore when the flesh tempts you, flee, and pray; when the world tempts you, watch, and pray; and when the devil tempts you, resist, and pray. So shall ye be more than conquerors. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

Suffer me to prescribe to you a method, how to live one day well. It may serve for every day after,

by repeating it. Nor will I presume to lay a burthen on your shoulders, and not touch it with my own fingers.

As soon as you awake in the morning, employ half an hour in five things. Bless God for the mercies of the night past; pray for the blessings of a new day; examine well your own heart; meditate upon some spiritual subject; and lastly, plan the business of the approaching day. Then rise at four o'clock, but never later than five, if well. While you put on your cloaths, praise, or pray, mentally, but suitably to your state. Then spend another half hour in secret meditation, praise, and prayer. After this call your family together, read a chapter, and as you have ability and leisure, expound it to them. Then sing a hymn, and conclude with prayer. Pray always before and after meat: thus take the curse from off your victuals; and bless God for the benefit of them. Begin, proceed in, and lay by work, thus. Begin with that which should never cease, prayer in your mind; while you are at your work, meditate, praise, or pray, or converse religiously with those about you: this will not hinder, but further your labour. As often as you can, retire a few minutes to prayer, at nine o'clock in the morning, and three in the afternoon. It would be well to spend a little time in prayer with your family, immediately after dinner. In the evening constantly observe the same order of devotion in your family, as in the morning. At going to bed, revise the thoughts, words, and actions of the past day. What appears amiss, beg pardon for: what is well bless God alone for: and never close your eyes to sleep, with any unforgiven sin upon your conscience. Are you trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

Never neglect this, or some such method of walking with God. Do all feelingly, fervently, and devoutly, as from the spirit of God in you. Custom will make it familiar, easy, and pleasant to you. And if you thus spend every week-day, you will no doubt keep the sabbath-day holy. You will surely attend the word, the Lord's table, and all occasional meetings. All this will help you to attain to the measure of the stature, of perfect men in Christ. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

In a word, diligently use every means, and as diligently exercise every measure of grace. Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. In every thing, invariably aim at his glory, out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned. Are ye trees of righteousness? Let the trees be known by their fruit.

To the everlasting praise of our dear Jesus be it known to you, that his work of grace prospers in these parts. Our congregations are generally large: new members are added to our societies, and our old ones go on in full assurance, and some of them in the triumph of faith to heaven. Are we trees of righteousness? May we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Pray for me, and I'll pray for you, who am

Your affectionate Brother,

W. G.

L. E. T.

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

My dear Father,

Dublin, July 23, 1755.

THO' I am far distant from you in person, yet I am intimately near you in spirit and affection.

At present I write unto you, with abundance of tears flowing from my eyes, proceeding from the fullness of love in my heart. My intent in writing unto you, is not to procure your favour, that I know you give me out of paternal affection and a sense of duty; nor for your substance that I do not want; but my business with you is far more important; I beseech you, O my dear Father, to seek the *one thing needful*. To lay aside every weight, and the sin (*viz.* wordly mindedness) which does most easily beset you: And to use all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Renouncing your own righteousness, *which is but as filthy rags*, make application to Christ, that you may be interested in his blood, and righteousness. 'Tis by faith in his blood we are justified; 'tis by faith in his blood we are sanctified: yea, it is the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin.

Oh! that I could but impart unto you some of the sweetness, and comfort, which I now feel in the enjoyment of the love of God. Tho' it would be hell to me, to return unto a natural unregenerate state again; yet I would willingly part with the love of God, for a little time, that you might know what it is to love him, and to have Christ formed in your heart by faith. I could with St. Paul, wish myself, (temporally) accursed for you and the rest of my relations according to the flesh. But though I cannot, by this or any other means I can use, merit this blessing for you, or confer it

it upon you; yet there is the same unexhaustible fullness of mercy, and love in Christ for you, as I and many more have found. If you turn heartily unto him, you will, you assuredly will meet with the same welcome, and blessed treatment that others have done. There is balm in Gilead: his arm is not shortened, that it cannot save; or his ear grown heavy that it cannot hear, but he has the same compassionate heart, cordial love, and exquisite tenderness toward returning prodigals, and self righteous renouncing pharisees, as he had seventeen hundred years ago, when affectionately crying: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, and sorrowfully complaining, ye will not come to me that ye might have life.*

Yet as I have often told you, when present, so I tell you now I am absent, that you must come unto Christ here on earth, in the way of repentance, and faith; or you can never ascend to his kingdom and glory in heaven.

Christ must come down into our hearts, by his spirit; or we can never arise to happiness in eternity, not even by his merit. Our hearts, must become his throne here, if ever we have a seat in his throne hereafter. Converted we must be, or be condemned. Changed from nature to grace, while living, or change our place from earth, to hell, when dead. Without renovation in time, no resurrection to eternal happiness in eternity. What must dogs and swine do in the palace of the king of heaven, and in the garden of paradise, and such we really are, until renewed in the image of God.

I know you are an honest man among your neighbours, and a loving and respectful father unto your children; but honesty is not regeneration.

tion. Though you are civilized, you are not sanctified. Do not take it ill. Think me not undutiful, because faithful unto my conscience, least of all think me unkind, because I tell you the truth. Ye must (notwithstanding) be born again.

Pray attend the word of God where it is preached in *the demonstration of the spirit, and of power*; and do not by any means neglect private or family prayer. May the blessing of God attend every means you use, and make them spirit and life unto you: may he give you grace, with peace in this world, and everlasting happiness in the next, is the unfeigned prayer, of

Your dutiful Son.



L E T T E R X C.

Cork, March 23, 1756.

My very dear, and loving Father,

YOURS I received with thankfulness. I might inform you how much I esteem you, and how great pleasure the hearing from so kind, and indulgent a parent gives me: but this would neither be as expressive of my true affection, or so useful and beneficial to you, as to watch for your soul, and pray for your salvation. I am thoroughly convinced this is the truest instance of rational and exalted kindness. Every claim to this amiable character is quite defective and vain, if it does not extend to our spiritual interests, and our eternal welfare.

I hope, my dear Father, you do not neglect *the one thing needful*. All worldly things, tho' of the most excellent kinds, are but like the most despicable

despicable chaff, when compared with the blessings God bestows upon his children here, and the inestimable treasure he hath laid up for them hereafter. Oh! how dark and gloomy is that man's state, who has not an interest in our dear Redeemer, tho' he may swim in the river of sensual pleasure, bask in the warmest beams of human honour, and have the spoils of kingdoms at his feet, compared to his, whose privilege it is to live under the benign influences of heaven, in the prospect of glory, and in divine communion with his God, tho' cloathed in rags, and situate with Lazarus upon the dunghill.

I have delayed, for some time, to write unto you, expecting Mr. W. coming to this place, in order that I might inform you when, and how I hope to come into England; but his having been prevented in his intention of coming here, has rendered me incapable of giving you any information, notwithstanding my delay.

I unfeignedly thank God I am in my usual state of health, and disposition of mind, tho' neither exempt from bodily pains, soul conflicts, or outward crosses; yet the Lord gives me strength according to my day; and, which is not a little to my comfort, is pleased, in some small measure, to give success to my unworthy labours. Some sinners which were far off, are brought nigh to God by the blood of Christ; and others convinced of their distance from him, and has an earnest desire to return unto him.

I need not tell you, that I think often of, and desire to be with you; but while this cannot be, God will give me contentment: however, may you, and all my relations and friends, live under the heavenly light, and healing wings of Jesus Christ. May you have brighter and brighter
manifestations

manifestations of his immense and amiable perfections; and may you, by these heavenly views, grow daily in his holy and divine image; then your happiness will be such as is wished for,

By your most obliged, and dutiful Son, &c

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L E T T E R XCI.

My dear friend, Jan. 19, 1758.

WHAT can comfort a soul that is painfully distressed for want of love? It may be some allay to one's misery, to think that others love that God whom we would love, but cannot. What can afflict that soul which is free from every creature, and fixed on God alone? One can scarcely think that any could be so base, with respect to God, and wretched with regard to himself, as not to love him; and yet this wretchedness I feel. Writing just now on my own condition, presses it deeper on my troubled heart. I had no sooner come to this conclusion, I do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, but it occurred to me, yet others do: here I found a pleasing satisfaction. I then blessed God for you, and others of my friends, who offer him what is due from all, but what I still withhold, *the love of the whole heart.*

As the state I apprehend your soul to be in, affords me matter of praise, and actually excites it; so the state you must judge my soul to be in, from the account I have given of it, will afford you matter of prayer, and should actually excite it, while it occasions your pity.

I formerly threatened you with letters, knowing, that if you have patience, it was not given

to be wrapped up in a napkin, but for exercise: and now I am going about the performance of it, I may tell you before hand, I am wretched, and desire your prayers, shall be my subject: the various parts of which, I shall unfold, explain and insist on, as I see occasion. But you may expect I shall do this in different humours; you must look for nothing of unchangeableness in me, till my worst, my oldest enemy, self, expires.

Perfect love, unspotted charity; not to be subject to any inordinate affections, any irregular desire of any kind, in any degree: to have no one affection of the soul at any time exercised on an improper object, or in an undue manner; to love every creature in a due subordination to the love of God, and each in their order, according to that measure of his image which they bear, and the relation they stand in unto him; I say, these are things so great for a sinner to attain to, as to be almost incredible. Yet if you can, in cool blood, affirm each of these particulars of yourself, I know not how I could, consistent with that charity, which hopeth, and believeth all things, disbelieve you

But how shall I attain them? Methinks I hear you earnestly exhort me. Cast off: press on: fight: wrestle, and be still. All this is ever founding in my ears; but alas! I find no door of hope. The old man, if not the strong one, has still possession, and much goods laid up in store for many years. No straits can expell him; for however closely he may be besieged without, he has provision enough to subsist on within: and he can resist all power, but omnipotence. You say there needs no other. Engage this on your side, and you shall be more than a conqueror. How? By prayer. I do pray; but

The cloud of this dispensation may, in all probability, be so *thick* at present, that you cannot see the hand which directed it. But it shall soon become *transparent*; and then you shall see the hand, and heart of your *best* Father; and acknowledge, it was unmixed goodness, which *intended* the stroke, and unerring wisdom, which *directed* it so near your heart. Till this appears, be *silent*; and when it does, you shall *adore*. You have often recommended to others, *Not to sorrow as those who have no hope*. Let me recommend the same to you. Let those tears which evidence your tender affection for your late friend, equally evidence your submission to your divine Father. You have heard of the *patience of Job*. With what deep reverence! with what unfeigned subjection! did he receive the *repeated* tidings of his *complicated* calamities! *The Lord gave, said he, and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord*. And when he was strongly solicited to murmur at the dispensation, and blaspheme its Author, he rejected it with abhorrence; *What!* said he, *shall I receive good at the hand of God, and shall I not receive evil?* It is then added, to his immortal honour, *In all this Job sinned not*. May God say the same of you! “I took away a distant relation,—and in this he sinned not. I took away his son, his only son—and in this he sinned not. I then tore from his bleeding heart, a tender wife, lately entwined about it—and in this he sinned not. The first messenger of heavy tidings was scarce arrived, when lo! a second followed; and ere he had delivered his more awful message, beheld! a third trod upon his heels—and in all this he sinned not.” May you thus have a testimony that you please God, and it shall turn to your honour before assembled worlds!

If you have been a means of helping your friend to conquer the difficulties of life and death, she is now *blessing* the day she became yours. And I hope you were—and that she, and her new born son, are now two shining forms before the throne, rejoicing in the presence of the Lamb. May you follow them to your Father's country!—May you weather out every storm, which shall rise against you on the ocean of time!—and when the voyage of life is over, they shall *meet* and *hail* you on the celestial strand, and bid you *ten thousand* welcomes to their blessed abodes:—and it may be, when the all-bountiful Redeemer, all-righteous Judge, shall assign you your reward, that they will be officious in arraying you in the garments of light; and in adorning your head with an immortal wreath; and in putting the emblem of victory, and a golden harp into your hand.—O that I was master of the language of immortality! O that I could speak like the disembodied! how loudly would I call on you! how *powerfully* would I persuade you, to *glow* ! to *burn* ! with *ardent desire* ; with *holy affections* ; with *flaming zeal* —for that *better world* ! for that *better company* ! for that *better enjoyment* .

Imagine, for a few moments, that your late companion is permitted to do this, and that you hear her addressing you in the following manner.

“O thou blessed among mortals! who wast, for a few short-lived moments, my dearest friend on earth—thou findest by *sad* , but I by *joyful* experience, that the sweetest earthly enjoyment is *soon over* . Thou seest as through a glass darkly, but I with the full blaze of eternal day, that all on earth which mortals call *good* and *great* , is only emptiness, vanity, and disappointment. We, the inhabitants of unclouded day, look down from our

exalted summits, and behold *your world* and *all its glory*, only as a *speck of darkness*, encompassed by an *infinite ocean of light*.--We see how *closely* eternity besets you on *every side*; while you, like millions of intelligent atoms, *crowd* each other within your *little sphere*; thousands of which are daily hovering on the *verge*, while other thousands are *passing over*! ---We likewise see, with eyes of pity, how eagerly you toil amidst *darkness, snares, and deaths*, and all for the *trifles of a moment*, while eternity, *greedy eternity*! not satisfied with the slaughter of six thousand years, still waits, with its wide extended jaws, to swallow up *all succeeding generations*! ---O! how does all heaven pity your folly, in *slighting* the awful concerns of eternity; and in despising the infinite source of all blessedness; only for the *bubbles and shadows of a disordered world*.

But, with ineffable pleasure, we behold the happy few, who have declared eternal war with the prince of darkness; who despise the empty enjoyments of a vain world; who rise superior to their own degeneracy, and seek their all in God.---Such are esteemed by you, O ye blind mortals! as the filth and off-scouring of *your world*; but we, through all our different orders, esteem them as some of the *brightest ornaments of ours*. You long to drive them from earth; but we, to receive them into heaven. And when he who bought them with his blood, shall sign their happy dismissal; a detachment of celestial messengers, a convoy of flaming guards, shall safely guide them through death, and swiftly conduct them home. Then, then shall the living doors spontaneously fly open to admit them--and all the *tongues, and eyes, and hearts* of heaven, shall bid them a thousand welcomes--while the
mighty

mighty concave, made vocal by the universal acclamations, reverberates the sound.---Till then, their lot is to *labour and suffer*; to *obey* God, to *resist* the devil, to *renounce* the world, to *crucify* themselves. O! with what soft regard, tender pity and deep compassion, do we behold their toil, their difficulties, their enemies, their dangers! yea, how do we almost tremble, to see their everlasting *fate* so often weighed in a *doubtful* balance! but all the mighty powers of heaven rejoice, and through all their countless myriads, bow in grateful homage, to that exalted *Name* which preponderates the scale.

“ But, O thou! the late partner of my weal and woe, whose friendship followed me through life, through death, and still follows me beyond the grave; what *floods*! what *oceans* of immortal pleasure! fills! *overflows* and *deluges* my disembodied capacity on *thy* account! O how I exult and triumph, on seeing thy face towards Zion! with what inconceivable extacy do I behold thee labouring up the skies, and beckoning to thy fellows, to follow after! Joy---extacy---transport---glory---*increase*;---and *wider*!---and *still wider* expand my happy spirit, on every prospect of thy arrival to this happy world! It exalts my most exalted joys;---it heightens my highest praise, to think that my dearest earthly friend shall soon shine brighter than ten thousand suns; and that ere long we shall sit down together, at *Immanuel's* feet, to recount the dangers we have escaped on earth, and to repeat the story of redeeming love.

“ Till then, go on in the name of thy great Master. Let nothing on earth *obstruct thy passage*, or *retard thy motion*, towards a blissful immortality. Let thy eye be ever fixt on that sacred ray which proceeds from the throne of God, and which, in

great mercy, glimmers through the skies. Let it direct thy steps through all the darkness and dangers of time, and point out thy way to this world of glorious light; and when thou arrivest, whole floods of endless day shall be poured on thy astonished sight. Let thy ears be always open to the sacred calls of thy divine Master, and let them continually attend to the humble complaints of his afflicted servants; and in a short time thy enraptured soul shall be filled with the sounds of these mighty, these *thundering* hallelujahs, which burst for ever around the tremendous throne. Let thy tongue, now feeble and faltering, and which shall soon be silent in the grave, publish abroad through *all the earth*, the *Love* which astonishes *all heaven*. Publish, O publish! its exalted heights, its profound depth; its immeasurable length and breadth!---Tell the rebellious sons of earth, of *immensity* contracted to a span!---Tell them of *Infinity* crushed beneath *their* load!---Tell them of *Immortality* dying in their stead!---Employ in this service, thy *best strains*, and thy *loudest accents*; and, in a short time, thou shalt have a tongue of celestial fire, and a voice which shall reach the most exalted of all our radiant orbs.---Let thy *whole soul*; thy *whole strength*; thy *whole time*; be employed for *Him*, who *lived!* who *bled!* who *died* for thee! O! be active as fire; be humble as the dust; be serious as death; be solemn as the grave; Let thy faith be like *Abraham's*; thy meekness like *Moses's*; thy patience like *Job's*; thy prayer like *Elijah's*; thy repentance like *David's*; thy zeal like *St. Paul's*; thy love like *St. John's*; thy praise like a Seraph's; ---and thy joy shall soon be like mine!---And O what rising joy!---what *swelling* pleasure! what streaming, shining! *flaming* glory fills this place!---How mighty! how huge is the reward of heaven!

ven!--*All is infinite--All is eternal--And all is mine!--Adieu.*" And now, as she returns, imagine you hear the *lessening* sounds, "HALLELUJAH--HAILL UJAH--Hallelujah."

Thus she being dead, yet speaketh. May the important admonition have its due effect on your mind! May the sound of it enter your very soul, and follow you wherever you go: so shall your *abundant loss* become your *more abundant gain!*

The advantages intended you by this visitation, are, first, to convince you, more deeply, of the mutability of all earthly comforts. Through the medium of this dispensation, you see more clearly how fluctuating these things are, and how little they are to be depended on. You see that riches, honours, friends, health and life, may be at our command this hour; and in the next, make themselves wings and fly away. With what clearness do you now behold that all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as *the flower of the grass!* With what advantage do you now read that *the fashion of this world passeth away:* passeth away, even, while we are beholding it; and that with *such speed*, that ere we have a *full view*, it is out of our sight. Happy are they who have a *divine confidence* that an *unchangeable God* is their Father; and who have a *lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away!* May that confidence and hope increase in you daily, and be preserved steadfast unto the end!

A second advantage intended, is, that you may sit more loose to the world and its enjoyments. Wretched as these enjoyments are, there is something in them so peculiarly ensnaring, that it is almost impossible to possess them and not be destroyed: and it is much to be feared, that thousands, who have overcome every other difficulty, will,

will, after all, be dashed in pieces on *this rock*. But this is not for want of caution: the sacred admonitions are for ever sounding in our ears; *Be not conformed to this world; Set your affections on things above, and not on things on earth; Love not the world, nor the things of the world; Little children keep yourselves from idols.* Now, if after all these fatherly instructions, and kind commands, we still incline to wander, the blessed God will hedge up our way with briers, if we break through these, he will in mercy, conceal some thorn under our favourite flower, or mix our sweet delight with gall. If this proves ineffectual, and the little impertinences of earth still cleave to us, even, like the flesh to the bone; in this case, God is obliged to put us to more pain, and (in order to prevent our eternal ruin) to save us by such means as are like *tearing the flesh from the bones.* O what a privilege is yours at present. Your most gracious Father is now telling you, that you *must* be all his own; that he *will* have all your heart; that you *shall* be fully blessed.— And rather than the world or sin or *satan* should *destroy*, or *hurt*, or even *touch* you to your disadvantage, that he will interpose with all his wisdom, and power, and mercy, and truth; and that nothing, but the most wilful obstinacy, shall be able to harm you. O what rich mercy and astonishing goodness is this! and how unutterably great is your privilege! May it teach you to praise and adore its divine Author, with the most pure and warm affection! May it teach you to watch with the strictest attention over your heart; and to keep at the utmost distance from the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life! And may it teach you to look on yourself only as a stranger and sojourner on earth;

earth; only as a poor pilgrim, who is travelling through a vale of tears, in search of a better country; who is urging his way to eternal life, through the valley of the shadow of death!

A third advantage intended, is, to quicken you in your way; to cause you to mend your pace and double your diligence. We all have constant need of this. Our work is so *important*, and our strength so *little*; and our time so short, that we ought to be *broad awake*, and *all alive* and on *full stretch* continually. But this is not pleasing to flesh and blood; not agreeable to our wretched hearts: these love to be at rest and quiet, and ever incline us to fall asleep. To prevent this, we have need of all the grace of God, and of the assistance of all his dispensations. Affliction (your present dispensation) is of singular use in this case; because, thereby, the soul is purged of that grossness which occasions its dulness and stupidity. Hence we often find, that persons in affliction are *zealous* and *active*, who, at other times, are *cold* and *negligent*. With what fervency do they then call upon God? With what steadiness watch over their own hearts? With what impartiality examine themselves? With what indignation vow against sin? With what holy resolution devote themselves to God? And with what deep humility, seriousness and circumspection walk before him?

How often have you desired God to help you, *thus* to double your diligence? How often have you *begged*, with *strong crying and tears*, that he would do it by *any means*, so it might be done effectually.

And behold! he is now answering your prayer: he is now granting the request of your lips and the desire of your heart. May the means by which his

his infinite and adorable wisdom is promoting this desirable end, promote it more abundantly day by day! May you continually increase in zeal for the glory of God, and in pity for a dying world! May you see, in the clearest light, what numberless scenes of misery! what universal ruin and destruction, covers the whole earth! And may you see how the common enemy lieth in wait for unwary souls: how he first captivates; then blindfolds them; then drags them in his cursed chain to eternal death; and then *triumphs over his prey, and insults the throne of God!* May holy indignation against this enemy of God, this devourer of human-kind, set you all on fire! And may the deepest compassion, and the most generous concern for your fellow sufferers, soften and melt and enlarge your soul! And may *this* cause you to sound the name of JESUS, and publish his great SALVATION; with all your might! O may you fly with the sacred TIDINGS, to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south! And may you esteem it your highest honour, and make it your chief concern, to be instrumental in plucking dying souls out of the jaws of destruction; to be instrumental in *turning them from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan to the living God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by Faith which is in Jesus.*

That you may thus act your part on earth; and quit the stage of life with honour; and rejoice in the day of accounts; and be for ever with them whom your soul loveth, is the sincere and fervent prayer of your sympathizing

Friend and Brother,

Aug. 19, 1766.

T. O.

L E T T E R X C I I I .

My much respected Friend, Feb. 29, 1760.

A Deep sense of my own inability, and your great superiority to me, almost in every thing, has, till now, forbid my writing unto you. I can sincerely rank myself among them who have reason to bless God for your coming into this country. If I ever shall again be favoured with your company and conversation, you will, I trust, have less reason to chide me for those things, you so many times judged reproveable in me. You had not been gone above two days, before I was convinced of several things, which I ingenuously acknowledge did not before appear amiss. Whatever I have been, I am not an Antinomian now. I never was more sensible of my dependance upon God, for all things. I think it my indispenfible duty to ask, at his beneficent hands, the minutest blessing my necessity calls for. I am, as you once justly observed, but a child in holiness; but I can truly say, I desire and design, to be an obedient one. When I know my Father's will, I immediately apply myself to the doing, or suffering of it with all that power he gives me. My happiness, distinct from every other consideration, consists in doing his blessed will. You may remember to have told me, I should meet with many trials: this has indeed been exactly true. My experience has been something extraordinary; but let me with gratitude acknowledge, my strength has been equal to my every day. I find an increase of every thing which is true, just, virtuous, commendable,

able, and of good report. This I speak to the praise of God. Of how great things is the human mind capable. I did not think once, that my faculties could have been raised thus, from the ruins of the fall. My desires and aversions are, I trust, turned toward their right and proper objects. The Lord makes those discoveries to my understanding, which draw my affections to things above. My very body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and is employed in the service of God. Help me my dear friend, to praise God for these inestimable mercies. Pray excuse whatever you see amiss in this. I promise myself great satisfaction, when I shall have the happiness of being a spectator of their improvement at L--ds. Give my kind love to all friends, accept the same yourself,

From your ever loving,

and faithful friend, &c. &c.



L E T T E R XCIV.

My dear, and much respected Father,

St. Austle, May 6, 1758.

THE reason of my silence so long, is from my expectation of hearing from you, in answer to my last. Since I wrote last, I have enjoyed as good a state of health, as I have usually had in time past; for which I unfeignedly praise God, who is the giver of this, and every other blessing. I have been in some danger lately, of falling into the hands of unreasonable and sinful men, but the Lord hath restrained their power, and kept me

me from their malice. Some of the gentlemen of this country are very much averse to the way, which they are pleased to call heresy, *in which we worship the God of our Fathers.* And this is not to be wondered at, for as it was in the beginning, so it is now; those who are born after the flesh, persecute them who are born after the spirit. But when almighty God is disposed to work his great works among sinners, impotent men, tho' ever so combined together, cannot prevent it. The Lord is making known his salvation, which is through faith, unto the people: where his name is recorded, tho' by very imperfect ambassadors, yet his powerful grace is displayed. *Men are enquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, weeping.*

I cannot, once again, help expressing my concern for your salvation. I make this the subject of my prayers; and shall it not have a place in my Letters? O my dear Father, do not slight, or neglect that which our Lord calls, *the one thing needful*: without the enjoyment of this, we can neither be happy in time, or in eternity. I often think, with wishful concern, of your declining age, and diminishing strength. Your days on earth, even in the course of nature, cannot be many. The weakness of your vital powers, the infirmities which attend you, and the instances of mortality which surround you, call loudly unto you to consider, and prepare for your latter end. There is no way of facing death with courage, and looking undaunted on the tomb into which we are going; no assurance of happiness in yonder world of spirits, but by an assured interest in the holy life, and propitiatory death, in the glorious resurrection, and prevalent intercession of our adorable Redeemer. As I have often told you in

times past, so I tell you again, that the only way of obtaining salvation through Christ, is by faith. In order to this, earnestly beseech the God of all grace, to give you a true and deep sense of the depravity of your nature, the exceeding sinfulnes of sin, and your utter guiltiness in consequence of it. Pray that you may be enabled to renounce your dependance upon your own righteousness. Let the spirit of God convince you of the entire necessity of being born again of the Holy Ghost. In this disposition come unto God, in the name of Christ Jesus, that you may, with Christ, receive pardon of all your sins, peace with God, adoption into his family, sanctifying grace, and everlasting glory. And remember for your encouragement, that you are invited. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.* Call to mind what our Saviour saith: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Do you labour against sin? Are you burdened with the guilt of it? Christ bids you come! Christ, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, bids you come. What power can prevent your access unto him? Christ, the ocean of love and mercy, bids you come: here all your sins, however many, or mighty, are swallowed up. That he is willing you should come unto him; witness those bitter pains and sufferings which he endured, and that precious blood which he shed for your sake. Nay, you have the infallible testimony from his own mouth: *And him that cometh unto me, I will in no-wise cast out.* Haste, then; O haste unto the Saviour of sinners! Fly, fly unto the Son of God! Destruction pursues you while without; safety is within the city of refuge. *The Lord make you willing in the day of his power.* May your heart become his residence, and may his me-

He will guide you in the way of uprightness. Though the sea be rough, and the winds rage, we have an unerring Pilot at the helm, who will assuredly bring us to the haven where we would be, if we continue in the ship. Look! O look beyond the narrow bounds of time, and take a survey of a boundless eternity: stretch forward to the heavenly plains, where happiness is clad in everlasting green; and where, amid the verdant landscape, streams of endless pleasures roll. My best wishes for all my relations, my filial duty to you, while

I remain your ever affectionate Son, &c.

F I N I S

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