

Charles Wesley In-Correspondence and Related Items (1736–40)

Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

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1736

From Thomas Hawkins

[St. Simon's Island, Georgia]
March 21, 1736

[[Mr. Wesley,

[[Being by your priestly order confined,¹ the care of the sick is no longer incumbent on me. As you have been busy in intermeddling with my affairs, I desire the following patients may have proper assistance, which ought to have been before this time, and no neglect laid to

[[Your injured friend

[Thomas²] Hawkins.

[[P.S. I dispute the authority of confining a surgeon, and especially for a thing I know nothing of.]]

Source: CW transcription in MS Journal; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 1:6.

¹Hawkins had been confined to the guardroom for firing a gun on Sunday, against the order of Gen. Oglethorpe; see CW, MS Journal, Mar. 21, 1736.

²The shorthand reads "John," but his first name was actually Thomas.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Savannah
March 21–22, 1736

Dear Brother,

How different are the ways wherein we are led! Yet, I hope, toward the same end. I have hitherto no opposition at all. All is smooth and fair and promising. Many seem to be awakened. All are full of respect and commendation. We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last; storms must come hither too. And let them come, when we are ready to meet them.

It is strange so many of our friends should still trust in God. I hope indeed, whoever turns to the world, Mr. Tackner and Betty,¹ with Mr. Hird's family,² and Mr. Burk³ will zealously aim at the prize of their high calling. These especially I exhort, by the mercies of God, that they be not weary of well-doing, but that they labour more and more to be meek and lowly, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God.

I hope too Mr. Weston, Mr. Moore, Mr. Allen, and Mr. White, as well as Mr. Ward and his wife, continue in the same wise resolutions.⁴ I must not forget Mr. Reid and Mr. Daubry,⁵ both of whom I left fully determined to shake off every weight, and with all their might to pursue the one thing needful.

*Conciones omnes meas jamnunc habes, praeter istas quas misi. Aliquae in pyxide sunt (de qua ne verbum scribis), una cum Bibliis in quarto. Liber de Disciplina quam celerrime potes, remittendus est. Quanta est concordia fratrum—tui, volo, et fratris B[enjamin]i!*⁶

You are not, I think, at liberty στρέφεσθαι εἰς τὸ ἔθνη, ἕως οἱ συμφυλέται σου, ἀπωθοῦσι σε.⁷ If that period comes soon, so much the better. Only in the mean while reprove and exhort with all authority,

¹Ambrose Tackner (or Tuckner), a locksmith, aged 30, was baptized by JW, having previously undergone only lay baptism. He was joined on the ship by Martha Tackner (his sister-in-law) and Elizabeth (Tackner) Hassel, his niece (i.e., “Betty”). See *Georgia Settlers*, 22; and *Simmonds List*.

²Thomas Hird, a dyer, aged 42, who in 1739 became constable of Frederica; his wife Grace, aged 39; their son Mark, aged 21, who served as a lay leader in Frederica for JW; and their daughter Phebe, aged 17. The family were Quakers, and JW had baptized the four of them on Nov. 16, 1735. The Hirds had two other children, Frances, aged 13, and John, aged 12. See *Georgia Settlers*, 23; and *Simmonds List*.

³The *Simmonds List* shows “Thomas Burk, 33”—another of JW’s communicants on Nov. 23.

⁴William Weston, a tanner; either William Moore, a tanner, or Francis Moore, a storekeeper; William Allen, a baker; Richard White, a hatter; and Benjamin and Margaret Ward—all fellow passengers with the Wesley brothers; see *Simmonds List*, and *Georgia Settlers*.

⁵These two were already in Frederica when the *Simmonds* arrived. Will Reid (JW spells “Reed”) was a servant to Patrick Tailfer (see *Georgia Settlers*, 93), and allowed CW to share his hut. Elisha Dobree (or Daubray) was clerk of the stores in Frederica (see *Georgia Settlers*, 71).

⁶JW and CW used Latin, Greek, and shorthand to disguise more confidential passages in their letters. The Latin of this paragraph may be translated:

“You now have all my sermons, besides those which I have sent. Some are in the box (of which you write not a word), along with the quarto Bible. The book of discipline must be returned as soon as possible. How great is the harmony of brethren! I mean of thee and brother Benjamin [Ingham].” The book referred to was likely Nathaniel Marshall, *The Penitential Discipline of the Primitive Church, for the first Four Hundred Years after Christ* (London: W. Taylor, 1714).

⁷“To turn to the Gentiles, till your own countrymen shall cast you out.” See Acts 13:46.

even though all men should despise thee. Ἀποβήσεται σοι εἰς μαρτύριον.⁸

I conjure you, spare no time or address or pains to learn the true cause τῆς πάλαι ὀδύνης τῆς φίλης μου.⁹ I much doubt you are [in] the right. Μὴ γένοιτο, ἵνα οὕτω πάλιν ἀμαρτάνῃ Γρηγόρει Φυλάσσου, ὡς μάλιστα δύνῃ. Γράφε μοι, πῶς με δεῖ γράφειν, πρὸς αὐτήν.¹⁰

If Mr. Ingham were here, I would try to see you. But omit no opportunity of writing. Κινδυνεύω πάσαν ὥραν· δύο ἢ τρεῖς εἰσι γυναῖκες, νεώτεραι, ἀστεῖαι, φοβούμεναι τὸν Θεόν. Προσεύχου, ἵνα μήτινα αὐτῶν γινώσκω κατὰ σάρκα.¹¹

Let us be strong and very courageous; for the Lord our God is with us. And there is no counsel or might against him! Adieu!

Address: “To ye Revd Mr Wesley, with a Box of Books and Papers.”

Endorsement: by JW, “JW, March 22,” and later “To C[h]arles.”

Source: Garrett-Evangelical, Presidents of the British Wesleyan Conference Collection.¹²

⁸“This will be your opportunity to testify” (Luke 21:13).

⁹“Of my friend’s earlier distress.”

¹⁰“God forbid that she should again miss the mark, in like manner. Watch over her, take care of her as much as possible. Write me how I ought to write to her.” Referring to either Beata Hawkins or Anne Welch, who had told CW that Oglethorpe had committed adultery with them, then told Oglethorpe that CW was maliciously spreading this false story, whilst himself guilty of sexual misconduct with them (See MS Journal, Mar. 1–24, Apr. 14–24, 1736).

¹¹“I am in danger every hour [see 1 Cor. 15:30]. There are two or three God-fearing, refined young women. Pray that I know none of them after the flesh.”

¹²Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:452–54.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

[April 21, 1736]

[Dear Brother]

... I still extremely pity poor Mrs. [Beata] Hawkins. But what can I do more till God show me who it is that continually exasperates her against me? Then I may perhaps be of some service to her. There is surely someone who does not play us fair. But I marvel not at the matter. He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there is that is mightier than they.² Yet a little while and God will declare who is sincere. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure, and be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart.³

Source: published excerpt; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:16–17.⁴

¹In response to CW's appeal, delivered by Benjamin Ingham, JW immediately tried to leave for Frederica, but was delayed both in setting off and during the actual voyage by contrary winds, so that he did not arrive until Apr. 10. CW was ill with dysentery, but improved with his brother's arrival. Through many interviews during his week's stay, especially with Mrs. Beata Hawkins, JW attempted to unravel the complex and dangerous situation, leaving a little more contented, but disillusioned. On arriving in Savannah on Apr. 20, he wrote to CW the following day.

²See Eccles. 5:8 (for the last phrase, see Num. 14:12).

³See Ps. 31:27 (BCP).

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:455–56.

From James Hutton

St. Paul's [London]
September 3, 1736

My Dearest Friend,

I have seen Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham's journal,¹ in which mention is made of some trial which Mr. Ingham and you are said to have undergone. I should be glad to know the particulars, that we might know how to pray for you. Be strong and of good courage, and God shall establish and strengthen you. The way of suffering is narrow enough, but it is the safest way to glory. It is the way Jesus Christ trod through his whole life. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with the temptation, find a way for us to escape.

Think upon the examples of prophets, saints, and martyrs that have gone before you, who were men of like passions with yourselves; but being strong in faith, and in the power of God's word, fought the good fight, and manfully pressed on towards the mark of the prize of their high calling. That chapter in Thomas à Kempis, *De regiá viá Crucis*,² will, with the Bible, support and comfort you. Remember how many saints have prayed for the crown of martyrdom, and God did not grant it to all. Prepare every day for death, and every day pray for me and mine.

I am this day twenty-one years old. O beg of God to give me his grace, that as I increase in years I may grow stronger for the spiritual combat, and may, by the help of God, overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil! Let us labour for holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord—without which we shall be eternally miserable. Standers by *may* encourage those that are fighting and running a race. That is the reason I write thus to you. I have much need of exhortation and rebuke too. I could wish you had a companion; nay, do wish myself *that* companion. But God's will be done.

Mr. [George] Whitefield of Pembroke [College] has taken orders and is at present in town to supply Mr. [Thomas] Broughton's places at the Tower and Ludgate prison. Mr. Broughton reads prayers every night to a religious society that meet in Wapping chapel,³ and I assure you there is a large congregation. And I hope much good is done there. Mr. Whitefield preached there September 2nd on the great benefit of religious society, from Ecclesiastes 4:9–12, an excellent discourse.⁴ I spent some time after it with him, and God knows whether he will come or no. Perhaps he may; perhaps not. *Bono animo sis. Eja age*.⁵ Mr. Broughton is gone into the country, or he would have wrote.

Mr. [Richard] Morgan is obliged, by his father's orders, to study physic at Leyden; at that place the name of Wesley stinks as well as at Oxford. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. If your names be written in the Lamb's book of life, it matters not.

My aunt Jones died August 17th, 1736.⁶ She was a dear friend to my sister [Catherine] and me. You have heard of the patience of Job, and I hope that she has seen the end of the Lord. I had the happiness of seeing your good mother, who came to town in her way from Gainsborough to Mr. Hall,

¹The Wesley brothers and Ingham were sending back manuscript journal letters to their friends and supporters in London.

²*Imitation of Christ*, Bk. II, chap. 12, "On the Royal Road of the Holy Cross."

³I.e., the Anglican chapel to St. John the Baptist in Wapping.

⁴George Whitefield, *The Nature and Necessity of Society in General, and of Religious Society in Particular. A sermon preached ... before the Religious Societies... in Bow Street Church in the year 1737*. (London: W. Bowyer for James Hutton, 1738).

⁵"If you are of good heart, oh come."

⁶Ann (Hutton) Jones (1689–1736) was buried the next day.

first; and thence very soon to Tiverton.⁷ Mr. [William] Law visited her at Gainsborough, and again at London. My father [John] knew not of her being in town till Sunday. But he was so lame he could not wait on her.

If all matters relating to receiving your fellowship and your brother's stipend are not exact, write fresh ones and send over. But I believe they are, because they have received some money, and perhaps the colleges only pay at some certain times, half-yearly or quarterly. Your mother desired her blessing to you, and would have wrote but had no time. She prayed for you and blessed you; and may God, who remembers the blessings of the parents upon the children, send down upon *you both* the choicest of them. And may her blessing accompany you, and be a protection and covering against all evil! May the glorious light of the gospel be propagated by your hands, and may the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God! May your examples keep pace with your preaching, and may the grace of God preserve you from being castaways! O remember that ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people! Be not deceived. Take care to inquire carefully and strictly concerning the mission of the Moravian bishop.⁸ I will make what inquiries I can. A great deal depends upon the validity of ordinations. This is the seed-time of an eternal harvest. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me."⁹

I know you will join me in these collects of our Church: "O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee. Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."¹⁰ "O Almighty God, who has knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son, Christ our Lord, grant us grace so to follow thy blessed saints in virtuous and godly living that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou has prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."¹¹

I am, dearest sir,

Your obedient friend and humble servant,

James Hutton

P.S. Pray continue the journal to me.

Address: "To / The Rev'd Mr Charles Wesley / at Savannah / in Georgia."

Endorsement: by JW, "to C. Ja[me]s Hutton / Sept. 2. 1736."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/81.¹²

⁷After the death of Samuel Wesley Sr., Susanna (Annesley) Wesley lived for a while in Gainsborough (with her daughter Emily's family), then spent time with Westley and Martha (Wesley) Hall, and subsequently with Samuel Jr.'s family in Tiverton. She would eventually move to London and live at the Foundery.

⁸David Nitschmann (1696–1772), who had been consecrated as one of the first two bishops of the Renewed Church of the United Brethren, accompanied the Wesley brothers on the *Simmonds* to Georgia.

⁹Rev. 22:12.

¹⁰BCP, 19th Sunday after Trinity.

¹¹BCP, All Saints Day.

¹²Transcription published in *WMM* 71 (1848): 1101–03.

From Samuel Wesley Jr.

Blondell's School, Tiverton, Devon
September 21[–29], 1736

Dear Charles,

To make full amends for my not hearing from you at first, I have received four letters from you within this month, of each of which according to their dates.¹

To that of April 8, Frederica, 8:00 at night, I answer thus. I own the will of God in your being in America; that is, the order of his providence. But I do not see that it was the will of God in another sense, as it is the rule of your action. Before I confess that I must have a text either plainly or probably applied. You seem to be under severe trials, and I might with full as much justice quote “Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God,”² as ever you could do “He that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me.”³ It was God's will too that I should come hither—how else am I here? For who hath resisted his will in that sense? I am in a desert as well as you, having no conversable creature but my wife (till my mother came last week); at which, that I am no more grieved is perhaps my fault. Your fearing a cure of souls⁴ is no argument against your fitness for it, but the contrary. What “indelible character” means, I do not thoroughly understand.⁵ But I plainly know what is said of him “who putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back.”⁶ Your wishing yourself out of the reach of temptation is but wishing yourself in heaven. That you had lived eighteen years *without God*, I either do not understand, or I absolutely deny. My wife loses none of your love, if repaying it in kind be putting it to the right use.

To yours of April 28. You repent not of obedience to divine providence. I hope not; and I hope I never persuaded you to disobedience. I am sure coming back to England will not be looking back from the plough, while you can exercise your ministry here. Jack's passions, if I know anything of him, never were of the same kind as yours. I advised him to go—not you; nor will ever consent to your staying. Never spare unburdening yourself to me. Why you should have waited even years for that purpose, Jack can tell. That sister Emily ever retracted her consent, she utterly denies; for she says she never gave it. By that I see I did no more than was absolutely necessary when I used the strongest terms to express my meaning, lest I might have been brought in for being passive at least—though I never would, should, or could have consented. I own I cannot rejoice in your affliction any more than in my own. It is not for the present joyous, but grievous. God grant a happy end and meeting! I use a holiday, St. Matthew's day, to converse with you. Why may not the same man be both publican and apostle? However, if you can get hither, you may keep your apostleship, though not your receipt of customs.

To yours of May 5. I heartily wish you joy of the danger being over. I would send what you write for, but your next letter gives me hopes of your being here before the cargo could come to you. Allix I had sent for to London, before your letters reached me.⁷ Lawrence I do not altogether approve of, but

¹None of these letters are known to survive, leaving only the hints and extracts in the replies of Samuel Jr.

²James 1:13.

³Matt. 10:37.

⁴I.e., serving as a pastor.

⁵CW had likely referred to the notion of ordination instilling an “indelible character.”

⁶Cf. Luke 9:62.

⁷CW had requested some work by Pierre Allix (1641–1717); most likely one of his works on sacraments or on the near approaching return of Christ.

begin to doubt;⁸ though that should be no reason against my sending it. What the books are “p. 100,” I comprehend not; but I suppose they are recommended in some p. 100 I have not seen, perhaps in a journal that was to come to me by a safe hand but has never arrived at all. I wish you joy of the departure of *amor sceleratus habendi*.⁹ I can say little of Phil but that she wants you.¹⁰ Brother [Westley] Hall’s is a black story.¹¹ There was no great likelihood of his being a favourite with me. His tongue is too smooth for my roughness, and rather inclines me to suspect than believe. Indeed, I little suspected the horrid truth. But finding him on the reserve, I thought he was something like Rivington¹² and feared me as a jester, which is a sure sign either of guilt on the one hand or pride on the other. It is certainly true of that marriage—it will not and it cannot come to good. He is now at a curacy in Wiltshire, near Marlborough. I have no correspondence with Kezzy. I did design it after reading yours, but the hearing she is gone to live with Patty and her husband made me drop my design.

Yours from Savannah, May 15, is your last and best letter, because it brings news that you design to come back as soon as you can. The sooner the better say I, for I know Mr. Oglethorpe will not leave the place till he thinks it for the public good so to do.¹³

September 28. So long have I been forced to stay for time to transcribe (most wretched work) and to go on, which is pleasant enough. I have had a sort of a ship-journal of Jack’s, ending at his being upon the coast, but have had nothing of that kind since his landing.¹⁴ Glad shall I be of a full and authentic account, which I begin to perceive I shall hardly have till I see you. If Jack will continue Kezzy’s allowance, should she come hither, she might pay me for her board, which I cannot afford to give her, be a great comfort to her mother, and avoid the hazard of strong temptations either to discontent on the one hand or what is much worse on the other. If this comes to your hand before you sail for England, I wish you would bring Jack’s resolution upon that point. But except he will engage to continue the stipend, I must not take her in, for I can do no more than I can do. Supposing that he intends to spend his life in

⁸CW had likely requested one of various editions in which Roger Laurence (1670–1736) defended the necessity of baptism by an episcopally-ordained priest, rejecting both lay and Dissenter baptism; such as *Dissenters’ and other unauthorized baptisms null and void* (London: Clements, 1712).

⁹“The accursed love (lust) for possessions.”

¹⁰Samuel Wesley Jr.’s daughter, Philadelphia.

¹¹Westley Hall (1709–76), a native of Salisbury, became a pupil of JW at Lincoln College on Jan. 26, 1731. Within a year he was closely involved with the Oxford Methodists. An apparent model of Christian piety, JW gladly introduced Hall to his family; only to find him courting Martha and Kezia at the same time in 1734–35. Hall married Martha on Sept. 13, 1735, days after being ordained both deacon and priest, professedly in order to accompany JW and CW to Georgia. Within a month Hall withdrew from this venture. More importantly, he eventually proved unfaithful to Martha, justifying his actions by appeals to polygamy in Scripture. In addition to fracturing his marriage, this led to an end of his service as an Anglican priest and supporter of the Methodist cause. Hall kept up some correspondence with Martha until his death. See *DEB*, 507–08; Maser, *Sisters*, 86–96; *ODNB*; Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 386–411; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 147.

¹²Apparently referring to Charles Rivington, the London publisher known to the Wesley brothers.

¹³James Edward Oglethorpe (1696–1785) had been a friend of Samuel Wesley Sr., and solicited his input of recruiting clergy to serve the new Georgia colony. JW and CW accompanied Oglethorpe to Georgia, JW as a parish priest and CW as Oglethorpe’s secretary. See *ODNB*.

¹⁴I.e., the journal JW prepared covering Oct. 14, 1735 through Feb. 16, 1736; see JW, *Works*, 18:312–58 (and the description on pp. 299–300).

India,¹⁵ which seems most probable, why or wherefore should he refuse the fifty pounds? If he is not poor, does he know none that is? There appears much more danger of pride in refusing it, than there can be of avarice in accepting so small a sum.

Michaelmas-day. This third time I am come to go on with my writing, but must be somewhat shorter than my paper would admit, because of going to church. My mother sends her love and blessing to you and Jack, and bids me to tell you she hopes to see you again in England without any danger of a second separation. My wife and I join in love; and Phil, according to her years, in duty. I heartily pray God to prosper you in public and private where you are, and to give you a safe voyage back, and a long and happy abode here!

I am, dear Charles,

Your most affectionate and faithful friend and brother,

S. Wesley

My hearty love and service to Mr. Oglethorpe.

Address: "To the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley / to be left in the Georgia House in Old Palace Yard / Westminster."

Postmark: "1/OC."

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/62.¹⁶

¹⁵Samuel may be referring to North America as the West Indies; but he is more likely alluding to how Samuel Annesley Jr., the supposedly wealthy brother of Susanna (Annesley) Wesley that resided in India, failed to send any support to his sister Susanna.

¹⁶Transcriptions published in Clarke, *Memoirs* (1823), 391–94, (1836), 2:181–85; and Stevenson, *Memorials*, 246–48.

From Samuel Wesley Jr.

Tiverton, Devon
December 7, 1736

Dear Charles,

This moment almost I received yours.¹ I believe by the date of it you may be at London by that time this can get thither. I heartily bless God for your safe arrival, having heard many flying reports of your being lost; though I never read newspapers, being otherwise at least if not better employed. Yet ill tidings would find me out. I fancy you like business no more than I. Yet I do not much regret your being employed in it, provided always no part of it relate to your going back to the place from whence you came, since I do not care for two partings. I would not have mentioned this in the present joy, only I thought it best to declare myself soon enough.

I am mightily obliged to Mr. [James] Hutton, who is apprentice to Mr. Innys²—for the minute he heard you were arrived at Boston he sent me word of it, for fear I should give too much credit to the story of your being cast away. I desire you would give my service and thanks to him and tell him that I take it particularly kindly of him, and was just going to write a letter to assure him of it, but now I have a better way of conveyance.

I have had a deliverance from danger lately, God only knows whether as imminent as yours, but I have been very low. My strength is now returning almost sensibly. And when I see your face I shall in a more especial manner rejoice for seeing the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

My mother [Susanna] is here with me. You may easily guess whether she is partaker of the general joy that your little script brought along with it. She sends her blessing and longs to see you.

I would certainly have sent you what you mentioned in your letters over sea, if I had not heard of your coming over—nor should I then first in my lifetime have grudged expense to benefit a friend. I hope you will now be able to fit yourself in London. But if not, come to Tiverton and see what that affords. You will find me pretty much the same man, though not the same usher still. I could wish for all our sakes the *archididascalus* had as large an income as the *hypo-[didascalus]* had.³ Phil is extraordinary well in her bodily health. My wife has been almost go[ne] during my illness, but begins to pick up again as I recover. I wish she would hold it on, and mend as long and as much as I believe I shall do. We join heartily in love. Little Phil sends her duty. Service to all friends that ask after me. I hope you'll keep your holidays here. Where's Mr. [James] Oglethorpe? We are, dear Charles,

Your faithful and affectionate friends, and brother and sister

S. Wesley [and] Urs. Wesley

Address: "To the Reverend Mr. Wesley / at the Reverend Mr. Huttons / in Colledge Street / Westminster."

Postmark: "10/DE."

Endorsements: by CW, "faithful and affectionate indeed"; and on cover "B[rother] and S[ister] Wesley welcoming me from Georgia. Dec. 1736 / *Notus in Frats animi paterni*⁴ / Let my widow preserve this precious relick."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 6/5.

¹This letter, written shortly after CW landed back in England, is not known to survive.

²William Innys (d. 1756) was a major publisher in London.

³"Head teacher" of a school; contrasted to "under-teacher."

⁴"The father's spirit continues in the brother."

From the Rev. George Whitefield¹

Dummer
December 20[–22], 1736

Reverend and Dearest Sir,

Blessed be God who still holdeth your soul in life and has brought you safe to your native soil. May the same good Being fulfill your design in coming hither.

You come you say for more labourers. I willingly offer myself to go to Georgia. All things concur. Three months previous intimation of it from the Holy Spirit, your own and reverend brother's letter,² and Mr. Kinchin's being settled at Oxon to supply my place are clear and manifest calls from above.³ Lo then I come. And throw myself blindfold into the hands of my heavenly Father, to conduct me where he pleases. Pray dear sir that now I have resolved to set my hand to this plough I may not look back. Indeed I am sensible that many hardships, afflictions, and temptations will attend my present undertaking. But I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. And I would be willing to say with the great apostle of the Gentiles in this morning's lesson that none of th(ese)⁴ things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself so (that) I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.⁵ And may the great God of heaven say Amen to it.

I expect Mr. Hervey⁶ and Mr. Kinchin here on Thursday and propose, God willing, to set out with the latter for Oxford on Monday. I should be glad of an answer from you next post, that we may all three pray and consult while we are together. It will be proper for me to know how, when, and where I am to go, that I may act accordingly.

In the same packet in which my Oxon friends sent yours⁷ yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Salmon.⁸ I'll even write to him and see if God stirs up his heart to accompany us. I have had an unusual inclination lately to write to Mr. [Wesley] Hall, to beg him to contribute something towards reprinting *Christian Prudence*.⁹ If you think proper and will tel(l me how to di)rect, I'll send him a line. Who knows

¹This is CW's first known surviving letter from Whitefield.

²Likely referring to a journal letter sent by JW, directed specifically to Whitefield, dated Sept. 10, 1736; see JW, *Works*, 25:471–73.

³Rev. Charles Kinchin, (1711–41), matriculated Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 1725, receiving his BA in 1729 and his MA in 1733. He was elected a fellow of the college in 1731, and Dean in 1736. An early member of the Oxford Methodists, Kinchin gave leadership when the Wesley brothers departed for Georgia. Ordained and installed as rector of Dummer in 1735 (where Whitefield was currently preaching), Kinchin also supervised a series of Oxford Methodists as curates. See *DEB*, 646; Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 363–70; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 191–92.

⁴A small portion is torn away by the wax seal; the missing words are clear from the scriptural text being cited.

⁵See Acts 20:24. The entire chapter of Acts 20 is assigned for Dec. 20 in the BCP lectionary.

⁶Rev. James Hervey, (1714–58), another of the Oxford Methodists, had just been ordained deacon and was serving as curate to Kinchin at Dummer. Whitefield spells “Harvy.”

⁷CW had clearly sent Whitefield a note after his safe arrival back in England; it is not known to survive.

⁸Matthew Salmon (b. 1714), of Nantwich, Cheshire, who matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford in 1730, and received his BA in 1733.

⁹JW had published an abridged version of John Norris's *Treatise on Christian Prudence* in 1734. Whitefield had apparently overseen the second edition, which had just appeared

but his time to ⟨go thither may⟩¹⁰ be now fully come? Remember the text pointed out to you, “As touching our brother Apollos,”¹¹ And he himself said at Oxford he believed he should go to Georgia ere he died.

God direct us in everything.

I am just now going to answer a brother’s letter of mine,¹² a captain of a ship who has for a long time and still desires me to give him the meeting at Gloucester, where I think it meet for me to go when God points out my way more clearly on many accounts. O pray that no natural affection may make me draw back my hand. I’ll in this apprise them all of my firm resolution to go to Georgia, and oblige them to promise me they will not dissuade me from it. If they will not, I’ll even go (by the Divine assistance) without taking my leave *personally* of any of them.

O that there may be always such a mind in me! You’ll not fail writing my dear friend (or “father” shall I call you?), that I may have your letter by Sunday’s post. In the meanwhile recommend me to God (as I do you) heartily and frequently, and believe me to be, I trust sincerely,

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

GW

P.S. Will your circumstances permit you to subscribe something towards *Christian Prudence*? There are a thousand reprinted, but I have not yet sufficient to pay for them.

Adieu

December 22nd

Mr. Hervey is just come safe hither. He begs you’ll pray he may do no harm here. O humility! If you can, show sick G. J.’s man I pray for and salute him. When shall we meet?

Address: “To / The Revnd. Mr. Charles / Westley at the Revnd. Mr. Huttons / in College-street / Westminster.”

Postmarks: partial and illegible

Endorsements: by CW, “1 lr”,¹³ “G. Whitefield - for Georgia / Dec. 20. 1736”, and “[to Mr. Whitefield]].”¹⁴

Source: holograph; Drew, Methodist Archives, Whitefield Collection.

¹⁰A portion of the text is missing, affecting two lines. The missing text has been reconstructed based on context.

¹¹1 Cor. 16:12ff.

¹²Captain James Whitefield (1709–66).

¹³At some point CW also wrote “2[nd] L[ette]r” on the address portion.

¹⁴CW frequently preserved a copy of his reply in shorthand at the end or on the address portion of a letter he received. The fact that he breaks off at this point, without giving any text, suggests he received Whitefield’s Dec. 30 letter before he had time to respond to this first letter.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Oxon
December 30, 1736

Dearest Sir,

Last night I returned from a weeping flock at Dummer,¹ and met with a grateful, sweet reception from my Oxon friends. But alas, how transient are our visits in this life! For tomorrow I purpose, God willing, to set out for Gloucester, or otherwise I shall hardly see the bishop,² who I hope will contribute something towards assisting the Americans. Add to this that friends promise not to dissuade me from my enterprise; and I have a brother, I believe, now there that comes on purpose to see me.³ So that all here bid me hasten away. O may such speedy removes teach me to be every moment ready at my blessed Master's call, and remind me that I have here no continuing city, but seek one to come!

I have great reason to bless God (and do you also) for sending me to Dummer. It has, I think, been an excellent preparative for Georgia. It has taught me to love *alone*, and much improved both my outward and inward man. O may these instances of divine love strengthen my weak faith and make me ready to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth!

I have written to [Matthew] Salmon, and will, God willing, shortly send to [Westley] Hall. No one but myself is *ready* to go from Oxford. Dear Mr. Hutchin[g]s will go hereafter, I believe.⁴ But his time, as yet, is not fully come. If you should be taken off (and oh how happy then dear Mr. Charles!) I trust notwithstanding God will give me strength to throw myself blindfold[ed] into his hands, and permit him to do with me whatsoever seemeth good in his sight. All friends like the German hymn admirably.⁵ Happy shall I be if my lot is cast amongst such pious souls. But I think God calls me in a particular manner to assist your brother.

My friend will not take it amiss if I enquire why he chooses to be secretary to Mr. [James] Oglethorpe, and not rather go, when labourers are so much wanted, in the character of a missionary? Did the bishop ordain us, my dear friend, to write bonds, receipts, etc.; or to preach the gospel? Or dare we not trust God to provide for our relations without endangering, or at least *retarding*, our spiritual improvement? But I go too far. *Habe me excusatum*.⁶ You know I was always heady and self-willed.

I hear you are to be in Gloucester next week. Will dear Mr. Charles take a bed with me at Mr. Harris's?⁷ I believe he will be welcome. You will write next post, if convenient, and direct for me to Mr. Harris's, junior, bookseller, in Gloucester. All friends here kindly salute and long to see you. Mr. [Charles] Kinchin is all heart. Dear Mr. Charles, adieu! Let us wrestle in prayer for each other, and believe me to be, dearest sir,

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

[George Whitefield]

¹The congregation where Rev. Charles Kinchin was rector.

²Martin Benson (1689–1752) was currently Bishop of Gloucester.

³Captain James Whitefield; see previous letter.

⁴John Hutchings (b. 1716) matriculated at Pembroke College, Oxford in 1734, where he became involved in the "Oxford Methodists." After receiving his BA in 1738, he was ordained deacon and became Charles Kinchin's curate at Dummer, Hampshire.

⁵Likely one of the German hymns that JW had translated and would include in *HSP* (1737).

⁶"Excuse me."

⁷Gabriel Harris (1665–1744), married to Susanna Beacon, was a book-seller in Gloucester. His son Gabriel Jr. was born in 1711.

P.S. Is it expedient to go into priest's orders? Tell me, that I may acquaint the bishop. He leaves Gloucester next Wednesday. Is there provision ⟨?⁸⟩ me at Georgia? I have one or two good ones to go.

Address: "To / The Revnd. Mr. Charles / Wesley at the Revnd. Mr. / Huttons in College-street / Westminster."

Postmarks: "Oxford" and "31/DE."

Endorsements: by CW, "2 lr" and "[[Whitefield]] 1736. Dec. 30 / G Whitfield / going to Georgia."

Source: holograph; Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 1932/402.

⁸One or two words are obscured by the wax seal.

1737

From Sarah (Kirkham) Chapone¹

Gloucester
January 5, 1736[/37]

Alas, my good Charles! How shall I describe that tender sorrow which filled my eyes and heart at reading your letter?² Why I should be your peculiar consolation, God only knows. I am truly sensible that I am not worthy of that happy distinction. I must confess I found it very difficult to give up the delight I expected from your conversation. I trust we shall meet—I hope in paradise, for alas I have no expectation of that full freedom of soul here. I have had great trials this last year, but God has graciously supported and made me happy under them. My father suffered more in the flesh than I ever saw any mortal endure.³ His last vocal prayer was this: “O my lovely God, enlighten me with the bright beams of thy mercy, and support me by thy strength, and accept of my weak endeavours to bear these great pains as I ought.” He not only died without fear, but even with desire. The toils of the longest life would be well repaid by the comforts and blessing of such a death. If yours is near, I pray God it may be like his, and that we may meet in fulness of joy!

I hope and pray for your recovery. In order to it, you will find on the other side of the paper a receipt for the disorder with which your worthy friend Mr. [George] Whitefield tells me you are afflicted.⁴ Mrs. Granville’s great concern for you furnished me with this prescription which she recommends to you in the strongest terms.⁵ May God bless it to the health and ease of my friend! I shall return home soon. Direct a line to my mother at Stanton,⁶ for I shall be impatient to know your condition. You may be as openhearted as you please, no one shall see your lines.

Our friends in this house are in great concern for you, and desire their particular respects. Mine you can never doubt of, though how few and trivial are the testimonies I have been ever able to give you of it? Be sure to have a full trust in the mercies of God; heaven and earth shall pass away ere charity shall fail, or a soul that desires to please God perish. Pray for me. God will hear you for me since it has pleased him to inspire you with that Christian love for me which can come only from him. Selima⁷ is, I think, as perfect a Christian as I have seen. Adieu.

Endorsement: by CW: “Sally Chapoon, my Friend / Jan. 5. 1736 / of her Father’s Death.”⁸
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/39.⁹

¹Sarah (Kirkham) Chapone (1699–1764) was the sister of CW’s friend Robert. See his letter to her of Feb. 5–14, 1736.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Rev. Lionel Kirkham (1675–1736), Sarah’s father, was rector of Stanton, Gloucestershire. He died in July 1736 (buried July 21).

⁴This receipt does not survive.

⁵Mary (Westcomb) Granville (c. 1670–1747), following her husband’s death in 1723, settled with her daughters Ann and Mary at Buckland in the Cotswolds.

⁶Damaris (Boyse) Kirkham (b. 1677).

⁷The literary nickname for Ann Granville among CW and his Cotswald friends.

⁸This is a later expansion of his original endorsement in shorthand: “[Sally] 1736. Jan. 5. / [[her father’s death]] My friend.” Separately CW also wrote: “[I cannot say I rejoice in being better].”

⁹Transcription published in *WHS* 25 (1946): 103–04.

From James Hutton

London
February 8, 1737

*Mi Wosleie,*¹

I could no more hold from writing by this opportunity than I could from telling you, if I was to see you, that you are a friend. Ah glorious title—fit only for a few. Are there many such as you and I? Show me them, that I may learn to be more a friend. Teach me yourself, for thou canst teach. Teach me to be more a friend. I sent the letter by the post to London. I wrote this day to Kitty.² I told her what the Count³ said, [[all mortal⁴]] will is hell. May she and I learn to dread it as hell. Doest thou at matins and at evensong pour forth thy soul in prayer for thy friend? Yea, I believe thou prayest without ceasing for him. When you are praying for any good for your own self, I am also a partaker. Oh my friend,

When selfish passions are no more,
When all's at peace and calm within,
When all our soul can God adore,
Free from wand'ring as from sin.

Then and only then can we, should we, cease from mourning. And yet I that am not in the least degree on the way to perfection. Like the ungalled hart, [I] play; whereas I ought rather with the stricken deer go weep. Teach me, oh thou mourner the way to mourn! Rather, oh Jesus, teach thou me what is so acceptable to thee.

*I conclude with wishing you eximiam libertatem.*⁵

*Mi Wosleie, tuus sum*⁶

Address: "To / The Rev'd Mr Chars. Wesley / at / Christ Church / Oxon."

Endorsement: by CW, "[James Hutton] / 1737 / Loving – most loving James!" Added at a later date:
"Furimus Troes!"⁷

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/65.

¹"Dear Wesley."

²His sister, Catherine Hutton.

³Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–60), now the bishop of the Moravians; see *DEB*, 1226–27; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 408. CW had several conversations with Count Zinzendorff from mid-Jan. 1737 through early Feb.

⁴The shorthand is simply the letters "l" and "m"; see CW's comment at the time that the Count told him "My own will is hell to me" (MS Journal, Feb. 5, 1737).

⁵"Exceptional freedom or liberty."

⁶"Dear Wesley, I am yours."

⁷CW almost certainly meant "*fuimus Troes*," a phrase from Virgil's *Aeneid* (ii.325), often translated "We were truly Trojans." It was used popularly to describe a reality that was now past and irretrievable.

From Elizabeth and James Hutton

[London]
[c. February 10,¹] 1737

Dear Sir,

What have I done that makes you unwilling to eat of my bread without paying for it? I do assure you upon the word of a Christian, I did not invite you to take up a lodging in my house with an intent ever to be paid for it. Nor did I entertain you in such a manner as if I had any such view. And I will convince you that your entertainment here was no expense but such as is entirely suitable to my present circumstances. First, as to your lodging, I should not have made one single penny off the room had you not been in it. And for the little diet you had, it was after the same manner. I provided nothing for you. You ate in that plain way that we did, and your drink was water. I dare say all the wine you had for the whole time you was with me did not stand me in three shillings as you drank. It was much less expense than small beer. Nor was either my butcher's or baker's bills enlarged, for I am a pretty exact economist. And I kept no more servants for you, nor had my servant any more work. What you could not do for yourself, I or my daughter did, and to so assist the sick is a very proper employ. So that I do with all sincerity assure you I think myself more obliged to you than it is possible you can be to me, unless it be my plain friendship can be made anyways useful to you. I insist upon it that neither I nor my son receive any of your money. He is already enriched very much by your friendship to him, and I bless God he ever saw you. And I have in him been already amply paid, had you been ever so expensive to me; whereas I look upon myself at present far in your debt. I may be mistaken in my conduct, but what is looked upon in me to proceed from a greedy or covetous temper, I mean only such a frugality as will enable me to be rather helpful than needful, according to my dear grandfather's prayer for his descendants. If my children will be of the same temper, I hope it will prevent their being covetous. For if they will learn to have but few wants, a little fortune will answer the ends of great riches. And such by the kind providence of God I have been able to procure for them. I verily believe you have all good intentions to me and mine in your kind offer. But I hope I have convinced you it will be esteemed a greater kindness if you accept what accommodations you have had under our roof with only a return of your prayers for us and good offices of friendship as occasion offers. And what you intended to spare for us out of your present fortune, give to such others of your friends whose wants are more, and their abilities to supply them less, than ours is at present; unless by our follies we erase them.

Believe me to be, with the greatest sincerity,
Your most affectionate friend to my power,

E. H.

[next page for letter on backside by James Hutton]

Dear Charles,

K[itty]² would fain hear from you. You promised it, and therefore I think you really ought. Don't immediately be angry at me for desiring it; I judge it best. I would have you tell John Sarney I am as

¹When CW arrived back in England in Dec. 1736, in poor health, the Hutton family took him into their home and helped care for him. CW left their house in early February, to spend some time in Oxford (staying with John Sarney). This letter was likely written shortly after that, in response to CW's offer to pay the Hutton's for their care and boarding.

²Catherine Hutton (1719–49), James's sister; she married Thomas Asteley in 1739.

miserable as he;³ nay, much more so. More wretched than if I had 10,000 sores. O my friend, it is no light matter to offend in any degree infinite Goodness.

I can write no more. I wish my heart was wounded within me, and God would accept it.

Ever yours. Adieu dear Charles!

Do not forget me, nor Mr. Baldwyn.

Endorsement: by CW, “Mrs Hutton 1737 / acknowledging.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/2.

³John Sarney (fl. 1735–45), an Oxford mercer, was a sympathizer with the Oxford Methodists. CW was currently lodging with him.

From James Hutton

[London]
February 26, 1737

Dearest Charles,

Captain Corney¹ was obliged to go away in such a hurry that he has left some things behind him which should have been taken with him. As yet (thus long I have denied myself the pleasure of writing) I have heard nothing of any letter from him.

Would you think it? I had a hour's conversation with the modest Mr. Appee.² Looking wistfully on him, not knowing him, he accosted me and asked, "Did not you inquire for me at Paris Coffee House, Suffolk Street?"

J. H.: "I did."

A: "For what? Are you an officer?"

J. H.: "No. I wanted you, to ask you about 18£ that was just owing by you to Mr. [Charles] Wesley, and about letters from Mr. [Charles] Delamotte which you should have delivered before."

A: "I was hindered at first, and soon after business kept me six weeks longer. I have delivered them. Do you live with Mr. Wesley?"

J. H.: "I do not. No matter where I live."

A: "You asked me yourself for myself. I told you I did not know him (i.e., myself)."

J. H.: "Very well."

A: "I could not know what you wanted."

J.H.: "Nay, I do not blame you. Why would you not meet Mr. O[glethorpe]?"

A: "I will never meet him and Mr. Wesley; if I give as good reasons as he, his character will prevail."

J. H.: "Fit it should. Why do you deserve a worse character than Wesley?"

A: "You think mine worse because I have spent my fortune. Would I therefore lie?"

J. H.: "Did not you appear religious in Georgia? Why so different since?"

A: "I was so there. But I saw Wesley's character was different from profession: ostentatious, etc."

J. H.: "I would as soon cut your throat for blackening my friend's character as for robbing me on the highway." Here I was in a passion. But he told me he never knew any religious person but, if contradicted, would immediately lose his boasted characteristic meekness.

A: "Mr. Wesley wrote a letter to James Oglethorpe containing eight reasons for leaving Georgia. Mr. Oglethorpe was amazed, and thought how he could save his reputation, so pretended that he came over on business. I threatened to ask Mr. Oglethorpe, and if it was false, to post him. He pretended to be in a passion."

I again threatened to cut his throat, though not directly. We parted at last. I am amazed to see the rogue shift, not at all at a loss for fresh lies, referring me for his character to [Capt.] Corney, Zouberbuhler,³ etc. Truly I cannot but admire his invention. There runs through the rogue such a fine vein of deceit. Nay, he had the impudence at last to own that he played the hypocrite in Georgia. Nay, to defend the practice—that it was better to go to church if we were very wicked, to edify. Precious rogue! Mr. Oglethorpe went to church to set an example! Rare rogue! Look you, I write down these appellations

¹John Corney captained the *Hannah*, the ship that brought CW and Peter Appee from Boston to England.

²Hutton spells "Appy." Peter Appee, a native of Holland, met the Wesley brothers in Georgia, and accompanied CW back from Georgia to England.

³Sebastian Zouberbuhler (c. 1715–73) was an agent for Samuel Waldo, who speculated in land in North America, and had accompanied CW and Appee back to England on the *Hannah*.

to save you the trouble of adding them.

I asked him how he could betray anything, supposing anything had been said, which had been told him under confidence. Hear the rogue: “He betrayed what I told him.”

“It is false,” says I.

A: “You will affront me?”

J. H.: “I can’t help it. I care not.”

A: “Zouberbuhler will witness that he would affront me for nothing in the ship, insomuch that Corney was forced to put a stop to it.”

J. H.: “False again.”

A: “I wish Mr. Wesley would have arrested me. That would have shown his actions.”

J. H.: “Would you not pay your debts, thou true man of honour?”

A: “I cannot. I have nothing. Indeed, I appear now but indifferent at the masquerade, where I was last night; at the play, in company, I appear like another person. I am never without two or three guineas (or a guinea or two, I forget which [J.H. clarifies “this is my parenthesis”]) in my pocket. But that I cannot be without. Mr. Oglethorpe released me.”

J. H.: “That is false, I know.”

A: “If Mr. Oglethorpe had not had a kindness for me, he would not have sent to me as soon as he came.”

J. H.: “You promised to freight Corney’s ship.”

A: “I thought I could, but Mr. Oglethorpe had no occasion” (or he said something like that; I do not remember certainly).

He likewise hinted something to me as if you had spoke something against Oglethorpe. I would fain have pumped it out, but could not. His words were his principles forbid him speaking ill of any. He would not for the world say anything against Mr. Oglethorpe.

I left him with proving that he ought to meet you and Mr. Oglethorpe; that indeed his character would not bear the load, and that his hypocrisy was of the devil. He would have left me several times, but I would not part with him till I had heard him. And I am sorry I can remember no more of his precious conversation. Villain scarcely to be matched! If the rogue had any of Cataline’s good qualities; nay, any other famous rouge’s, I am sure of this—he has all their bad qualities.

*Cedite Romani Nebulones, Cedit Grai!*⁴

P.S. He would lay me a wager that you would not return.

I had a letter from George Whitefield. He is in good heart. When he comes to town, he is to be at my father’s.

Oh my friend, time scarce suffices me to tell you how much I think of you! Do not forget me. Our friend is well. Our friends are so too. Count Zinzendorf I hear is gone. Did you bespeak the laws for which Mr. Baldwyn gave you six pounds? When do you go to Georgia? Does Mr. [Westley] Hall go? Do you, have you, resigned the post? These three queries George Whitefield desired an answer to.

When shall we see you in London? Be not offended at these, so many, impertinent questions. Write soon. Tell me, shall I give you joy in hearing that you are at peace? I can no more write any longer that I can cease loving you. I am in a maze, dull, stupid. Oh, when shall I be free? Write soon. Adieu.

*Tuissimus sum,*⁵

J. H.

⁴“Make way you Roman restless spirits. Make way Greeks!” Cf. Propertius, *Elegies*, II.xxxiv.65.

⁵Hutton is creating a superlative form here, like “Most truly yours.”

Address: “To / The Rev’d Mr Chas. Wesley / at the Rev’d Mr Wesley’s / at Tiverton / Devonshire.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[James Hutton] / 1737 / Faithful James Hutton / with Appee.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/66.

From James Hutton

[London]
May 3, 1737

My Friend,

What long fortnights you make! First you tell me I shall see you in town very shortly. Well, I am glad. I expect you every day. Inquire at the coach, is any such person come up? NO — Now I hear from you in this manner.¹ Perhaps you may think it worth 3 pennies to hear I am some miles nearer. “There will a time come, etc.” WHEN? This is your sly trick. You, secretary like, put me on a wrong scent, make me eager to see you, and then cry “a time will come.” Let it come. Is it worth 1 penny to know you are 20 miles nearer than you was, and yet at such a distance? If my spirits were low, I could cry to be made such a fool of Fie Charles. I have not been able to hear of any parcel come from Oxford by Bew’s coach for you. Inquire who it was sent by. Do you hear?

Sir, at sight hereof take a place in the coach for London, and be sure to render yourself in College Street 48 hours after sight of this my first bill, or expect to hear further from

Your’s,

J. H.

I must write in this manner, for begging or fair words signify nothing. Dear Charles, if earnest business keeps you at Oxon, so be it; if affection, does any bear the same to you at Oxon that I do? The next comes behind a great way, *Longo Proximus Intervallo*.²

I have 10,000 things to say to you, and 20,000 offer at once, but one is uppermost, *Veni*.³

Dear Charles,

Your friend and brother,

J. H.

P.S. If after this you dare stay, make some apology.

Address: “To / The Rev’d Mr Wesley / at Mr Sarney’s / near Pembroke College / Oxon.”

Postmark: “3/MY.”

Endorsements: by CW, “[James Hutton] 1737 / Jam. Hutton, lovingly impor/tuning my return.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/67.

¹CW had apparently sent a letter, which is not known to survive.

²Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, v.320; “next by a long gap.”

³“Come!”

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

Tiverton, Devon
Sunday, August 7, 1737

Dear Charles,

As time is the most precious of all things, so yours is the most precious of all time, especially if I may judge by what pittance of it that fell to my share at Tiverton. But I make allowance for that wretched letter,¹ whose motto might have been: “*sequar atris ignibus absens*.”²

But Laura’s image will be there
Where Laura will not be!³

How came I to have no books to disperse? You know I approve the *Advice to the Parishioners*.⁴ [John] Norris is such that nothing beneath an angel need be ashamed of, even if it were a folio.⁵ If you can get more acquaintance in a fortnight than I in three years, it does not follow I can do *nothing at all*.

I have several objections to the *Prayers*,⁶ some slight and some substantial, though I think the main very good. I shall not insist on the weekly form, because some folks love *whims*; though three days are purely arbitrary, and the same reason will in a great measure hold for every day in the month, nay and in the year too. In the preface I find “self-renouncing” and “self-denial,” to which let them add self-avoiding and self-displacing and as many selfs as they can think of; only spare self-annihilation, because that is co-incident with Dr. Sherlock’s great self—namely self-contradiction.

In the Sunday there is an amazing omission: where is our *Lord’s resurrection*? There is as bad a commission too, p.18. “I know the very corruption of the devil is the having a will distinct from *and therefore* contrary to thine.”⁷ Every creature *as such* must have a will distinct from God. Without this Satan could not have fallen; nay, our Lord could not have merited. What mystic nonsense is this then? It is too soft a word—what blasphemy! Our Savior’s saying “not my will but thine be done”⁸ shows he had a will; nay, and much more properly contrary to God’s than a man can be said to be nothing and the rest of that trash.

p. 24: Question 4 seems to imply there can be no good end in view without probability of conviction by contradiction, when there may be many, even without the possibility of it. Question 5. Letting one in the wrong have the last word in *a trifle* may confirm him in it, and are we to feed another’s

¹No recent letter from CW to Samuel is known to survive.

²Virgil, *Aeneid*, iv.384.; “absent will I pursue with vengeful fire.”

³William King, “The Mad Lover.”

⁴*A Country-Parson’s Advice to His Parishioners. In Two Parts: I. Containing a Plain and Serious Exhortation to a Religious and Virtuous Life; II. General Directions how to Live accordingly* (London: Printed for Benjamin Tooke, 1680).

⁵Likely referring to JW’s abridged version of John Norris’s *Treatise on Christian Prudence*, recently reissued in a second edition.

⁶JW, *Collections of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week* (London: Charles Rivington, 1733).

⁷The oldest surviving edition of *Collections* is the 3rd (London: James Hutton, 1738), where this quote is on p. 19.

⁸Luke 22:42.

pride for the sake of advancing our own humility?⁹

p. 29: “Give me a lively sense that I *am nothing* that I have nothing and that I can do nothing.” How does this agree with what follows, “I am ignorance ... sin and misery”? Are those nothing? But nonsense never can be understood. These special assertions are called fundamental maxims.

p. 31: Question 1.¹⁰ At this rate all these prayers are from nothing about nothing doing nothing. *Nihile nullae sunt affectiones*. There is no possibility of evasion but by explaining *nothing* into *something*. The 4, 5, and 6 questions about the praise of men are very imperfect. That may be lawfully desired as any other worldly good, with much the same restrictions.

p. 40: Question 1.¹¹ If doing a thing merely for pleasure be a sin, there seems an inextricable labyrinth of scruples to arise. But allowing this, sure I am question 6 (submitting our will to the will of everyone) is so far from a general duty in matters indifferent that it approaches nearer to a sin with respect to our inferiors, is often inexpedient to our equals, and far from being always required even to our superiors.

p. 48: Question 3. “Have I (after doing what he requires me to do concerning them) left all things absolutely to God’s disposal?”¹² This is sense and piety, unless by the word “absolutely” be intended what follows with a most marvellous—i.e. “Have I laboured to be wholly indifferent to which way soever he shall ordain for me?” It is absolutely properly and always our duty *not to be indifferent*. Must we pray to God for good and not desire it? And against evil and not dislike it? Must we talk nonsense or tell lies to the Most High? Or must we be in earnest in our prayers, and then forthwith divest ourselves of those human affections? Christ’s cup was bitter; had not he learnt the art of indifference? Could it be attained, it would seem to me to raze in a great measure the very foundations for suffering rewards and punishments. Why should any one be rewarded for *suffering no evil*? Or punished for having slighted *no good*?

I like the Friday well; only p. 54, the repeating “Jesus” put me in mind of a popish prayer-book, where “Jesus” is put nine times before every petition; which I suppose was meant by way of balance to the *Ave Marias* in bidding beads.

The words “Our Father, etc.” should be put at the end of every morning and evening prayer as well as at the end of the whole book, for the sake of ignorant people who may imagine it is to be used only on a Saturday.

If you will send me those three books, I’ll thank you. To which you may add two other little things printed, as I remember, by Downing in Bartholomew Close: *The Way to Spend One Day Well* and *The Mother’s Legacy to Her Unborn Child*.¹³ John sent me down one of my father’s instructions to a curate,¹⁴ but it was so tore in the passage that good part was not legible. It is odd I *should not have that, and should never have seen Jack upon the stations*,¹⁵ and never so much as heard of his *Prayers* till Mrs.

⁹These questions for Monday evening are on p. 29 of the 3rd edn.

¹⁰The questions for Tuesday evening, which are on pp. 37–38 of the 3rd edn.

¹¹The questions for Wednesday evening, on p. 48 of the 3rd edn.

¹²Among questions for Thursday evening, p. 58 in the 3rd edn.

¹³Edward Synge (1659–1741), *Some Short and Plain Directions of Spending One Day Well* (London: R. Sare, 1701); and Elizabeth Jocelin (1596–1622), *The Mother’s Legacy to her Unborn Child* (Oxford: Wilmot, 1684).

¹⁴Samuel Wesley Sr., *Advice to a Young Clergyman: in a letter to him* (London: Charles Rivington, 1735).

¹⁵Referring to JW’s “Essay upon the Stationary Fasts,” of which excerpts were published in Thomas Deacon (ed.), *A Complete Collection of Devotions, both Public and Private: Taken from the Apostolical Constitutions, the Ancient Liturgies, and the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England* (London: for the author, 1734), pp. 72–74 of the Appendix.

Alice Peard told me of them last night. She and her youngest sister send their service to you.¹⁶ I am, dear Charles,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

S. Wesley

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother] W[esley] Aug. 7. 1737 / B[rother]’s Criticism on the Prayers.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/14.

¹⁶Alice Peard (1696–1747) and Mary Peard (d. 1780) of Tiverton; both spinsters.

From William Delamotte¹

[Bexley?]
[c. September 1737²]

I imagine you do not wonder at my failing to write to you sooner, as you are acquainted with the feeble condition I am in. Though God be thanked, I am in a much better state than I was, and hope through his assistance I shall be enabled to see you shortly.

I hear it has pleased the Lord to make you the happy instrument of awakening our family to discern the hope of their calling, exciting them to shake off that carnal lethargy. I could wish to taste—and not only to taste but relish—conversion, as they have done. But as the Lord had not brought me to this bed of sickness, had it not been for his glory and my good, I will submit myself to his divine will with patience and resignation till he had accomplished his gracious purposes in me, and acknowledge his mercy in the midst of wrath, sadly reflecting that my punishment is infinitely less than my offenses deserve. What would make your company the more satisfactory is my need of a fellow worker, an example such as lives and labours after the true spirit of Christian charity for I am situated among some of the modern Christians. But as I am debarred of that, I will more abundantly beg of God to strengthen my weak endeavours and enable me to do better, fill my soul with so sincere a love for him and the things that are pleasing to him that I may no longer harbour any love for anything here below, but esteem them as what they really are—vain, empty, and deceitful—and trust that he in his good time, when he sees a perfect calm will be seasonable for me, will put a period to my pain and sickness.

As I deferred that great and important work of my life, the renewal of my fallen nature; as I have contracted so many corrupt and vicious habits from the companions I was in familiarity with; I even now where I am find it no small difficulty to relinquish and throw them off. Though God be praised, I am seriously disposed to repent and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings. I sincerely intend to please God in every action of my life for the future, as the best and happiest thing I can do. I strive and labour to subdue the flesh and the affections of it, to place all my hopes, my happiness, and thoughts in pure and spiritual satisfactions, to follow the one thing, as I am so fully sensible it is the adequate and proper employment of my life. And I heartily thank God for continuing this his father corrections to me, since it is the most sure means to strengthen me to be “*iustum et tenacem propositi verium*”³ at my return to my college, where without doubt my combat will be much superior to what I now wrestle with. For as you justly observe, I shall then enter in “*ipsam aciem et certamen*,”⁴ though [I] hope through the assistance of that God which now comforts and supports me, when “*non civium ardor prava jubentium mente quatit solida*.”⁵

I am very glad to hear it has pleased the Lord to send me a fellow lodger, and I hope [it] will please him to lift up the light of his countenance on our whole university. It is far degraded from its original purity, that instead of being a seminar of true religion and sound education, it is a seminar of

¹William Delamotte (1718–43), the younger brother of Charles, matriculated at St. Catherine’s College, Cambridge in May 1736. An illness that year sparked a new spiritual seriousness that was strengthened by encountering Benjamin Ingham and CW. On his return to Cambridge in fall 1737 Delamotte gathered a fellowship group that garnered the pejorative title of “Methodists,” like in Oxford.

²Date based on CW’s annotation, and account of early meetings with William Delamotte in MS Journal.

³Horace, *Odes*, III.ii.13; “a man just and firm of purpose.”

⁴Cf. Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, XV.iv.16; “Into the field of battle and contest.”

⁵Cf. *ibid.*; “The wild fury of fellow-citizens ordering evil to be pursued.”

every kind of wickedness. Instead of living under good and wholesome regulations, they live in anarchy and confusion. As I am at present detained from gaining a personal acquaintance with Mr. Bentham,⁶ I have taken the liberty to write to him, to give him a few necessary precautions. And though I am sensible you had not failed to do the same, yet as the two universities differ very much, I only hinted some few things which a fatal experience has convinced me of the danger of. I recommended him to the acquaintance of Mr. Iliffes,⁷ the only good examples I know, and men who are truly righteous, who have preserved their integrity against the contempt and derision of a multitude, glory in the cross of Christ, and rejoice to be counted mad for his sake.

I approve very much, dear sir, of stated hours of retirement, and God be thanked have endeavoured to observe them for some time. Mr. [William] Law, Thomas à Kempis, and two or three more such books have been my familiars some time, and I hope by conversing with the Holy Scriptures and such writers as these, and converting what they contain into practice, I shall become a new creature. I shall dwell in Christ, and Christ in me. I shall use and improve the grace of God here, till grace be swallowed up in glory and I be translated to my Master's joy.

I am, sir,

Yours in Christ

Wm DeLaMotte

Endorsement: by CW, "1737 / W. Del[amot]t[e] — awakening at Cambridge."

Source: privately held?; photocopy at Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Papers, Box 72.

⁶Samuel Bentham (1718–52) was the son of Joseph and Ann (Fox) Bentham, born in York—and likely a cousin through Samuel Wesley Jr.'s mother-in-law, Ursula (Bentham) Berry. He completed preparatory school at Tiverton with Samuel Jr. and matriculated at Cambridge in June 1737. It is possible his father is the Joseph Bentham who became university printer at Cambridge.

⁷John Iliffe (1715–38) and George Iliffe (1717–81), both currently students at Cambridge, were sons of William and Mary (Johnson) Iliffe. William was a rector and school teacher, and the brother of Anne (Iliffe) Wesley (c. 1675–1712), the wife of Matthew Wesley, Samuel Wesley's brother. Thus the Iliffe brothers were cousins of CW.

From Christopher Wells¹

Oxon
October 20 [1737]

Dear Sir,

I have been, as to my health, in much the same condition as you left me;² until within this day or two that I have been better, thank God, and am now free from pain. I mean from outward pain and sickness, which I do but little regard in the degree that I have had it (though I thank God, who did not order it to be worse). I wish my mind, by God's grace and renewing Spirit, was as well as my body is by his providence. But I must wait his time. I must bear my infirmities, the inward crosses and sufferings which he is pleased to lay upon me, as well as outward difficulties and afflictions. I hope his grace will be sufficient to bear me through them. It is my time of temptation, the wilderness that I have to pass through. He will give me so much of his comfort and softening grace that I may bear as patiently that I may not fly to any other remedy but him. If I endure to the end, I know I shall be delivered. God almighty, through his Christ and his comforting and guarding Spirit will preserve me in humble patience and hope.

But in this condition as I am at present, I cannot think myself fit or worthy to join your friends.³ I am a sinful man. When I have not been sinful, I have not held by religion or true regard to God. God suffers me to be weak, to be still more and more unfit for any design of joy, interest, no ambition in this world. He presses in. He forces me to return to him. I hope I shall. But I cannot at present think myself, and must not pretend to make myself one of these who have the great honour and satisfaction to be despised and reproached (by those who do not or will not know them) for being good. I must bear that. That is my burden, and a heavier cross than theirs, a cross that is uncomported to be despised and reproached, without, and for not being, good. I think I ought not at present to disguise this, or seem to suffer upon any other account. But when I am freed from these faults, by bearing the due burden and punishment of them; when God will be pleased to give at last and in his due time his Spirit and grace; I may be worthy then to "suffer reproach for his name,"⁴ which I am not now. For this reason I will bear my burden privately with myself, pressing but waiting, I hope patiently to be delivered, and laying the foundation by God's grace deep in these sufferings against the time when he may be pleased to raise me with the strength of his faith, and make me, if it be his pleasure in any degree, an instrument to serve him. So pray for me, if I am worthy, if there be any seed or beginning of God's work in me to deserve your affection, pray for me that I may not in this state fall back into sin; that I may bear the burden that is necessary for me with patience and entire resignation, dying to my faults, to my own vanity and desires. Which, if it is God's intent to destroy in me entirely, may he have his end by my not resisting him, and I shall at last find peace and be fit to serve him. But I must suffer a great deal first. It is so ordained by the circumstances of my affairs and condition. And I have set my heart, I hope, with patience to bear them, till the time of comfort shall come from God. This is my state, which I hope I am the better while I am writing it to you.

I have not been able to sit down until now. I hope this is not too late, or that it may be sent after

¹Christopher Wells (1706–66) matriculated Jesus College Oxford in 1721, receiving his BA in 1724 and MA in 1727. He stayed on as a Fellow of Jesus, earning the DD in 1735. Wells was sympathetic for a time with the Oxford Methodists, and particularly close with CW through 1737–38. Ordained in 1743, Wells disclaimed the emphases of the Methodist revival. He left Oxford in 1748, to become rector of Remenham, Berkshire, where he served till his death. See *Alumni Oxonienses*; and *CCEd*.

²CW had been in Oxford in late September.

³CW was still thinking of returning to Georgia, and had apparently invited Wells to join the group he was trying to gather.

⁴Acts 5:41.

you, to show you that I remember you and your kind endeavours to do me good, which I hope have not been entirely lost. I shall read your hymns,⁵ and the books you recommended me by degrees. I can give you now but little account even of Mr. Law's book that I seemed fond of. I have read but the beginning, which I think very strong and good.

Heaven give you a good voyage, preserve you in his (Spirit,⁶) and make you an instrument in his hands to save many, that you may have a crown of glory hereafter. Send me the letter of your brother's, if you think it will do me good, but do not speak of me to anybody, I desire of you, as being anything. Let me be forgotten and never thought of but in your prayers. That is proper for my state. And burn my scroll when you have read it.

So farewell. Remember me and pray for me, as one that hopes to be

Your friend and brother, by the same Spirit, when God pleases,

C. W.

I have not seen Mr. [John] Gambold since.

Your friend of Magdalen⁷ called upon me. I kept him in talk for half an hour. Was much charmed with his simplicity and goodness. If any opportunity could happen that I might serve him by advice and assistance, without offence to his tutors or college, I would gladly.

Address: "To / The Reverend Mr Charles Westley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[October]] Oct. 27, 1737 / Mr Wells, lab'ring, complaining!"

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/100.

⁵These would be manuscript hymns, as CW had not yet had any of his hymns published.

⁶A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, but the missing text is fairly evident.

⁷This is likely Charles Caspar Graves (c. 1717–87), who matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford in Oct. 1736, where he was drawn into the Oxford Methodists. Graves was ordained deacon in 1740, on receiving his BA, at which time he formally disavowed the Methodists. He was reconciled to the Wesley brothers in 1742 and traveled with them for a time. In 1750 he was ordained a priest and became perpetual curate of the chapel in Tissington, Derbyshire, while continuing to offer support to surrounding Methodist societies as a clergyman. See *DEB*, 469.

From the Rev. Benjamin Ingham¹

Ossett, near Wakefield, Yorkshire
October 22, 1737

My Dear Brother,

Your letter is just come to my hands.² I rejoiced over it, because it came from you. I was afraid you had been almost lost. But since I see you are desirous to make full proof of your ministry, I greatly rejoice. Blessed be the Lord, who by his grace preserves you from falling, amidst the deceitful and alluring, bewitching temptations of worldly preferment. May he still continue his loving kindness towards you! May he thoroughly settle and establish you! May you have power to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil and, like a brave soldier, manfully to fight under Christ's banners! May your one desire of living be for Christ's sake, and the gospel's.

I have no other thoughts but of returning to America. When the time comes, I trust the Lord will show me. My heart's desire is that the Indians may hear the gospel. For this I pray both night and day.

I will transcribe the Indian words as fast as I can. I writ to Mr. William Delamotte three weeks ago. If he did not receive the letter, it miscarried. I wish you would inform me, that I might write again.

I have been just now talking to Mr. Godly, curate of Ossett (you know, I believe, that he is misnamed).³ I was all on a tremble while I talked to him, and for a good while after. He took my reproof very uneasily. But, however, he trembled as well as me. I have lent him the *Country Parson* to read;⁴ and since he went away, I have been praying for him in an agony. I seem to be full of hope, as if God would turn his heart—and oh that he may! One of the wickedest women in all Ossett is turned since I came down, and I believe she will make a thorough convert. She says she is sure God sent me to turn her heart. To his holy name be all the glory. There is another poor soul too here that is under the most severe agonies of repentance. Cease not to pray for these and the rest of your Christian friends at Ossett, who pray constantly for you.

Last Sunday I preached such a sermon at Wakefield church as has set almost all about us in an uproar. Some say the devil is in me; others, that I am mad. Others say no man can live up to such doctrines, and they never heard such before. Others again extol me to the sky. They say it was the best sermon they ever heard in all their life, and that I ought to be a bishop. I believe indeed it went to the hearts of several persons, for I was enabled to speak with great authority and power, and I preached

¹Benjamin Ingham (1712–72), a native of Ossett, Yorkshire, matriculated at Queen's College, Oxford in 1730, and in 1733 became involved with the Wesley brothers in the Oxford Methodists. He received his BA in 1734, was ordained in June 1735, and accompanied JW and CW to minister in Georgia. Thus, he met the Moravians on the ship going to Georgia. When Ingham returned to England he accompanied JW in 1738 to Herrnhut and Marienborn. Ingham's initial labors in the evangelical revival that was breaking out were focused in the West Riding of Yorkshire. As the Wesley brothers and Moravians parted ways in the early 1740s, Ingham sided with the Moravians. In 1741, in spite of opposition in her family, Ingham married Lady Margaret Hastings (1700–68). This helped provide the means to buy Bank House, near Pudsey, which in May 1746 was dedicated as the Moravian headquarters in the north of England. About a decade later, Ingham separated from the Moravians, leading about 80 congregations into a connexion of "Ighamites" that he guided. See *DEB*, 590–91; *ODNB*; Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 57–154; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 175.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Rev. John Godly was appointed curate of Ossett in 1732.

⁴I.e., *A Country-Parson's Advice to His Parishioners. In Two Parts: I. Containing a Plain and Serious Exhortation to a Religious and Virtuous Life; II. General Directions how to Live accordingly* (London: Printed for Benjamin Tooke, 1680).

almost the whole sermon without book. There was a vast, large congregation, and tears fell from many eyes. Tomorrow I preach there again.

Everyday I undergo several changes within me. Now I am under sufferings, sometimes just ready to sink; then again I am filled with joy. Indeed, I receive so much pleasure in conversing with some Christians here that I have need of sufferings to counterbalance it. Last Saturday night we were sixteen that sat up till after twelve. We are to meet again tonight, after the rest are gone, and we shall pray for you and the rest of our Christian friends everywhere. You would think yourself happy to be but one night with us.

Give my sincere love to Mr. [James] Hutton's family, whom I never forget. Are they all well? The Lord bless them all. Greet brother [George] Whitefield. My heart will be with you on the seas and everywhere. Never be discouraged. "*Nil desperandum est Christo duce et auspice Christo.*"⁵

You say Mr. Delamotte Sr.⁶ has an order to pay me 5 guineas. From whom is the order? If it be from anybody but his son Charles, you may receive them and put them into Mr. Hutton's hands.

My mother,⁷ etc. salute your. Remember me to all friends.

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

B. Ingham

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr Charles Wesley / at the Revd Mr Huttons / in College Street / Westminster."

Postmarks: "Wakefield" and "26/OC."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Ingham October]] 1737 Oct 22 / simple zealous hearty Benj. Ingham."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/1.

⁵An adaptation of Horace, *Odes*, i.27; "There is no grounds of despair under the guidance and auspices of Christ."

⁶Peter Delamotte (d. 1749) of Blendon Hall, Bexley—the father of Charles and William—was a wealthy sugar merchant.

⁷Susannah (Casselhouse) Ingham (1674–1745).

From the Rev. John Gambold¹

Stanton Harcourt
November 2, 1737

Dear Sir,

I am sorry I did not return in time to meet you at Stanton Harcourt, whom perhaps I may not see again until many days are past. I thank you for the care you took of my churches. But you have bound yourself long ago to bear all my burdens—yet still in expectation that I should prove a better and wiser man in the end. But what if I should now confess that I have outlived all my hopes of being a Christian, otherwise than by fits and short intervals. That my nature is in no degree changed, but every base disposition, every mad disorder incident to man dwell with me. That except when I am melted down by divine grace (as I have not been now a great while) I have no devotion, or charity, or humility, or patience but what is so plainly an affected state of soul, mechanically produced, that I am ashamed to screw myself into it. That as I find it clear even to demonstration that there is no sound difference between me and those who never pretended to religion, I look for no salvation but along with the herd of sinful men. If I should tell you this, would it not absolve you from all friendly affection for me? I really think it ought, and I would fain warn all (especially those who live in a serene, successful practice of virtue) to withdraw from my tent, as the Israelites did from Korah's.² For I have an abyss gaping under me. If any will throw away his friendship upon me, let him know that I can but very seldom love him again.

Hitherto I have only transcribed that book within me, wherein my Maker every hour reads what I am. But now upon the subject of friendship (for alas, that also in such as me is vain and hollow!) I will give you what I took down out of a book translated from the French under this title: *The Falsehood of Human Virtue*.

But most assuredly we shall be astonished when the day of the Lord shall come, and the lustre of his grand appearance shall disperse the night and darkness from the hearts of men, and discover the secret foundations of friendship which men now esteem so holy, and maintain in so profound a repose. The heavens, saith Job, which seem to be so clear and full of brightness, are not pure in the sight of God, nor are the stars themselves without spot. And therefore the reason we have to fear that men seek after human satisfactions in virtuous friendships is this, because they who are looked upon by the greatest part of the world as holy men have very few friends, correspondencies, or interests; and for that they cannot approve in most people of worth their particular obligations to women, believing that the person that binds himself to a woman, and devotes all his services to her, how regular soever he may be in his life and conversation, is altogether swayed by some secret ambition, if it be not of the number of those that are cherished by diligence and confidence. Could we discover what he's concealed in the folds of man's heart, we should find in the breast of the most prudent and pious, sentiments altogether strange and surprizing. We should find a great number of amours turned into friendship; others into zeal for the good of the soul; others covered with a pretense of kindred. We should find amours intermixed with ambition, and several other sorts of them, which we could easily discover, were it

¹John Gambold, (1711–71), who received his BA in 1730 and MA in 1734 at Christ Church, Oxford, had been active with JW and CW in the Oxford Methodists, and was currently the vicar of Stanton Harcourt. In 1742 he left the Church of England and became minister of the Moravian congregation in London. In 1754 Gambold was consecrated the first English Moravian bishop. See *DEB*, 422–23; Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 155–200; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 131.

²See Num. 16.

proper to dive into that subject.³

Mr. [Charles] Kinchin showed me your answer to Mr. Holloway's queries,⁴ which I hope will make the Methodists more judiciously such, as well as satisfy some who are jealous of them with an honest theological jealousy. Miss [Kezia] Wesley gives her love to you, and would be glad of a letter from you.

I am, dear sir,

Your much obliged,

John Gambold

Address: "For / The Revd. Mr C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Nov. 2. 1737 / J Gambold hum/ble loving."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/59.

³Jacques Esprit, *The Falsehood of Human Virtue* (London: Timothy Child, 1691), 71–72.

⁴Neither the queries nor CW's reply are known to survive.

From Kezia Wesley

[Stanton Harcourt¹]
November 15, 1737

My Dear Brother,

Though I am very ill of the pain at my stomach, to which is added a great cold, yet nothing can prevent me returning my sincere thanks for your kind letter.²

My dear brother, you have not a friend in the world that will be gladder to be directed or reproved (in the spirit of meekness) than I shall be. I own it is a great fault, but my mind, and body too, are so much weakened with ill usage that I cannot bear any roughness without either being angry or quite dejected. I have not heard *from my mother* this two months. Nor have [I] had any letter or receipt from you. I can't write to her because I don't know how to direct. If you can still have patience, and retain any love or tenderness for

A weak, entangled, wretched thing,³

you may by your prayers and direction add much to the happiness of
Your sincere friend and affectionate sister,

Kezia Wesley

Address: "To / the Rev'd Mr. Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Kez. Nov. 15. 1737 feeble."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 6/4.⁴

¹Kezia was staying at the home of John Gambold.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³George Herbert, "Home," st. 11.

⁴Transcription published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 424.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

Tiverton, Devon
November 16, 1737

Dear Charles,

Since letters lie so long (why or wherefore *I cannot comprehend*), I will lose no time in writing, though it is the most inconvenient just now of the whole week. You may be very sure my sister and I should be glad to see you before you go, and she bid me tell you so. But I believe the *fatum Carthaginis*¹ will hinder. We have naturally less hope of seeing *your return* than before, though we don't despair of it neither if you hold your *resolution*. I will not believe you will break it in haste. I have not heard at all from Wiltshire, and my illness has prevented me from writing to my mother as I proposed.²

I have read Law against the *Plain Account*,³ borrowing it of my neighbor Mr. Pike,⁴ the Presbyterian teacher. I think it an *excellent book*. I have seen H[oadly] demonstrated heretofore into a deist pretty plainly, but I never saw him so thoroughly proved an atheist. The fall and redemption are exceeding well represented, though some difficulty will always remain in such a subject. As it was in the beginning, I believe it will continue to the end in another sense—darkness will be when the Spirit of God moveth upon the face of the waters. It is enough for us that we are not concerned to tell how these things be.

My illness has not been so uninterrupted but I have been able to read a little between while, though I was past writing for a good while together. I have not yet ventured a foot out of my own house, for I account my school but as a room in it. But I hope by next Sunday I shall be stout enough to ride to church and stay there without catching cold by the help of a warm Presbyterian cloak which I have used before upon that occasion. Mr. Greenway my usher,⁵ who bore evidence against a young man who was going into orders for two small faults—Arianism and treason—is to have his final hearing on Wednesday next; and if I am able I shall not fail to go along with him to keep him in countenance, which is all I can do.

I did not think I should have had time to write you so long a letter. The truth is I have truanted for it. Service to all friends. We join heartily in love. I am, dear Charles,

Your affectionate and faithful friend and brother,

S. Wesley

Address: “To the Reverend Mr. Wesley at the Reverend Mr. Hutton’s in College Street Westminster.”

Postmark: “16/NO.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother] W[esley] Nov. 16. 1737 / of Law’s answer / to Hoadly on / the Sacrament.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/15.

¹“The fate of Carthage”; i.e., CW’s resolve to visit Tiverton before returning to Georgia being defeated. This is a revised quotation of Livy, *History of Rome*, xvii.51.12–13; found, for example, in Simon Patrick, *Commentary upon the First Book of Moses* (London: R. Chiswell, 1695), 168.

²Susanna (Annesley) Wesley was currently staying with Westley and Martha (Wesley) Hall, in Wootton Rivers, Wiltshire.

³William Law, *A Demonstration of the Gross and Fundamental Errors of a late Book, called, “A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper”* (London: W. Innys and R. Mansby, 1737); responding to Benjamin Hoadley, *A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper* (London: J. Janeway, 1735).

⁴Joseph Pike (d. 1742); Samuel spells “Pyke.”

⁵Rev. Thomas Greenway (b. 1712) was Samuel Jr’s assistant master.

From Christopher Wells

Oxford
November 18, [1737]

Dear Sir,

I have been slow in writing partly because I have been away from hence, and because I heard that we might hope to see you again. But now having talked lately with Mr. [Charles] Kinchin, and being advised by him that it is safest to write (least possibly anything should hinder your coming), I cannot omit to thank you for the great and real favour I have received by your letters,¹ for your being so good to think of me at all, for your kind and proper exhortation to me, and for the other pieces so proper to enlarge and warm an enslaved and dead heart like mine. You might think the love and value I have for Mr. [John] Gambold would recommend anything of his to me, besides the goodness of the things themselves. Your _____² who wrote the other I never had the happiness to be acquainted with. But now since I have read these, [I] lament my misfortune that I was not, if he would have thought me worthy of being acquainted with them. I cannot but have a great opinion of the man that had so consistent and thorough a notion of Christianity, that could express his sense so well, and prove by such strong reasons and just inference. *I really assent* to him in his opposition to human wisdom. His greatest paradoxes, as they are to earthly wisdom, I think at least to be generally true. As they are certainly Christian, professedly and designedly held up by the great Author and original preachers of Christianity. He has given me a full conviction of this important truth (which is indeed too plainly shown in Scripture for anyone who reads that not to have some glimmering of it, or for those who by their good will and in the whole tendency of their doctrine oppose it, not to acknowledge it sometimes) that as the Christian life is in opposition to all the desires of man, so the doctrine is preached directly and confessedly as a paradox to that wisdom and beauty (which is properly of man) founded upon these. I feel and see that men are men still, and that the name of Christianity does not transform them, though I believe the power of it does. That there is a world at present that subsists shall, in the true Scripture sense, if Scripture sense be rational and real, though covered over with the veil of baptism and the externals of a church and I think (recollecting some diteonize(?) of Mr. Gambold's) that the ruin of religion and Christianity will then be if this distinction so spiritual, so clearly made and so established in Christianity, should ever be lost before the difference be removed and God's kingdom be established in its full glory. I think our Saviour knew the utmost effect of his (first) coming into the world, and therefore that he said truly and properly that he did not come to make peace between all mankind and to blend them as together while the most real difference should subsist, but directly to make a separation of good and bad, or to call to himself a church out of the whole. That this separation would be attended with great commotion, even enmity and war on one side, but that however those that would be his should separate [from], renounce, and leave the rest. That at the same time, lest the world should complain, he came to divide and separate us even from ourselves, and taught us utterly to renounce, deny, and avoid ourselves as much as them, and for the same reason. That at the same time we must carry on this double war with the same resolution and in the same Spirit, without thought of favour or hope of peace, with no other enmity or ill-will to others than to ourselves. That it will therefore be in this sense a peaceful or inoffensive and suffering war on the [one] side. But it will be no wonder if it be otherwise on the other. I only hope, in regard to myself, that it is not time that all who are not Christians will hate or despise those who are. Those who are not weak but determined sinners will. And from this I think our Saviour's prediction will not fail to be verified, and it can scarce ever happen but real Christians will meet with opposition or contempt. While I have this sense, I must own there is no reason to decline enmity or reproach. But I think there is solid reason not to pretend to deserve or to suffer

¹These letters are not known to survive.

²Wells leaves a blank space here.

“for his name,”³ or upon his account what I deserve and suffer upon my own. I hope my wish is sincere. May I live to suffer it for being good! And do you pray for me that since God hath given me these convictions, his grace may enlarge and set free my heart to follow them.

I believe your censure of me is just in respect of Mr. Gr—. ⁴Lest I should not see you again, I must tell you (that) I will send to him, and observe whether I can be of any service to him in any respect; or he to me.

Your other recommendations I will observe, and profess as I find myself deserving of them. This is my openness at present. I live in hope of God’s mercy and of being

Your brother and friend in Christ,

Chr. Wells

Address: “To / The Rev’d Mr Charles Westley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Nov. 18. 1737 / Chr. Wells, convinced.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/101.

³Acts 5:41.

⁴Probably Charles Caspar Graves.

From George Whitefield and James Hutton

London
December 10, 1737

Dearest Sir,

God be praised for bringing you safe to your journey's end.¹ I hope your's and your brother's sickness will not be unto death, but unto the glory of God. We never forget you in our midnight intercessions, and doubt not of the continuance of your prayers in return. I am glad you intend going with me at this time. May God give us all those that sail with us, make us instruments of driving the devil out of the dark regions of America, and enable us to be more than conquerors through him that loved us. The trustees have ordered me twenty-three pounds to provide me with necessaries. But God raises me up such friends every day to make me presents that I shall not want so much as I imagined. O that I may always choose a voluntary poverty!

*Floret hic evangelium.*² I preached nine times last week and near 50 pounds were collected for the charity children. Two ministers have directly preached against me. But the more they oppose, the more people follow. I keep silence before men, but pray for them earnestly before the throne of grace. Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham goes on bravely at Ossett. God sets his seal to his ministry in a glorious manner. He is threatened to be silenced as well as I. But God I trust will give us grace not to fear the face of man. Your brother has been complained of in a formal manner to the trustees for denying the sacrament to the governor's daughter (I think) for marrying without being asked in the Church, and they honourably commended him for it.³ May God endue me with the like boldness. Miss Delamotte goes on well.⁴ I go to Blendon (God willing) shortly. Her mother has heard me preaching, is very kindly affected towards me.

I hear more and more of the success of my ministry. Many are convicted, some I believe converted, and hundreds confirmed and strengthened. O pray that these mercies may make me humble and lead me to repentance.

All friends join with me in love. And that you may, through your sufferings, be made perfect, and through much tribulation enter into glory is the hearty prayer of, dearest sir,

Your unworthy though affectionate friend and brother in Christ,

G.W.

P.S. Mr. [Walter] Chapman goes on well. / He wants to hear from you.

[added by James Hutton]

Dearest Charles,

Blessed be God for bringing you so far. I have no time to write you, but that George Whitefield goes on. May you and I go on too. My best love to you dear brother. And sir, if it be in my power to serve them while I live, I will do it, and not to them but theirs also, God enabling me. Mr. [Thomas] Horne, hearing you was so ill, would not venture to write until he heard again from you. Write to Spelsbury.⁵ He sends his kind love to you.

¹CW had travelled to Tiverton to visit his brother Samuel's family, as promised in Nov.

²"This gospel blooms!"

³Referring to the turmoil around Sophy (Hopkey) Williamson's marriage.

⁴Elizabeth Delamotte (1710–80), to whom Whitefield would propose marriage in 1740. She was the eldest daughter, and namesake, of Elizabeth (Wickham) Delamotte (1685–1771).

⁵Thomas Horne was now vicar of Spelsbury, Oxfordshire.

Dear Charles, Adieu. Pray for us. Chaddocks⁶ and Delamottes are well.
Yours (in time) and eternity.

Address: "To / the Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley at / Tiverton."

Endorsement: by CW, "1737 / Dec. 10. /[[George Whitefield breaking forth / and James Hutton]] G.
Whitefield / breaking forth / a scrap from loving Jam. Hutton."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/81.

⁶William Chaddock was a London merchant, and cousin of John Byrom.

From James Hutton

December 15, 1737

Dear Charles,

By this time you have received George Whitefield's [letter] and three words from me. I would have wrote more, if the paper would have sufficed. You know not what the dismal account you hint of yourself costs me. I shall feel it until I hear from you a *better story*. I hope you will live until, like Epaminondas, you hear of the victory of your friends: "*usque eo retine arundinein quoad renuntiatum est, me vicisse.*"¹ Oh my friend, that I could make haste to conquer! That you might die in peace and present me a mark of the travail of your soul before the Master of the vineyard. Remember those who, incited by you, have pressed forward towards the mark of their high calling. I hope you now feel, as your outward man decayeth, the inward man comforted by such a remembrance. I can no more not love you as my own soul than I can cease to live when I please. If my death would put a stop to yours one moment, if you desired it, I almost think I, even I, would throw myself humbly upon the mercy of God.

Fresh Wharf people are well.² [William] Delamotte meets friends and success at Cambridge. John called on me today and told me his father rejoiced in a letter he had received from Will.³ Mr. [Westley] Hall is with us. He is a servant of God truly. I am exceedingly edified by him, and I can no more go to bed while he and such as he are in my company than I could if you was with me. When they are gone I hope to be punctual. Dear Charles, bear with me. George Whitefield will soon leave me. Pray earnestly for me. [John] Hutchings and George Whitefield join in great love to you, as does Mr. Bray.⁴ Mr. Hall too. I am with all hearty love and respect to your dear brother and sister,

Yours most affectionately,

J. H.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[James Hutton – loving and much loved James while fate permitted]] / 1737 / Jam. Hutton / willing *then* to die for me! / *dum fata simebant.*"⁵
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/68.

¹Hutton is adapting Cornelius Nepos, *Excellentium Imperatorum Vitae*, xv.9. "hold the arrow until the report comes, 'I have won'."

²Fresh Wharf is an area of London near London bridge, on the north bank of the Thames. Peter Delamotte kept a home here for when he was in town on business.

³John Delamotte (b. 1720), was another son of Peter and Elizabeth (Wickham) Delamotte.

⁴John Bray (fl. 1737–44), a brazier of Little Britain, London, was one of the founding members of the Fetter Lane society. He would soon prove helpful to CW, who was lodging in Bray's home at the time of his conversion on May 21, 1738.

⁵Ovid, *Tristia*, v.III.5; "while fate allowed it."

1738

From John Byrom

[Manchester]
March 3, 1738

Dear Sir,

I take the opportunity of Mr. [William] Chaddock's going up to London from us to return you thanks for your last letter and the good wishes therein contained.¹ I begin to think that your brother's arrival will be the occasion of your staying some time at least in England, and especially because you say that you are going to Oxford. We are in expectation of seeing your brother in these parts, from Mr. Clayton's intimation to us that he would come hither.²

As your brother has brought so many hymns translated from the French, you will have a sufficient number, and no occasion to increase them by the small addition of Mrs. Bourignon's two little pieces, which I desire you to favour my present weakness, if I judge wrong, and not to publish them.³ I do not at all desire to discourage your publication. But when you tell me that you write not for the critic but for the Christian, it occurs to my mind that you might as well write for both, or in such a manner that the critic may by your writing be moved to turn Christian, rather than the Christian turn critic. I should be wanting, I fear, in speaking freely and friendly upon this matter, if I did not give it as my humble opinion that before you publish you might lay before some experienced Christian critics or judges the design which you are upon. But I speak this with all submission, it is very likely that in these matters I may want a spur more than you want a bridle.

When you go to Oxford, I beg my hearty respects to all our shorthand friends and others there. I have thought often of writing to Mr. [Charles] Kinchin about contractions, but the tediousness of explaining that matter by writing, and the ease of doing by conversation, has made me defer it in hopes of meeting with some occasion of doing it the latter way; but as I have had the pleasure of talking with you a little upon that subject, you will be able to give him some satisfaction in that particular, or anything relating to the art, whereof you are so complete a master that I shame at my own writing when I see the neatness of yours.

I wish you and your brother happiness and holiness, and am
Your most obliged and humble servant,

J. Byrom

Source: published transcription; Richard Parkinson (ed.), *The Private Journal and Literary Remains of John Byrom* (Manchester: Chetham Society, 1856), 2:195–97.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Rev. John Clayton (1709–73) matriculated at Brasenose, Oxford in 1725, receiving his BA in 1729, and MA in 1732. It was also 1732 when Clayton met JW and became part of the Oxford Methodists. Clayton distanced himself from the Wesley brothers after their evangelical conversion. See *DEB*, 229–30; Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 24–56; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 70.

³In 1737 and 1738 JW published two distinct volumes of *Collections of Psalms and Hymns* designed to supplement regular patterns of Anglican worship, including public services. He and CW were now considering a new venture, a collection of verse aimed more for personal devotional (and in groups other than formal Anglican worship). This would appear in 1739 as *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, including several hymns by CW and the two translations from Antoinette Bourignon contributed by Byrom; see *HSP* (1739), 17–19, 123–24.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Oxon
April 28, 1738

Dear Brother,

If this reaches you at London, I wish you would pay Mrs. [Elizabeth] Hutton (with many thanks) what she has paid for my letters and washing. And buy for Mr. [Charles] Kinchin a pair of leathern bags, as like yours as possible. I wanted much to have seen you before I set out, and therefore stayed to the utmost extent of my time. My sister is much better.¹ Could not you bring with you a few of Mr. Corbet's *Thoughts*?² If so, call at the little hut where the coach usually stops to let the passengers walk, on the brow of Stokenchurch Hill, and give one to the old man.³ I promised him a little book when I called there in my last walk to town.

Adieu!

Address: "To / Mr James Hutton, Bookseller / Near Temple-bar / London" (letter to CW appended to that to Hutton).

Postmark: "29/AP."

Source: holograph; London, Moravian Archive and Library.⁴

¹Kezia Wesley came to stay with CW in Oxford on Feb. 28. A week or two later she also became ill, and Charles summoned Dr. Fruin to help her (see MS Journal).

²John Corbet (1620–80), *Self-Employed in Secret; containing I. Evidences upon self-examination. II. Thoughts upon painful afflictions. III. Memorials for practice* (London: Thomas Parker, 1681).

³JW's diary for 11:15–11:30 a.m. on Apr. 27, 1738, reads, "at the Hut; religious talk." The hut was about 18 miles from Oxford on the London road.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:538.

From the Rev. John Gambold

Stanton Harcourt
June 2, 1738

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to hear that your sickness is returned upon you.¹ Pray be careful to have it well removed. It is a critical time for you. Miss [Kezia] Wesley is with us. She has received your letter and writes to you by this post.

I have been of late (since I conversed with the Moravian²) very much convinced that the unsuccessfulness of all my endeavours to be a Christian was owing to my unbelief. I did not attempt it in the strength of faith, with an unfeigned and entire dependence upon Christ. The last thing I read made some impression on me. I will trouble you with my meditation thereon.

Van Helmont, at the beginning of his *Works*:

Lest an hour should pass away without fruit, I read Seneca, who greatly pleased me, and especially Epictetus. I seemed in moral philosophy to have found the juice of truth. I thought this was that for which Pythagoras might require the strict silence of so many years. At length I discerned that a Capuchin is not other than a Christian Stoic. Though I was willing to devote myself to the concerns of eternity, yet so great austerity my more tender health would not permit. I prayed the Prince of life diverse times that he would give me strength to contemplate the naked truth, and love it in an immediate manner. Thomas à Kempis increased this desire in me, and afterwards, Taulerus.³ And when I presumed, and certainly believed, that through Stoicism I did profit in Christian perfection, at length, after some stay and weariness in that exercise, I fell into a dream. I seemed to be made an empty bubble hanging between heaven and earth. Above me hovered the image of death, but below in the place of the earth was a bottomless pit of darkness. I was very terrified. But coming to myself, I understood by one conception that in Christ Jesus we “live and move and have our being.” That no man can even call on the name of Jesus salvation without the special grace of God. That we must continually pray, “And lead us not into temptation.” Indeed, I was given to understand that without special grace nothing but sin attends us in all our actions. Which being seen and sensibly known, I wondered at my former ignorance, and I knew that Stoicism did detain me an empty and swollen bubble between the bottomless pit of hell and the necessity of imminent death. I knew, I say, that by this study, under the show of governing my passions, I was made most haughty. Trusting in the freedom of my will, I did renounce divine grace, as though what we would we might effect by ourselves. Wherefore I judged that, though this error might be endured in heathens, it did not become Christians.⁴

How apt are we to mistake Stoicism for Christianity? What passes current even among good people for Christianity is no other. It is so, I mean, as to the main complexion of their religion. For as these persons have a portion, and indeed the fullest portion, of divine grace that is bestowed on mankind in general and without faith, there must be something very right in the first motions of their mind toward

¹Gambold gives no indication that he has heard of CW’s “evangelical conversion” on May 21, while confined by his sickness at the home of John Bray.

²Rev. Peter Böhler (1712–75) was ordained in Dec. 1737, by Zinzendorf, to serve as the Moravian pastor in Savannah, Georgia. He spent time in Oxford in early 1738, en route to America.

³I.e., *The History of the Life of the Sublime and Illuminated Divine, Dr. Johannes Thauler* (London: L. Lloyd, 1660).

⁴Jean Baptiste van Helmont, *Van Helmont’s Works* (London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1664), 12.

virtue, in the first stirrings of conscience or good temper. But when they come to reflect on and use this general and inarticulate holy inclination, reducing it to their own system of notions, exerting it after their own maxims of life; when it has thus passed the digestions and is mingled with their character, we may charge it more or less with error. Thus there is something divine and infallible, something human and fallible, in the piety of all well-meaning men. And as there are few or none so exactly formed by the Christian spirit, at least in the skirts and outlines of it, that the human and fallible is not to be seen in them, so I believe there are not that mean well, so lost in their errors and weaknesses but that we ought to acknowledge and revere something divine and infallible in them, as to the main strokes and the grand stamina of their religion. *Fragili quaerens illidere dentem, Impinget solido.*⁵

Having thus blunted the edge of my censure, that it might not enter deeper than I intended, I will repeat it again: The religion of most Christians, as far as it is under their own management, and under the influence of modern divinity, is but a kind of moral philosophy grafted on divine revelation, preserving the genius entirely, and for the most part the bounds and measures of old ethics, but clothing its definitions in Scripture-language, and strengthening itself with the additional certainty there given of rewards and punishments, not without some application of the life and death of Christ as a collateral incidental enforcement. It differs from the old sects of philosophy just as one of those sects might differ from another; and perhaps differs nothing from a new edition of the Stoic or Platonic, or Aristotelian morality, which a follower of one of those sects might make with improvements from the Christian Scriptures, supposing him only to weight those Scriptures more maturely and pursue the accommodation farther than Plotinus or Hierocles, though still without injuring or changing the spirit of his sect.

But may not a Christian recommend the same virtue with a wise heathen? Are not the words temperance, continence, etc., found in St. Paul's writings as well as the philosophers? I deny that they are strictly the same virtues, for St. Paul intended them in a much higher degree. But that is not the chief thing. The great difference lies in the spirit, genius, reason, and end of the two schemes; in the different manner and view wherewith a moralist and a Christian do set themselves to practice the same precept. To express it in short, the moralist labours to sanctify himself, to raise a habit of virtue and righteousness out of several virtuous acts. The difficulty of these virtues lies upon himself, and the merit of this is so much his own that he can only in compliment give it away. For either he supposes no assistance from God, his own nature being self-sufficient for virtue (which, excepting some raptures of faith, was generally the case of the heathen world), or such an assistance as only sends opportunities and hints of advice, outwardly or inwardly suggested, for his own understanding to make use of—among which, if at all a Christian, he reckons the example and instructions of Christ to be very considerable (which is the case of deists and Socinians). Or if he believes his nature to be corrupted or of itself miserable, and therefore that it needs the medicine or supplement of a divine nature really communicated to us, and perhaps also that this nature or divine Spirit is bestowed on angels and men through the Λόγος [Logos] or Son of God, who acquainted us with this power of his in a symbolical manner by his incarnation, yet he believes that it is in his own power to lay his life under such discipline, so to abstract from self-love and self-consciousness, to purify his soul by such acts of intellect and will, and to compose it into such a posture as must in the nature of things draw down the Holy Spirit from God, and therein from Christ the subordinate dispenser of it. And in the meantime that the guilt of sin, as it is set before us only to humble us in order to this irradiation, so upon attaining it, it is expiated without any more ado (which is the case of our Platonists and mystics).

On the contrary, the Christian believes in one who doth sanctify him. To him he refers both the care and the glory of his sanctification. Neither the difficulty nor merit of it is his own. The good works he performs are to acknowledge it, not to acquire it. They are the garb of his righteousness, but the only vital support of it is the bounty of Christ. In him, he lives. In him, he meets the Father and the Holy Spirit,

⁵Cf. Horace, *Satires*, l.ii.77–78: “*Fragili quaerens inlidere dentem, offendet solido*”; “while trying to strike one’s tooth on something soft, will dash upon what is solid.”

and no otherwise. He neither goes (with the deist) to the Father immediately, as Supreme Monarch; or (with the mystic or Platonic theurgist) to the Holy Spirit immediately, as the giver of divine life. His is a subject of the former according to the laws of Christ, and a vessel of the latter according to the gift of Christ. He needs neither go back by the light of reason to examine the fitnesses of things, nor forward by the sensations of grace to anticipate and unravel the secrets of the spiritual life. He needs neither argue nor amuse himself into holiness, for his heart is full of the zeal of a pardoned sinner, and the confidence of one who, through Christ, can do all things. At the same time, all his steps are directed by the most complete rule of life given to the society to which he belongs. In conforming himself to this rule both the simplicity and strength of his graces are preserved—the simplicity because he does everything as an act of obedience; the strength because everything there required of him is a strong expression and natural exercise of some noble grace or branch of the divine life.

But I am not fit to give pure Christianity its due praise. I shall only observe further how soon it began to be corrupted, while men made use of the gospel to aggrandize themselves. While sometimes the sublimity of its doctrines, sometimes the efficacy of its ordinances, sometimes the purity of its precepts were so insisted on as to stir up all the ambition of human nature to embrace Christianity, and value itself upon adhering to it. They soon began to triumph in the privileges which this holy religion invested them with, and in their superior wisdom above the heathens. In the 4th century especially the administrations of the church, which they had now an opportunity to clothe with all the pomp they desired, were excessively magnified; while some perceiving this glory to be carnal, fled to the desert and fell into spiritual pride, doting about contemplation and perfection. In the meantime Christ was spoken of as the maker and light of the world, and their particular teacher. They honoured him at first by a rationale of his office as the Image of God or Agent of the Father, then by mysteries of his person in the disputes of the Trinity. But as the atonement for our sins, as the refuge and righteousness of sinners, as the life and daily support of believers in deed and truth, as the object of a faith which takes away all glorying and all anxiety too from wretched man; he was in these respects not so much celebrated after the first century. Does not this show how apt we are, even in the midst of Christianity, while contending for its doctrines and guided by its laws, to do all this rather in the spirit of philosophers than believers? To consider our sanctification as in our own hands? To be elated or discouraged accordingly, and very little to depend on him upon whom it all depends, whose work and whose concern it is— *a work which he would soon finish if we importuned him to it by humble faith, but which will never be finished to eternity by any of our arrogant anticipations and anxious imitations of it.*⁶

Are these things so? You will consider with me when you are well. In the meantime these hints may perhaps help to amuse a sick hour. My best respects to your brother [JW]. I am glad we shall see him soon. Desire him not to forget to bring the German lady's life with him.⁷ I should be glad too to take a copy (unless he shall have done with them) of those little sketches of my own case.⁸

I am, dear sir,

Your very much obliged friend and servant,

J. Gambold

⁶The underlining for emphasis of this clause is almost certainly by CW, while reading the letter; not by Gambold.

⁷Identified in next letter as Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–78), *Eukleria seu melioris partis electio. Tractatus Breve Vita ejus Delineationem exhibens* (Hamburg: Corneleus van der Meulen, 1673) and idem., *Eukleria seu melioris partis electio. Pt. 2: Historiam vitae eius usque ad mortem persequens* (Amsterdam: Jacob van de Velde, 1685).

⁸JW included several poems provided by Gambold (in manuscript) in *HSP* (1739); if Gambold intends here biographical sketches, they are not known to survive.

My humble service to Mr. Baldwyn, if you see him. I think myself to blame that I have not writ[ten] to him since I received his very obliging letter.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Bray's / in Little Britain / London."

Postmarks: "Oxford" and "5/IV."

Endorsements: by CW, "[[Gambold June]] 2" and [later] "Mr Gambold on true / Xtianity June [[about]] 1739."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/60.

From the Rev. John Gambold¹

[Stanton Harcourt, Oxfordshire]
June 23, 1738

Dear Sir,

I understand that you have writ[ten] to me, but the letter happened to be lost, and I did not receive it. Your brother desired me to read his sermon for him;² which God willing, I shall do next Sunday. I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man; how peculiarly intolerable, even to the most religious men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and unions; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetic mortification; and all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith, in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most universal help and refuge; in such a manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it than we could before expect; if anyone offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their mediator, or their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded that a Montanist, or a Novatian, who from the height of his purity should look down with contempt upon poor sinners and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the gospel as he who should learn from the author of it to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon the level with them as soon as they begin to repent. But this is not to be wondered at. For all religious people have such a quantity of righteousness acquired by such painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits, which is their wealth both for this world and the next. Now all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant as to tell them they are very rich, and have enough to triumph in; or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them their riches are not yet sufficient, but by such arts of self-denial and mental refinement, they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber. It takes away all this wealth, and only tells us it is deposited for us with someone else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed they who are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners till very lately, may stoop to live in this dependent condition. It suits them well enough. But they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond moral men; for them to be told that they are either not so well, or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels of mercy, with the others; this is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh than have this honour wrested from it, to be the architect of virtue and righteousness.

But where am I running? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go this foolishness of preaching will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you. What are you then to do, my dear friend? I will not exhort you to courage. We need not talk of that, for nothing that is approaching is evil. I will only mention the prejudice we shall be under if we seem in the least to lay aside universal charity, and modestly of expression. Though we love some persons more than we did, let us love none less. And the rather, because we cannot say anyone is bad, or destitute of divine grace, for not thinking as we do. He only less apprehends, less enjoys that in Christianity which is the refuge of the weak and miserable, and will be his when he finds himself so. Indignation at mankind is a temper

¹This letter is sometimes mistakenly presented as if addressed to JW, and misdated as Jan. 23, 1738 (e.g., Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 165–72). It is actually in June (when JW was in Germany!) and to CW, as Whitehead rightly realizes; Whitehead, *Life*, 2:75–77.

²This would be the written form of the sermon preached in John Gambold's church at Stanton Harcourt on the morning of June 11, and repeated at St. Mary's, Oxford in the afternoon, which JW would publish later this year with the title *Salvation by Faith* (see JW, *Works*, 1:117–30).

unsuitable to this cause. If we are indeed at peace with God in Christ, let it soften our demeanor still more, even towards gainsayers. Let them reject us. Till then, and (as far as it will be admitted) afterwards, let our friendship with them continue inviolate. Then as to expressions, what has given most offence hitherto is what perhaps may best be spared as some people's confident and hasty triumphs in the grace of God. Not by way of humble thankfulness to him for looking upon them, or acknowledgment of some peace and strength unknown before, which they hope will be increased to them; but insisting on the completeness of their justification, the completeness of their deliverance already from all sin, and taking to them every apostolical boast in the strongest terms. I do not deny but purity from sin,³ and every gospel privilege, is bestowed perhaps in as large a degree in the beginning of grace, as at any time afterwards. For it depends on the actual operation of the Spirit that moment upon the heart, not on a mere federal or habitual union with him. And his operation is particularly strong at the first entrance upon a new life. Yet as such converts must remember that this absolute degree of innocence (excluding for the most part even the first motions of sin) may soon depart from them, and be given them but sometimes. Though till they fall from God, they will still be free from willful sins. So while it continues, it is the most slippery and dangerous thing among all the blessings they receive for themselves to reflect much upon, and the most exceptionable that they can talk of to other men. Let us speak of everything in such a manner as may convey glory to Christ without letting it glance on ourselves by the way. Let us profess (when we can with truth) how really the Christian salvation is fulfilled in us, rather than how sublimely.

I have writ[ten] in the end of a letter of Mr. [John] Sarney's to Mr. [James] Hutton for some of the hymns,⁴ and Madam Schurman's *Life*.⁵ Miss [Kezia] Wesley desires to hear from you immediately, and to see you soon, and hopes it was not illness that hindered you from coming before now. My giving you the trouble of this letter you must impute to her.

I am, dear sir,

Your's sincerely,

J. Gambold

Address: "To / the Revd. Mr. Wesley / at the Foundery / London."

Postmark: "1/IY."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/64.⁶

³In the 1797 published transcription this is changed to "power over sin."

⁴JW, *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (London: [Bowyer for Hutton,] 1738).

⁵See details in previous letter.

⁶A transcription was published in *A Collection of Letters on Religious Subjects, from various ministers and others, to the Rev. John Wesley* (London: Whitfield, 1797), 13–15.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Cologne
June 28, 1738

Dear Brother,

You will send my mother, wherever she is, her letter, by the first opportunity.²

By the conversation I have had with the brethren that journey with us, as well as with those at IJsselstein and at Amsterdam, I find the judgment of their church is: 1) That we ought to distinguish carefully both in thinking and speaking between faith (absolutely speaking), which is one thing; justifying or saving faith, which is a second thing (and ought to be called, not faith, absolutely, but always justifying or saving faith); the assurance of faith, where⟨by⟩ we know and feel that we are justified; and the being born again, which they say is a fourth thing, and often distant in time (as well as in the notion of it) from all the rest; 2) That a man may have, and frequently has, justifying faith before he has the assurance that he is justified.

My dear brother, pray (you and all the brethren) for us, that all things may work together for our good, and that we may be more and more rooted in faith, joyful through hope, and grounded in charity!

Adieu!

Address: “A / Monsieur Charles Wesley / Chez Monsieur Jaques Hutton / Proche Temple-bar / Londres à l’Angleterre.”³

Postmark: “7/IY.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Colen, B[rother], June 28, 38”; and “June 1738, B[rother] from Colen.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/21.⁴

¹JW is on a trip to the continent, to consult with Count Zinzendorf and other Moravians there, in part because of debates that have emerged in the Fetter Lane society over “degrees” of faith.

²This was part of a double letter sent to CW, the other half to be separated and forwarded to their mother (for which, see *Works*, 25:555–56).

³“To Mr. Charles Wesley, At the home of Mr. James Hutton, Near Temple Bar, London, England.”

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:554.

From William Delamotte

June 30, 1738

Dear Sir,

God hath heard your prayers. Yesterday, about twelve, he put his *fiat* to the desires of his distressed servant; and, glory be to him, I have enjoyed the fruits of his Holy Spirit ever since. The only uneasiness I feel is want of thankfulness and love for so unspeakable a gift. But I am confident of this also, that the same gracious hand which hath communicated will communicate even unto the end.

I am,

Your sincere friend in Christ,

William Delamotte

O my friend, I am free indeed! I agonized some time betwixt darkness and light. But God was greater than my heart, and burst the cloud, and broke down the partition-wall, and opened to me the door of faith.

Source: CW transcription in MS Journal; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 1:158.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Utp
July 7, 1738

Dear Brother,

I am now with the Count [Zinzendorf], at his uncle's, the Count of Solms,¹ five or six hours from Marienborn, and have stole an hour to let you know that hitherto God hath been very merciful to us in all things. The spirit of the brethren is beyond our highest expectations. Young and old, they breathe nothing but faith and love, at all times and in all places. I do not therefore concern myself with smaller points, that touch not the essence of Christianity, but endeavour (God being my helper) to grow up in these, after the glorious examples set before me; having already seen with my own eyes more than one hundred witnesses of that everlasting truth, "Everyone that believeth hath peace with God, and is freed from sin, and is in Christ a new creature."²

See therefore, my brethren, that none of you receive the grace of God in vain! But be ye also living witnesses of the exceeding great and precious promises, which are made unto every one of us through the blood of Jesus!

Adieu!

Address: "A Monsieur / Monsieur Charles Wesley / Chez Monsr Hutton, Marchand Libraire / Proche Temple-bar / à Londres / Angleterre."³

Endorsement: by CW, "'B[rother] Utlp [sic], July 7, 1738"; and (later) "B. from Utp, Panegyric on Germans."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/1.⁴

¹Frederick Wilhelm of Solms-Braunfels (1696–1761) was currently a Count, becoming Prince in 1742.

²A composite of Rom. 1:16; 5:1; 6:7; 2 Cor. 5:17.

³"To Mr. / Mr. Charles Wesley, At the home of Mr. Hutton, bookseller, Near Temple Bar, London, England."

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:557–58.

From William Delamotte

[Blendon]
[July 10, 1738¹]

My Well-Beloved Father in Christ,

I cannot keep pace. The mercies of God come in so superabundantly on our unworthy family that I am not able to declare them, besides the many unknown blessings which he is continually conveying. I would not therefore attempt to particularize them. But that as they are his blessings, upon *his own* ministry through you, I think they must needs strengthen your faith and prove helpers of your joy.

Great then, I believe, has been the struggle between nature and grace in the soul of my mother [Elizabeth]. But God, who knoweth the very heart and reins, hath searched her out. Her spirit, like Naaman's flesh,² is returned as that of a little child. She is converted, and Christ hath spoken peace to her soul. This work was begun in her that morning you went,³ though she concealed it from you; the particulars of which are worthy your notice.

When she awaked, the following text of Scripture was strongly suggested to her, "Either what woman having two pieces of silver, if she lose one, doth not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it."⁴ Which affected her so much that she rose immediately. Upon coming into her closet, she took up Bishop Taylor and opened on the place which so strongly asserting this *living* faith that she was fully convinced of the truth of it.⁵ But the enemy of souls, jealous of her salvation, preached up humility to her, that she could not deserve so great a gift. However God still pursued, and she could not long forbear communicating this motion of her soul to me. We prayed, we read, we conversed together for over an hour, during which time the Lord made use of a mean judgement to convince her of unbelief and of her ignorance in the Word. And throughout that whole day her mind was more and more enlightened, that at length she broke out thus: "Where have I been? I have nothing. I am nothing. My mind is in darkness. How have I opposed the Scripture!" The tempter, thus enraged, enacted all his powers to persuade her that she was labouring after something that was not to be attained, and that it was in vain to seek such fantasies. But Christ suffered her not to fall. She flew to him in prayer and singing, and though it damped her much, yet could not conquer her, because that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost. She continued agonizing thus all the evening. But how can I utter the sequel? The first object of her thoughts the next morning was Christ. She saw him approaching; and seeing, loved, believed, adored him. Her prayers drew him still nearer, and everything she saw concurred to accelerate the embrace of her beloved. Thus she continued in the Spirit till four o'clock, when reading in her closet, she received the kiss of reconciliation. Her own soul could not contain the joys attending it. She could not forbear imparting to her friends and neighbours that she had found the peace which she had lost. Satan in vain preached humility, for she felt in herself

Faith's assurance, hope's increase,
All the confidence of love.⁶

Joy, so communicated, when under the immediate umbrage of the Holy One, must needs quicken the

¹The date is established by the transcription in MS Journal.

²See 2 Kings 5:1–27.

³CW had left Blendon the morning of July 8.

⁴Luke 15:8.

⁵I.e., Jeremy Taylor's *Rules of Holy Living and Dying*.

⁶CW, "Hymn to the Holy Ghost," st. 8, *HSP* (1739), 111.

hearers. It did so. The light reflected upon *us* and warmed us with its secondary rays. My sister,⁷ though before grovelling and in distress, now leaped, ran, and triumphed. Satan lost his hold, and she forgot that she was in bondage.

But today I see her mourning and bewailing the loss of him whom her soul loveth. O surely Christ cannot long delay his approach to a soul thus thirsty, thus importunately resolute!

But I can scarcely forbear thinking she stifles it through humility, for her faith remains unmovable. O that mine did (equal⁸) it, or that God would give me leave to impart of that grain [I have] received. I attempt it every time I see her, but her hour is not yet come. He sees a longer delay most proper. His will be done in her, in us, and all men and all things. Amen.

Mama joined with us in one of your hymns today to her great satisfaction. They are all gone to be confirmed, Hannah, Frank, and my brother are gone in faith.⁹ I thank God for lending me my brother.¹⁰ I hope I shall make a good use of his ministry. Mr. Piers desires his service to you and all friends,¹¹ and will be in town this week, God willing. I believe I need not say “Pray for us,” for I am sure you do by the continuation of my strength. I have enclosed to you, according to your desire, my letter to Mr. B—, desiring your opinion. If you approve, it proceeds; if not, well.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr Chas Wesley / These.”

Endorsements: by CW, “N.B. W. Delamotte’s / mother justified / 1739”; and “W. Del. [[of his mother’s conversion]] / In testimonium Illis.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/3. Partially transcribed in MS Journal; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 1:165–66.

⁷Most likely his older sister, Elizabeth.

⁸A small portion of the page is torn away by the wax seal; this is one possibility for the missing text.

⁹Hannah was a maid to the Delamotte family, and Frank their gardener. Both were converted by CW on June 14, 1738 (see MS Journal).

¹⁰Charles Delamotte had just returned from Georgia.

¹¹Rev. Henry Piers (1695–1770), grandson of an Irish baron, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin (BA, 1718; MA, 1722). After a curacy in Winwick, Lancashire, in 1737 he became vicar of Bexley, Kent, the parish of the Delamotte family. While visiting the Delamottes in 1738, CW befriended Piers and helped him towards a conversion experience, awakening his support of the evangelical movement. Through the 1740s Piers was particularly supportive of the Wesley brothers, then his concentration narrowed to his own parish. See *DEB*, 888–89; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 272.

From Martha (Clifton) Clagget¹
(a solicited testimonial²)

[London]
July 24, 1738

In my infancy, from the time of my having learned to read, which I believe as very early, the Scriptures were so much my delight that I was seldom prevailed upon to leave that pleasure to play with my sisters, or take any other diversion. My father was so pleased with me on this account that he procured [for] me a folio Bible with cuts, which I was so taken with and found to be of such use that I soon got so much of it by heart and could give such an account where every remarkable passage was to be found that I was always called for by my father whenever he had any company come to visit him that liked such things, to surprise them with what I had learned. My mother had often told me (what I had myself forgot, being so very young when it happened) that at a time when she was big with child, and very disconsolate, and in pain, both of body and mind, and sitting very pensive; I went to her with my Bible and desired her to read, and pointed out to her these words of our Lord, “Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” Which gave her immediate ease and removed all her doubts.

I continued some years in this happy way though under great disadvantages, having no one to improve this disposition. I was almost left to myself, my parents being greatly engaged in worldly affairs. The devil (provoked my growth in grace) made use of an uncle of mine to persuade them that if they let me thus alone it would certainly be attended with fatal consequences such as ill health or despair, advising them to employ and divert me some other way. They did so, and from this time I seldom had the comfort of my Bible but by stealth.

I was sent abroad into the world to boarding schools (the place of my parents being but a mean little village) to learn to dance and some other things which did me great harm. I began to love the pleasures and vanities of the world and to grow cold to religious exercises, and as the former increased the latter decreased. Thus they took me from my Eden. But such was the continued mercies of God to me that, in order to call me back from this dangerous condition, he was pleased (about the 13th year of my age) to visit me with a disease which continued upon me about two years. After all likely means had been used, and having had advice of the most eminent people without any success, it brought me again into a serious way of thinking. I considered myself an ungrateful wicked wretch that could be negligent in my duty to so kind and gracious a God. I begged most earnestly that he would again receive me to mercy.

It came to my mind that if it was his pleasure (unworthy as I was) he could immediately remove this complaint, particularly my Saviour’s words, “And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive.” Being persuaded he who cured the ten lepers could restore me, also often [caused me to] cry out, “Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief”; for I saw no obstacle but the weakness of my faith. Nevertheless, I believed that God would grant me this thing also.

I continued instant in prayer till at length God had respect to my importunity. He granted me my heart’s desire and fulfilled all my mind. I had left off medicines, but my distemper immediately abated,

¹Martha Clifton (1691–1773) married Wyseman Claggett (1688–1741) in 1714. Martha and her two eldest daughters Elizabeth and Susanna were converted under CW’s ministry in June–July of 1738 (see MS Journal]. In 1739 the family aligned with the Moravian split at Fetter Lane, breaking with CW.

²CW preserved a collection of over 150 letters and testimonies, spanning 50+ years of his life and ministry (from 1737 to 1788) that are bound together now in a volume at the Rylands Library, shelfmark MA 1977/501. A major portion of these are accounts of the deaths of friends and fellow Methodists. But several of the items from 1738 through 1742 were spiritual biographies that CW solicited, and frequently annotated as being “witnesses” or “seals” of the validity of his ministry in general or of specific emphases like his insistence on the means of grace. We will use a subtitle to draw attention to this subset.

and in a short time I was perfectly recovered. But alas, I was of those who did not return to give glory to God.

I was then sent to London to improve in vanity. My lot fell among the careless, lukewarm, or (as the world terms it) good sort of people. In the twenty-second year of my age I married, and plunged myself into the cares of the world. A large acquaintance, and innumerable perplexities, took entire possession of me. I had uncommon sufferings in child-bearing, which kept me in continual fear. The enemy took advantage of my weakness and when I had conceived of my fifth child, tempted [me] to use some means to disappoint God's providence in bringing it to perfection, and [in] that way free myself from the pain I so much dreaded. Sometimes I thought it would be murder. He answered, "No, that as yet there was no life." He also poured temptations on me of other kinds. He thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the Lord was my helper. He had now almost made an end of me upon earth, and if the Lord had not helped me, it had not failed but my soul had been put to silence.

But how shall I express God's mercy in giving this child, whose singular goodness not many of her years have attained too, as she far exceeded any other I ever had.³ Her sweetness of temper and compassionate disposition was such that from her cradle, she took all opportunities of making peace and doing good. At about thirteen [she] seemed utterly to have renounced the world and gave herself wholly to God. I now see what before I had no notion of, how far she has been made instrumental to the bringing about my own salvation. She every day watched for opportunities of showing me the danger I was in by being too anxious about temporal things, whilst I neglected the only thing needful, telling me that she desired not to be rich or great at the hazard of my eternal happiness, desiring me to leave her to God who was sufficient to sustain her. My great love to her gave force to her arguments and made me endure these unwelcome truths which I should not have excused from any other. I trust her prayers and labours have not been in vain. But how many ways should I have wronged my own soul, if God had suffered me to accomplish my sad intention.

At the time when she was about a year old, I lost a brother whom I entirely loved; and, although he as a sober young man, had such fears concerning the state of his soul as threw me into a deep melancholy. I applied myself to reading the Scriptures and [Robert] South's *Sermons*, but received no comfort from them considering everything against myself. This was another of the devil's stratagies. He perplexed me about my brother's salvation till I despaired of my own.

After this I had a violent fever on my spirits, but my physician told me my case was out of his sphere, that my distemper was out of the reach of medicines. He enquired into the state of my mind (which the minister who attended me forgot to do) but could get no answer from me during this time. The devil tormented me with the most horrid illusions and blasphemous suggestions, particularly the words of Job's wife.⁴ I often attempted saying the Lord's Prayer, but found it impossible. The only thing that occurred to me which any way resembled prayer was, "Whither shall I fly from thy presence."⁵ My fever was at length removed, which was beyond expectation. I still went mourning all the day long. I was seldom able to give a reasoned answer to anything that was said to me.

After some months I began to pray and said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,"⁶ and in the anguish of my soul, entreated the Almighty that this thing might depart from me, though I deserved punishment. Still more intolerable now was [that] my prayers [were] wholly ineffectual. I had a succession of fevers. They were attended with many terrors and gloomy suggestions from the powers of darkness, though less than the former. I had six more children. My sufferings in bearing these were more remarkably grievous than before. My cares and disappointments, which also increased, gave me a strong

³This fifth child was Susanna Claggett (b. 1723–1802); cf. Benham, *Hutton*, 96.

⁴See Job 2:9; "Curse God and die!"

⁵Ps. 139:7.

⁶Matt. 27:46.

propensity to anger and impatience, which was the sin that did so easily beset me. I practised some outward duties, and now and then heard the word gladly, but it fell among thorns. I was still sore bound in misery and iron.

I knew not what to do, having none to guide me till God sent Mr. [George] Whitefield amongst us. He told me of original sin and man's fallen estate. This, by sorrowful experience, I had proved to be true. He talked of a new birth and change of nature, which I thought I had understood but since find I did not. I was pleased with his conversation, and was delighted with singing hymns when I was sure no one heard me; and persuaded myself that I was becoming a new creature. I had a sort of peace and some joy, and began to think I was alive indeed; but, quickly found myself sadly mistaken. My sins, which for some time lay concealed, attacked me again with greater force than ever. I prayed, resolved, strove, but all in vain. The impetuous torrent soon prevailed, notwithstanding my feeble resistance. I renewed my endeavours; the enemy, his assaults. Till wearied with constant defeats, [I] owned myself vanquished and sin to be irresistible. These conflicts greatly impaired my health.

My two eldest daughters [Elizabeth and Susanna] began to talk to me of free grace, of faith in Christ, which alone could justify and deliver us from the power of sin, and make us partakers of the divine nature. They had lived a great while in constant use of all the means of grace, but now declared they had not this faith. I gave some heed to what they said [and] owned it was agreeable to Scripture.

The devil, greatly alarmed at these proceedings, employed a friend of mine to dissuade me from such dangerous doctrine. He told me, as floods of tears would permit, that my daughters were entangled with a lot of enthusiasts; which, if not speedily prevented, would put them out of that good way, which he knew they had so long been in, and greatly hazard their salvation. I took his advice [and] began mightily to oppose the only thing whereby I might be saved. I took all possible pains to restrain my daughters, who still persisted in what they first alleged. The younger [Susanna] affirmed that now she knew her sins were forgiven through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. I told her I feared she deceived herself. Notwithstanding this; God, who saw me while I was yet a great way off, would not suffer me any longer to resist his mercy. Accordingly, on St. Peter's day, he sent the Reverend Mr. Wesley to my aid, who presented Christ in a new way and offered salvation now at this very moment.⁷ Like the apostle's good angel, [he] opened the prison door, bid me arise up quickly, and told me that Christ loved me and gave himself for me. That if I would only believe, I might that moment receive the atonement. I heard him with great attention, but having hitherto had Christ represented as a lawgiver and severe judge, I ignorantly imagined I could not receive it then because I was unworthy, not considering I must infallibly remain so till his righteousness was made over to me. We spent [a] great part of the afternoon in prayer and singing. After Mr. Wesley left me, my surprising cure through [the] prayer of faith came strongly into my mind, which I had almost forgot, having till then wholly neglected giving glory to God by declaring it.

In a few days Mr. Wesley made me another visit. His prayers and discourse affected me more than before. I thought Christ smiled upon me, as I could then say, "My Lord and my God."⁸ My happiness increased all that evening and I went to bed in great tranquillity. The next morning, between the hours of 3:00 and 4:00, [I awoke] in such joy as I never felt before. My heart overflowed with the love of God, the Spirit also bearing witness that I was a child of God, and could not help joining the immortal choir in their "hallalujahs."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[The unique dearest Mrs. Clagget's account]] / 1738 [[July]] 24" and "July 24, 1738 / Blessed Mrs. Clagget / one of the First Witnesses."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/41.⁹

⁷See CW's account of this day, June 29, 1738 in MS Journal.

⁸John 20:28.

⁹For digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From John Hutchings

Woolmiston
July 29, 1738

Reverend and Dear Sir,

A letter from Mr. [Charles] Kinchin this morning surprised me with the dismal account of the scattered condition of our friends at Oxon—their enemies many, powerful, vigilant, and active; and they few, feeble, and almost quite dispirited and run down. What dost thou here, Elijah, when the cause of God labours thus? Behold the vineyard, which his own right hand has planted, the wild boar doth root it up and the beast of the field doth devour it.¹ Oh tarry, tarry not, but go to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Go forth in the strength of the Lord God and may his arm by you effect wonderful things. Indeed, I have some convictions that he will call me to Oxon again shortly and I am ready to go whenever his providential direction shall show me the way, who am, reverend sir,

Your humble servant and unworthy friend,

J. Hutchins

P.S. My kind love to all, especially to your host and his family.²

Source: secondary transcription; Cardiff (Wales) Central Library, Manuscript Collection, MS 1.553, pp. 77–78.³

¹See Ps. 80:13–15.

²CW was staying with the Hutton family.

³Transcription also published in Graham C. G. Thomas, “George Whitefield and Friends: The Correspondence of Some Early Methodists,” *National Library of Wales Journal* 26 (1990): 393.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[c. August 1738]

[The Opinion of the Moravian Churches concerning the Doctrine of Justification in Eight Propositions as sent in a letter by Mr. John Wesley to his brother Charles.]

1. Justification is forgiveness of sins.
2. Everyone is actually justified the moment he flies to Christ.
3. And in the same moment he is born again of God.
4. By whose Spirit he was then conceived, when he was first awakened to seek Christ.
5. From the time he is justified, he has peace with God, unless he loses it by unfaithfulness, and then his only business is to humble himself before God until he recovers it.
6. But everyone that is justified hath not joy immediately nor uninterruptedly. Therefore, joy is not to be depended upon but peace, though any unfaithfulness, even in the smallest instances, may interrupt this also.
7. Persons may be justified long before they know it. This is a common case for all the fruits of the spirit are not given at once, and the assurance of faith is a distinct thing from faith itself as such it is frequently given long after it.
8. The plain marks, by which one may know he is justified or born again: i) peace with God within, ii) steady seriousness without, iii) hunger and thirst after righteousness (an indisputable proof of some spiritual life), iv) love of the brethren because they are renewed in the image of Christ. By these they are sealed of the spirit whose seal also they receive in baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's Supper

Source: secondary transcription; Cardiff (Wales) Central Library, Manuscript Collection, MS 1.553, pp. 97–98.¹

¹Transcription also published in Graham C. G. Thomas, "George Whitefield and Friends: The Correspondence of Some Early Methodists," *National Library of Wales Journal* 26 (1990): 392.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Herrnhut
August 4, 1738

Dear Brother,

Thus far God hath greatly helped us in all things. An account of the people here you must not expect till we come face to face, when I hope we shall part no more. O that after I have proved all things I may be enabled throughly δοκιμάζειν τὰ διαφέροντα,¹ and calling no man master, in faith, practice, and discipline, to hold fast that which is good!

Salute our brethren in London and Oxford by name, and exhort them all, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that they love and study the oracles of God more and more; that they work out their salvation with fear and trembling, never imagining they have already attained, or are already perfect; never deceiving themselves, as if they had now less need than before to be serious, watchful, lowly-minded; and that above all things they use great plainness of speech, both with each other and towards all men: μη ἐν δόλω πανουργίας, μηδὲ δολοῦτες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους.²

My dearest brother and friend, I commend you to the grace of God, to be more and more renewed in the image of his Son! Pray ye all for me continually! Adieu.

Address: "To / the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley / At Mr. Hutton's / Booksellers / Near Temple Bar / London / England."

Source: privately held; photocopy of holograph: MARC, MA 1977/617, Box 3.³

¹"To approve what is excellent," Phil. 1:10.

²2 Cor. 4:2, slightly misquoted: "Not in the guile of craftiness, nor adulterating the Word of God, but by manifestation of the truth to all men."

³Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:560.

From the Rev. John Gambold

Stanton Harcourt
August 21, 1738

Dear Sir,

I long very much to see you. I trust you will help to confirm me in that expectation of the grace of Christ which sometimes I have much ado to persevere in, under those objections and discouragements which proceed from blind theology and a sinking, despondent temper of mind. Yet hitherto I have, for the main, persevered in waiting for my salvation, at least since I saw your brother [JW] last, though with much fainting, distrust, and suspicion. I have hardly been able to stand against a suggestion that this peace through faith, with assurance and ghostly strength, though it may be granted some in their lifetime, yet is bestowed on most only at their death, till which time they must labour faithfully under the common degrees of peace and comfort, depressed with infirmities, endeavouring to do their duty, and trust in the merits of Christ sometime or other to be applied to them. Yet I feel plainly that I cannot so much as endeavour any more to do my duty, unless I shall be comforted and made free by faith. I am very weak in mind and body, and can do nothing any more but by a strength above nature. And I cannot but hope that I shall see the goodness of my Lord even in this world; whereupon I may with assurance exhort others that they may be saved. I believe the prayers of those who are admitted into the grace of Christ might do me good. You'll pardon me that I once more mention Schurman's *Life* (which Mr. [John] Wesley said was with Mr. [James] Hutton) because I have been asked concerning the books I borrowed.¹

Dear sir, oh that you may be enabled to add a greater benefit than ever you have done me yet—to be the helper of my faith.

Your most obliged,

J. G.

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 21. 1738 / J. Gambold / desiring our prayers."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/61.

¹See earlier letter of June 2, 1738.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire]
October 19, 1738

My Dear Charles,

I received yours of the eleventh instant on Monday night and am somewhat surprised at its being so long in coming.¹

It is with much pleasure I find your mind is somewhat easier than formerly, and heartily thank God for it. “The spirit of man may sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?”² If this hath been your case, it has been sad indeed. But blessed be God, which gave you those convictions of the evil of sin as contrary to the purity of the divine nature and the most perfect goodness of his laws. Blessed be God that showed you the necessity you were in of a saviour to deliver you from the power of sin and Satan (for Christ will be no saviour to such as see not their need of one) and directed you by faith to lay hold on that stupendous mercy offered us by redeeming love! Jesus is the only physician of souls, his blood the only salve which can heal a wounded conscience. It is not in wealth or honour or sensual pleasure to relieve a spirit heavy laden and weary of the burden of sin. These things have power to increase our guilt by alienating our hearts from God, but none to make our peace with him, to reconcile God to man, and man to God, and to renew the union between the divine and human nature which was broken by the disobedience of our first parents. No, there is none but Christ, none but Christ is sufficient for these things. But blessed be God he is an all-sufficient Saviour! And blessed be his holy name that thou hast found him a Saviour to thee, my son. Oh, let us love him much, for we have much to be forgiven.

I would gladly know what your notion is of justifying faith, because you speak of it as a thing you have but lately obtained.

I never thought it in your power to remove my troubles, nor ever had a hard thought of you on that account. I’ve been much obliged by what you have already done. And if God be pleased to give power, I doubt not your will to help me. I have indeed been under a state of what the world calls deep affliction; but alas, pain, poverty, want of friends are the least part of my sufferings. Nor have they been so grievous to me as some imagine. Temporal things are of short continuance and will soon be over. Therefore they do not much affect me. I have not time, therefore shall say no more at present, only this—*God hath not forsaken me*, nor hath his consolations (at times) been small unto me. And I hope that all the dispensations of his providence towards me will prove at last to have worked together for my spiritual and eternal good. I believe that God the Father, as parent of the universe, doth by his eternal providence sustain, provide for, and govern all the works of his creation. And that God the Son, as saviour of mankind, doth by his Holy Spirit overrule and dispose the events of God’s general providence so as to make them work together for the spiritual good of those which by faith are united to him. And this government of Christ I take to be signified by Ezekiel’s vision of a wheel within a wheel,³ and of what our Lord said to his disciples, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”⁴

I thank you for [re]minding me of the promises. I often think of them and have been often comforted by them. But I have had great conflicts with the powers of darkness who have laboured hard to persuade me that these promises belong not to me. Yet in this God hath not forsaken me, nor hath he suffered the gates of hell to prevail against me; but I yet hope that in the end I shall be more than conqueror through him that loveth us. But I must hasten to a conclusion. [Subsequent page with

¹CW’s letter is not known to survive.

²Prov. 18:14.

³Cf. Ezek. 1:16.

⁴John 5:17.

concluding paragraph(s) and signature is missing.]

Endorsement: by CW, “My mother of faith in Xt.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/13.⁵

⁵Transcription published in Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 174–75.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

Tiverton, Devon
December 1, 1738

Dear Charles,

I should not write to you, much less desire an answer, if it were not satisfaction to hear from you. How Jack's last to me, or mine to him,¹ should make yours unnecessary is to me incomprehensible, unless you persist in neither owning nor disowning the sensible information from God. I have writt[en] to you because I thought you liked I should, even when I knew it was unnecessary. In short what [John] Pym said to [the Earl of] Strafford in hatred, *I'll say to you in love*: "No need of words to show you have a mind to leave us, but we will never leave you while you have a head upon your shoulders,"² as I told my mother lately upon this occasion.

New matter must have new expostulation. New visions grow apace. Though I, like a Nicodemus, may ask how can these things be?³ But of these when I hear from Jack, who it seems is going into Lincolnshire, etc., etc. Em[ily] wrote a letter to him (querulous enough, without doubt) and he sent her word what glorious churches were in Germany!⁴ She wants me to explain it to her, which I will when you can make me understand it.

I am afraid you are only stationed at Oxford for a time, because he it seems is to be itinerant; though he says [Benjamin] Ingham or [George] Whitefield must be at London. My sister stares, as she well may. I wish you were settled at Christ Church as a tutor, but I believe *time is past* with you and me.

If Jack gives away any of his sermons to those that can afford to buy them, I desire he would order his printer to let me have one whenever he publishes. There is a most monstrous appearance of dishonesty amongst you—your sermons are generally three quarters of an hour long in the pulpit, but when printed are short snips, rather notes than sermons. This you must give public notice of, when more is spoken than printed, else it will be accounted flat knavery. Nay, and in me it would be so too. I never added a line that I thought would give offense but I carefully wrote it down, that it might be forthcoming; leaving a blank page for that very purpose among others.

It is got into Aunt Dyer's⁵ head to desire me to send Jack Ellison to sea, and Emily asks me when I do it.⁶ I hope you or brother Jack are not desirous of the same. I depend on the promise of his being taken to Oxford, and he has already got too much Greek for a tar. I had no hymns sent me down in John's last box, I wanted both parts but especially the first which I never yet saw.⁷ John says you asked him for a

¹JW and Samuel Wesley Jr. had exchanged letters in Nov. 1738.

²See James Welwood, *Memoirs of the most Material Transactions in England for the last hundred years, preceding the revolution of 1688* (London: Goodwin, 1700), 48.

³See John 3:9.

⁴Neither of these letters survive; but see Emily's response to JW, Nov. 24, 1738, *Works*, 25:589–90.

⁵Elizabeth (Wesley) Dyer (b. 1661), the sister of Samuel Wesley Sr.

⁶After Susanna (Wesley) Ellison separated from her abusive husband in the mid-1730s, Samuel Jr. brought their eldest son John Ellison (1720–91) to study at Tiverton. Rather than being sent to sea, JW arranged for John to apprentice to Felix Farley the Bristol printer (cf. CW to JW, June 9, 1740). He eventually settled as an excise officer in Bristol. While was not an active Methodist, Ellison maintained a cordial relationship with his uncles, JW and CW.

⁷I.e. *CPH* (1737) and *CPH* (1738).

Herbert's *Poems* that was to come from me.⁸ I don't remember I was to send any such.

My wife joins in love to you. We are all pretty well and have lived to see one more December's day, on which we designed to be heartily merry—and I hope not unwise. I think I have little less than direct command for it: "In the day of prosperity rejoice,"⁹ and I am sure it is to me a day of prosperity! I am, dear Charles,

Your sincere friend and affectionate brother,

S. Wesley

Address: "To the Reverend Mr. Charles / Wesley student of Christ Church / Oxford / by + post."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother] Wesley December 1, 1738 / of B.'s visions etc." and "December 1 / BW / 1738."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 6/6.¹⁰

⁸George Herbert, *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (Cambridge: Buck & Daniel, 1633).

⁹Eccles. 7:14.

¹⁰Transcription published in Jackson, *Life of CW* (1841), 173–74.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire]
December 6, 1738

Dear Charles,

I should write much oftener had I better health and should be very glad if you received as much benefit from my letters as I do comfort from yours.¹ My notion of justifying faith is the same with yours, for that trusting in Jesus Christ or the promises made in him is that special act of faith to which our justification or acceptance is so frequently ascribed in the gospel. This faith is certainly the gift of God wrought in the mind of man by his Holy Spirit. But then, as the gospel promises are conditional, I can't believe that the Spirit of holiness will give that faith to any but such as sincerely desire and endeavour to perform the conditions of the gospel covenant required on their part. Sincerely, I say, for perfection no man ever did, or ever will, attain to in this life.

Now because "the commandments of God are exceeding broad,"² and by reason of our manifold imperfection and infirmities we are so frequently subject to deviate from the perfect law of God, it is incident to many (I hope) good Christians often to doubt the sincerity of their faith. They make not the least question of the power or will of God incarnate to save them, but they keep a jealous eye upon themselves and are sometimes afraid that they do not all which is required of them; therefore they do in the most literal sense "work out their salvation with fear and trembling."³ And truly I am inclined to think that such humble, fearing Christians are in a safer, though not so comfortable, a state than those which think themselves sure of salvation.

I do not judge it necessary for us to know the precise time of our conversion. It is sufficient if we have a reasonable hope that we are passed from death to life by the fruits of the Holy Spirit wrought in our hearts. Such are repentance, faith, hope, love, etc. Our Lord acts in various ways and by various means on different tempers, nor is the work of regeneration begun and perfected at once. Some (though rarely) are converted by irresistible grace. Others (rarely too) have been sanctified from the womb, and like Obadiah, have served the Lord from their youth. But from these exempt cases we can draw no general rules, nor ought we too curiously to search after the knowledge of the operations of God's Holy Spirit. His ways are past finding out! It is observed by du Moulin:

that many devout souls yield a wrong obedience to this precept of St. Paul, "Examine your own selves, whether you be in the faith." [2 Cor. 13:5] For instead of examining themselves, they examine God, seeking with an over busy care what degree of comfort and assurance of salvation they feel in their hearts, which is the work of God, not of men. [...] Wherefore, when we examine whether we are in the faith, it is not the work of God we must examine, but our own. We must call ourselves to account whether we love God and our neighbour, and what care we take to serve him, to keep his commandments, and receive his promises with obedience of faith. In these things, where the work of God's grace is joined with ours, we have but our performance to examine, looking upon God's work with reverence and ascribing to him all the good that is in us. Which reverence must be redoubled when we consider in us that work of grace wherein man hath no share, and such are heavenly comforts, and spiritual joys. Of these we must not curiously examine the manner or measure as though the seal of our adoption consisted in them. For it is not

¹CW's most recent letter to Susanna is not known to survive; but some of its content is evident in her reply.

²Cf. Ps. 119:96.

³Phil. 2:12.

in feeling comfort, but in departing from iniquity that this seal consisteth.⁴

Thus far this excellent divine, and I think he is in the right.

I think you are fallen into an odd way of thinking. You say that till within a few months you had no spiritual life nor any justifying faith. Now this is as if a man should affirm he was not alive in his infancy, because when an infant he did not know he was alive. A strange way of arguing, this! Do you not consider that there's some analogy in spiritual to natural life? A man must first be born and then pass through the several stages of infancy, childhood, and youth, before he attain to maturity. So Christians are first born of water and the Spirit and then go through many degrees of grace, be first infants, or babes in Christ, as St. Paul calls them, before they become strong Christians.⁵ For spiritual strength is the work of time, as well as of God's Holy Spirit. All then that I can gather from your letter is that till a little while ago you were not so well satisfied of your being a Christian as you are now. I heartily rejoice that you have now attained to a strong and lively hope in God's mercy through Christ. Not that I can think you were totally without saving faith before, but then it is one thing to have faith and another thing to be sensible we have it. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit and is the gift of God, but to feel or be inwardly sensible that we have true faith requires a further operation of God's Holy Spirit. You say you have peace but not joy in believing. Blessed be God for peace. May his peace rest within you. Joy will follow, perhaps not very close, but it will follow faith and love. God's promises are sealed to us but not dated. Therefore, patiently attend his pleasure. He will give you joy in believing. Amen.

The other part of your letter gave me pain and pleasure. I was glad to find you still retain so much tender affection for me, but sorry you should be grieved because you can do no more when you have already done far more than you were well able. It was nothing but necessity (having more to pay than your brothers' money came to) made me take the last you sent, for which, as for all other kindnesses, I much thank you.

This is my only paper or I should write more, for I have much to say.

My tender love and blessing ever attends thee. Continue to pray for me, as I do for you.

S. W.

I wish you a cheerful Christmas and happy New Year, and many of them.

Your brother [SW Jr.] sent me word the 25th of November that he had that post writ[ten] to Mr. Bentham to receive some money for me the beginning of December.⁶ I hope he has got it, for having paid that money sent before, I was compelled to give Mr. Randall Hall a note upon him for £5.34 to be paid ten days after date thereof. So it will be payable the 14th instant. Dear Charles, inquire after it.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Bray's in Little Britain / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "My mother (not clear) / of faith Dec. 6. 1738."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/8.⁷

⁴Peter [Pierre] du Moulin, *A Treatise of Peace and Contentment of Mind*, 3rd ed. (London: John Sims, 1678), bk. iv, pp. 464–65

⁵Cf. 1 Cor. 3:1.

⁶Joseph Bentham (d. 1778), a relative of Ursula (Berry) Wesley, was currently apprentice to the London printer Edward Say.

⁷Transcription published in Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 175–77.

1739

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

Tiverton, Devon
March 10, 1739

Dear Charles,

Now for making ⟨note¹⟩ of my remarks on yours began January 30,² and then for your last, and opening myself farther as I shall have time and paper.

Servile fear I never suspected you of, and knew you did not take me fo(r a) vil⟨lan wh⟩o would do you mischief, or apprehend if I ⟨accept?⟩ brother H[all]’s clearing s^t [sister?] is enough for hi⟨m⟩. I ⟨am sat⟩isfied my being unable to do it signifies nothing. ⟨You⟩ did not say indeed Hall was not at all to blame. But when I spoke of your former and latter judgement, you said nothing. And I must confess it could not enter into my head that you imagined he was a *little* guilty, if you owned him so at all. I might now prove to my own apprehension at least that he is exceedingly so. And after a competent number of months and letters had passed, we might perhaps seek to find out that it becomes us not to judge *how* he ⟨* * * *⟩ or perhaps that we *cannot* do it at all. ⟨* * * * *⟩ letting it alone as I was ever ⟨* * * * *⟩ the particular words. *I was not. I am* ⟨* *⟩. Madness itself never assented to anything without ⟨believ⟩ing it apprehended a reason. I utterly deny your charge ⟨* *⟩ and yourself—that till then you were not so inwardly. *Hac* ⟨*⟩*us*

To yours of February 13 and 15,³ I answer I thank God we seem to be coming to converse like reasonable creatures, and it shall not be my fault if we don’t go on so. The instance of the state-ballad is *ad hominem* at least home.⁴ But as you seem to forget some circumstances, I would have you consider: 1) It was generally strangers, nay enemies ⟨who?⟩ enquired. 2) ⟨I⟩ thought it lawful to make sport(?) there, but [if] it is not so then ⟨* *⟩. 3) I openly and frequently declared I did it on purpose to ⟨make⟩ myself ⟨* * * *⟩ or not being concerned—a privilege ⟨you⟩ will likely desire ⟨*⟩ of religion. But you entered your protest that silence should be no proof to grant it; nor did I ever take their silence as such. And yet [I] should have believed the stories, had you said nothing, because of other circumstances and I should *therefore* ⟨* *⟩. My reasons were these: 1) Your brother’s representation ⟨was⟩ concerned, which you ought to vindicate if not your own. (2) It may be a *grief* to me, which I fancied you would prevent ⟨if you⟩ honestly could. 3) Several points in your letters were palpably agreeable to most of my informations. 4) The cause of God and religion itself might suffer, both in my opinion and in that of all that knew me. These reasons I did think far outweighed any prudential motives on the other side. Under such obligations as these to speak, I confess I thought nothing but the force of truth would have made you silent.

That Mrs. H[utton] may not cross us as the pretender does Whig and Tory, let us dispatch her in a few words. 1) Her testimony is sufficient when there is nothing in the other pale. 2) She is not single in memory of her stories—many are *à voce*, and some ⟨* * *⟩. 3) The doctrines were my representation.

Jack so far justifies ⟨himself in these mat⟩ers ⟨* * *⟩ instead of *sensible*. He ⟨insists?⟩ the assurance necessary to salvation but in case of ⟨invincible⟩ ignorance. And that he was not a Christian

¹Samuel Wesley’s copy of this letter has deteriorated, with several fragments missing or now illegible. I provide probable ⟨reconstructed wording⟩ when there is sufficient remnant or contextual evidence. In instances where this is impossible, I enclose asterisks—*one for each likely missing word*; e.g., ⟨* *⟩. In some cases (along crease marks that have frayed) there are several words missing.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³CW’s letter of Feb. 13, 1739 survives; but not that of Feb. 15.

⁴A hypothetical case posed by CW in his Feb. 13, 1739 letter.

before he had [this assurance]. (He) makes indeed two degrees, a lower one and the πληροφορια. He speaks in his paper within were (*), not at the same time I would think, or it must be indeed a new assurance. But of that more, if my mother sends me yours of justifying faith, the delay of which has made me not write yet to Jack, who I believe may explain himself away. But a(*⁵) should I if my fat(* * *) *afforet Hector*.⁶ I as(* * * *) which I would (* * * *) of law real or fictit(ious * * * *) may seem, because if so (* * * *) I would not recommend th(* * * *) you believe no more of(* * * *). perhaps Jack too may be (* * * *) did not so pla(* * * *). I question whether (* * * *) them at all or no. But (* * * *) them, I shall not le(* * * *) to be spread abroad for (* * * *).

I have now I think done, and (* * *) the storehouse a little but (* * *) much, very much (worried (that) I may in some mea(* * * *) order before if d(* * * *).

My love to Jack and all fr(iends. * *) better them worse in (* * * my) wife is pretty well and I (am,) dear (Charles,)

[Your affectionate friend and brother,

S. Wesley]

Source: Samuel Jr.'s copy letter; MARC, DDWes 9/17.

⁵The remainder of the letter is on an outside edge that is badly frayed, resulting in numerous longer lacunae in the text.

⁶Virgil, Aeneid, ii.522

From Christopher Wells

Jesus College [Oxford]
April 9, 1739

Dear Charles,

I have been slow to write, because I have nothing that would be agreeable to you to say. However, I write to you not unwillingly, though I have but little to say of things that you would be glad to hear. I could talk to you freely about books, and learning, and all the means of knowing religion, except that deep and inward reformation which I know as that which you would of all other things most advise for myself, as well as a means. I must ask you again (and I don't design to publish your answer, if it should be such as would make you very obnoxious), "Is there no other way of being good, of performing the duties and of knowing the blessings of Christianity, without joining myself to those who willingly accept that name of distinction which the world has given them?"¹ Because if it is necessary for those great ends, it would be very inconvenient to me in all worldly respects. It would agree very ill with my circumstances as they are at present, which are worse than I believe you know. With my business I do serious, important duty (you know, as we reckon it) here in college. With my most pleasing thought, which is that of my doing my duty with a great deal of care, but of having ease and a settlement at the same under the favour of our good established Church. I propose this still, though I am cured, I hope, of ambition, if I was ever so vain as to have any. My life now is that of studying to understand the Scriptures (being very busy learning Hebrew to read them); praying sometimes when I most feel my miserly and wants; telling my pupils or those that come to lecture by me all that I know of the New Testament; and making a sermon a week, which is only explaining some part of Scripture, to exhort and lead my parishioners to read it. At the same time I am imterable(?) and in sin myself; and best disposed, I find, when I am here, under the weight of many things. Some of which are disagreeable to me (and so keep my vanities and sin down) in the way of my duty. Others as mere crosses. Tell me what more (you'll think by my style that I justify myself; but I really know that as I do them they are only works) or what else I must do. Speak freely, for I'll burn your letter if I don't take your advice.

The charge against Mr. [George] Whitefield which I hear from our country is that he teaches the people—they say directly, and not by consequence—to have a mean opinion of the clergy. I really think I wish him well in his labours, nor should I be against his preaching in my parish if I had one. And my ambition, proposing things as I do for myself, is to be sometime a good parish priest. For which reason I keep correspondence with you, to learn of you. As I know I may, if you can instruct according to the measure of the bounds I seem to set you. I have been desired from Wales to inform one how best to catechize. He is one that says he thinks Mr. Whitefield may do good by stirring up the clergy to do more than they did before, and I desire that you would teach us both. He speaks as if he had seen some "Short Account of the Method of Catechism" in Germany, by which he says "that the apostolical writings have been handled on such a plain catechetical manner that the very children have been enabled to give an account fo the whole drift and purpose of every epistle and book in particular." If you have seen such a method, or any account of it, I desire you would tell me, that I may get it for him and me. Or if there is anything else used by any of those Reformed churches or by the Moravians that you would recommend, pray do. Pray tell me anything of that kind that you think good, and send me the hymns when they come out.² You may tell me as you think me fit to hear what success the gospel is attended with in London. I hope there will be none but common sufferings or persecutions. Though I don't know how things may be represented to those who have power in the Church. Nor do I think they will resolve to do anything extraordinary.

¹I.e., "Methodists."

²JW and CW, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), just published.

Poor Mr. Watson here is very much out of order (he was last Saturday), and distracted, as I heard and accounted for, by the threat of denying him his degree and a testimonium for orders.³ Much I am doing for both upon his account and that any should so far threaten him. I talked with Washington, but did not see him.⁴ I saw one of the women who was lately converted here, and saw nothing that I could reprove, and appointed with [John] Gambold to go and see some others when he comes to town. I suppose you have heard from him lately, and in something a new strain. He was very much affected when he was here last.

Give my service to your brother, and sister [Kezia] when you see her. Pray write to me when you have not anything better to do, as

Your sincere friend and servant,

Chr. Wells

Excuse my paying for my letter, because I think you ought to order it so to your correspondents. But this will be doing nothing if you do the same to me—which there is not the same reason for.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Charles Westley / to be left at Mr. James Hutton’s / Bookseller near Temple Bar / London.”

Postmarks: “11/AP” and “P[ai]D.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Wells asking advice / April 9. 1739.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/102.

³Robert Watson (c. 1712–85) matriculated at Queen’s College, Oxford in 1730, receiving his BA in 1735 and MA in 1739. He was drawn into the ‘Oxford Methodists’ by respect for CW. Ordained both deacon and priest in 1740, Watson became curate at Woolavington. In 1759 he was named rector of Egdean, Sussex.

⁴Henry Washington (b. 1718) matriculated Queen’s College, Oxford in 1733, receiving his BA in 1737 and MA in 1741. He was active in the Oxford Methodists during his early studies but rejected their evangelical emphases of 1738.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Bristol
April 9, 1739

Dear Brother Charles,

Against next post I will consider your verses.¹ The clergy here *gladiatorio animo ad nos affectant viam*.² But the people of all sorts receive the word gladly. Hitherto I have so full employment here that I think there can be no doubt whether I should return already or no. You will hear more from time to time, and judge accordingly. But whenever it seems expedient I should return, [casting] a lot will put it out of doubt. The God of peace fill you with all peace and joy in believing!³

Adieu!

I forgot. I must subscribe to the Kingswood colliers' schoolhouse.⁴ So I will take the money of Mr. Wilson.

Address: "To Mr. James Hutton / Bookseller / near Temple-bar / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "11/AP."

Endorsement: by James Hutton, "Ap. 9, 1739."

Source: holograph (addendum to letter to Hutton); London, Moravian Archive and Library.⁵

¹Since *HSP* (1739) was published the prior month, these were likely verse that would appear in *HSP* (1740).

²Cf. Terence, *Phormio*, 964, "hunt us down like gladiators."

³See Rom. 15:13.

⁴On Apr. 2, 1739 George Whitefield had laid the foundation-stone of a school for the colliers in Kingswood, and JW was implementing this project.

⁵Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:630.

From Francis Okeley¹

Bedford
April 11, 1739

My Dear Brother

Persecution is very hot and the devil rages horribly. He hath brought forth all his hosts to war against us. He hath left no device, no subtlety untried, to bring us to naught. He has employed all his instruments, but (glory be to God!) he hath pleaded his own cause. He hath made us to triumph in his name and rejoice in him, the God of our salvation, for he hath delivered us out of the hands of the enemy and brought to naught all their inventions and confounded them in the imagination of their hearts. Glory be to his holy name!

Wednesday 11th

Hearing that the brethren laboured under persecution at Olney, I and brothers Rogers² and [William] Delamotte set out in the strength of the Lord to comfort and encourage them. Mr. Rogers had been there several times to expound. We found most of the brethren had been staggered and many fallen quite, both there and at Emerton, a mile from thence, at the persecution that is raised against them, though small in comparison of ours at Bedford. Oh pray for us and them in your society, that those that are fallen may be brought back and again united to us in the bands of love, and that we may all stand fast and suffer as good and hardy soldiers to our captain, Jesus Christ!

I trust God blessed our endeavours and strengthened them thereby. My brother Delamotte expounded the 12th chapter to the Hebrews. I trust the Lord sealed it with his seal to the refreshment of their weary souls. Oh how does God delight to make one of his children comfort the other! We sang and conversed together till near 12:00. There were some souls strong in faith who seem to have some real experience. Oh may it increase with all the increase of God! Amen.

Thursday 12th

Rose and after taking solemn leave of the brethren in singing, prayer, etc., and commending them to the grace of God, we set out for Oakley³ in order to expound to a society settled there (and which brother Rogers attends constantly once a week) composed of poor people out of all the neighbouring villages for four miles round. We had the half of what we expected, it being a wet day. However, we had near 150 souls, for which glory be to God! Brother Delamotte expounded the 15th of Luke with great power, whereby I trust many were awakened. Believe me, my dear friend, the power of God is so visible among us that all, even our enemies, are forced to acknowledge it. Oh that you could see with what eagerness the starved souls of our dear, poor brethren feed on the Word, it would make your heart leap for joy. God multiples our five loaves and two fishes so as to make it sufficient for thousands. The harvest

¹Francis Okeley (or Okely; 1719–94), son of a mayor of Bedford, was educated at Charterhouse. He was converted in 1736 and entered St. John's, Cambridge in 1736, becoming part of the "Cambridge Methodists." He met the Wesley brothers as part of the Fetter Lane society in 1738, but sided with the Moravians as Fetter Lane split. On his return to Bedford, after receiving a BA in 1740, Okeley took the pastorate of a Baptist church, but soon returned to the Moravians.

²Jacob Rogers (1715–79) received his BA from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1737 and was ordained deacon that year by the Bishop of Lincoln. He came to Bedford to serve initially as a curate at St. Paul's. On being converted to Methodism by Benjamin Ingham (with whom he went to grammar school), he was expelled from his curacy, and began preaching outdoors with George Whitefield. He soon gravitated to the Moravians, among whom he served congregations in North America and England.

³Oakley, Buckinghamshire; Okeley spells "Okley."

truly is great but the labourers are few. Oh pray the lord of the harvest that he would send more labourers into his vineyard and shall we resign at suffering for so glorious a God! No, I trust we shall suffer with joy and thankfulness too.

We left them and came rejoicing to our own society of Bedford, where the word came with power mighty to save, and there were two souls awakened. Glory be to God! Oh cease not singing praises unto his holy name and to tell all his marvellous works.

Sing ye heavens and earth rejoice,
Make to God a cheerful noise,
He alone the work has done,
He hath glorified his Son.⁴

Friday 13th

This day (a day ever to be remembered by us, wherein we were counted worthy the honour of suffering for our dear Lord and Master, and wherein I trust he hath glorified himself. Oh may we be kept humble!), the devil hath raged horribly but God hath shown himself mightier. We were all last week absolutely forbid and excluded going to the prisons, but heard this afternoon there was liberty given to visit the prisoners again, and accordingly we agreed to go but our dear brother Delamotte. He (very providentially, for there would have been nobody to attend the society) could not go, being engaged to visit some Christian friends, so only brother Rogers and I went and about 20 of the common people went along with us, where we talked to the prisoners for some time, and brother Rogers performed divine service and expounded the lesson for the evening and preached the terrors of the law to them with power. And (praised be God!) they had their desired effect of three souls and very much moved all the rest, except four hardened wretches who were drinking and eating and disturbing us during the service. Oh that God may enlighten their eyes to see the things that belong to their salvation! As an evidence that those three souls were awakened, they went unto them and exhorted those poor wretches to turn unto God, for whom we also prayed heartily as they stood by us and trust those prayers will not fall to the ground. Amen.

Now we were told that the under-sheriff had come himself and confined us in the gaol. It was agreeable news and filled our souls with joy, and we immediately prayed for and blessed our persecutors. We loved them with all our souls and delightfully spent our time in again expounding and instructing them in the ways of godliness, in singing hymns and praying. Oh the comfort and joy we then felt in our souls; we could willingly have been confined our whole lives to have saved one soul. The prison was a palace to us. What joy is comparable to that of suffering for our Lord and Master? Oh may we suffer as good Christians!

Brother Delamotte was met by some of our Christian friends and told this news, and now the prison was surrounded with thousands of people, some for, some against us, while we were singing and praying within-side, which rejoiced his heart, but he could not get to us. So about 7:00 they went to the society, which was crowded more than ever, where they all heartily prayed for us and our persecutors. After the society was ended he went to the under-sheriff to know if he would let us out or him in, but found him resolute. He then came under the gaol window, where we were in an upper room, and called to us, and we cordially saluted each other, and then began singing “Shall I for fear of feeble man, ...”⁵ Those within and they without with heart and voice united. The people flocked to hear and I believe in half an hour there were more than 3,000 souls, to whom we expounded about an hour through the grates. Yea, so great was the grace given him that they could not resist the power by which he spake. Some cried,

⁴CW, “On the Conversion of a Common Harlot,” st. 1, *HSP* (1739), 103.

⁵Johann Joseph Winckler (trans. by JW), “Boldness in the Gospel,” *HSP* (1739), 200–01.

some pitied, some loved, and all were more closely united to him than ever. After he had done expounding, we sang again the hymn entitled, “Christ the friend of sinners.”⁶ There was one remarkable instance of the providence of God in our behalf. Though there was such a multitude and though our enemies purposely endeavoured to breed a riot, there was not all the while the least disturbance, but all in a lamblike disposition. Sing, oh Heavens, and rejoice, oh Earth, for God hath triumphed, the horse and the rider are thrown into the midst of the sea. They are sunk like lead into the mighty waters.⁷ He sits between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.⁸ He is the Lord over all, and though the enemy rageth, he ruleth.

About half an hour after 10:00, they condescended to let us out amongst the blessings of the people, who joyfully received us. We embraced brother Delamotte and all the brethren with great joy and went hand in hand singing praises to God through the streets from the gaol quite down to my mother’s house, all the people following us and blessing us, praying for us and singing with us. The devil cannot tell what to do now. He is at a stand. He is a fool and hath took the most effectual method to destroy his own kingdom. I am confident he lost some souls who came with weeping eyes to return brother Rogers thanks and has strengthened all. He is conquered; he is conquered by the strength of the Lord of Hosts. Oh praise the Lord, praise the Lord! What, shall we say, “The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!” I believe they will yet rage, though I believe they will yet be conquered, for he who hath delivered doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver. Oh pray for us that we may not be high-minded but be filled with humble faith working by love, that so in all our sufferings we may glorify the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

There is a glorious work going forward. Indeed, we grow under the weight of persecution; it is exceeding good for us to be tried. The work of conviction is going on among those already awakened very strongly. They have gone through much experience, and there are many, I trust, who will shortly pass under the pangs of the new birth. Oh may the Lord prosper us and carry on the work in their souls unto the perfect day. We are fitting up a room down my mother’s yard and have already finished it, which will contain 300 people and which we have hired of her for our society. It is charmingly retired and as suitable for the purpose as possible and God has put it into the hearts of many people to contribute towards it especially Mr. Walker, brother Rogers’s uncle. How they rage at this! They contrive all methods to make us out dissenters, but all in vain. Nor can they with all their policy bring our society to the ground, for the Lord is on our side. Therefore, we will not fear, though all the powers of hell were engaged against us. I know he is with us of a truth by the singular instances of his providence and grace, too many to be here mentioned, wherefore shall we then fear.

Brother Rogers has two pulpits lent him for a mount at two neighbouring towns, where he preaches tomorrow. The Lord is pleased to bless his ministry wheresoever he goes, making him instrumental of turning many to righteousness. He is violently persecuted for it. He lately preached to a numerous congregation in a churchyard, being invited to preach, and afterwards excluded. Oh the devil cannot bear he should make such inroads into his kingdom; therefore, stirs up his whole power against him. Arm him, therefore, oh Lord, with the might of thy Spirit that he may be able to quench all the fiery darts of his enemy. Oh may he learn to endure hardship like a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Brother Delamotte and I shall, God willing, be in town [i.e., London] on Wednesday next, where I hope to see you with joy. In the meantime, may the Lord bless you and fill you with his Holy Spirit, and make you an instrument in his hand of turning many to righteousness, and in the end, may you shine as a star in the firmament to the glory of our great Redeemer. Amen, Amen.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

⁶CW, “Christ the Friend of Sinners,” *HSP* (1739), 101–03.

⁷See Exod. 15:1, 101.

⁸See Ps. 99:1 (BCP).

F. Okely

P.S. Salute all the brethren in Christ and all friends here salute you all in the Lord Jesus and pray for you. I desire you would let Mrs. [Martha] Claggett see this letter and give mine and brother Delamotte's best respects. We would have writ[ten] to her, but were quite taken up (as also to her daughter).

Adieu.

Source: secondary transcription; Cardiff (Wales) Central Library, Manuscript Collection, MS 1.553, pp. 204–13.⁹

⁹Published transcription in Graham C. G. Thomas, "George Whitefield and Friends: The Correspondence of Some Early Methodists," *National Library of Wales Journal* 27 (1991): 199–203.

From the Rev. George Whitefield and William Seward

Oxon

12:00 at night, April 21, 1739

Dear Brother Charles,

By the especial providence of God, I cam hither late this night. Our brother [Charles] Kinchin's conduct almost shocks me. I am resolved, God willing, to oppose all such proceedings. Satan wants us to carry things to an extreme. On Tuesday night or Wednesday morning I hope to be at London, and to be at Fetter Lane conference. My heart is now quite melted down. Most of my graces are in exercise. I *feel* that I love you and the brethren. Great things God has done at Evesham for, dear brother Charles,

Yours most affectionately,

G. W.

Honoured Sir,

Our dear brother purposes, God willing, to preach at Islington on Thursday. O my dear brother, what mercies God has showed me. How has he answered our New Year's day prayers. Behold my brother Benjamin [Seward] is a new creature. His conversion is most like St. Paul's of any we have heard of. Bred at the feet of Gamaliel (Cambridge); as to the outward rigtheousness, blameless; concerning zeal, opposing the church till God begun to ope his eyes and darted a ray of light on his soul which cast him down for eight days¹⁰. Yet he could scarce bear the light, and he is now for preaching Christ to every creature and for that purpose designs to take holy orders. My cousin Ma(ry) comes on apace. My mother's Martha-like temper seems gradually (wear?)ing off, and I left my native county with as much freedom as I ever left any other place. I shall always love and honour my dear friends and spiritual father, and beg his prayers for, honoured sir,

Your child in Christ,

W. Seward¹¹

I long to embrace you in my arms, my dear father in Christ. Let as many of the brethren as can conveniently meet us on the road. We are to lie at the Catherine Wheel at High Wycombe on Tuesday night. I find myself grieved for the offenses which may be given to Christ's little ones by the late disputings here, but *feel* myself full of love to all weak as well as strong. I am sure God will bring good out of these devices of Satan, and will purify his church by these trials. In my little measure I have a will to pray that God would lead or guide us into all truth.¹²

Farewell dear and honoured sir.

Address: by GW, "To / the Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley at Mr. Bray's a Brazier / in Little Britain near Alders / gate / London / to be deliver'd immediately."

Postmark: "23/AP."

Endorsement: by CW, "April 21. 1739. / G. Whitefield and my son / W. Seward acknow / ledging."

Source: holograph, MARC, DDP 1/82.

¹⁰Cf. Acts 22:3–4.

¹¹William Seward (1704–40), a gentleman of Badsey, near Evesham, Worcestershire, was converted under CW's preaching. He became a strong supporter of Whitefield's evangelistic and philanthropic project in Georgia, accompanying Whitefield there on one trip. Seward died Oct. 22, 1740, as a result of a blow received from detractors while touring South Wales to raise support for Whitefield.

¹²This paragraph and the closing are also by Seward.

From William Delamotte

Cambridge
June 12, 1739

My Dear Brother,

I received three lines from a person signed “C. W.” Was it you? You might indeed well be ashamed to write the name at length. O my brother, had you remembered my weakness, my situation, my want of advice, surely you could not have closed the paper without giving me one word or two of advice. Let me beg of you, my brother, to lengthen your next, that my soul may receive comfort.

I have, since you left Broadoaks,¹³ been there and expounded to about 300 souls, and God was pleased to bless my weak endeavours. So that the people pressed me to come again very much, and I promised to come and expound the next Sunday, morning and evening. In the interim, Mrs. [Martha] Claggett received a letter from her husband [Wyseman] advising her of his coming the next Saturday, which put a stop to our intended work. But I, not knowing that he would come, went over on the Saturday. I had not been there long but he came, full of rage and revenge against the Methodists, and particularly against you for having come back from Hatfield and preached in the fields during his absence.

He would not see me for a great while. But through much persuasion about 10 o'clock he sent for me. It had pleased God to arm me with a great degree of love and meekness for the threatening fight. As soon as I came into the room I saluted him as kindly as I could. But the return he made was something to this purpose: “Charles Wesley is a rogue, a scoundrel, a villain, etc., and deserves to be hanged. He has taken away my reputation and has made a division in my family, and has broke[n] my heart.” This speech was near a quarter of an hour long. I spoke not one word till he had done, and then told him this was a very heavy accusation, and begged he would clear it up and be something more particular. He then instanced in your preaching in the fields, etc., and said were you to come into the house again, he would burn it and you and everything that was in it. I then, blessed be God, with the utmost meekness told him that he was once more convicted of the truth of your doctrine, and [I] was sorry to see he had stifled his convictions. I then summoned him to appear before the bar of God with you, and asked him if he could bear the same testimony against you there as he had now done to me. And [I] asked him likewise if he was to set the house on fire, whether he should not look on it as a type of that fire which he deserved in hell. He now began to rage and almost foam with passion, and glory be to God I felt my love and meekness increasing in proportion with his rage. I think I never loved any man so much in my life. He then told me, as for you, I respect you on account of your family. But if you intend to come here as Charles Wesley had done, he desired he might never see my face again. I told him I much approve of Mr. Wesley's proceedings, and as there were so many souls desirous to hear the word, I could not see them perish with hunger. And though he would not let me come to his house, I must come into those parts and encourage to people to seek Jesus Christ. Upon my saying this, he got up in such a fury as I think I never saw any man in, and said he would get a pistol and shoot me through the head (and blessed be God, I now loved him more than ever), and then immediately he desired [me] to get out of his house. I took my hat and whip and was going (not knowing whither I went, being entirely a stranger, and no houses nigh, and 11 o'clock at night; but I knew God loved me, and would therefore keep me). But immediately Mrs. [Martha] Clagget ran to the door and shut it, and begged as for life. The daughters cried out, “Let him go, let him go mother. God will protect him,” which strengthened me much. Upon this the parlour door was opened and I went to the hall door full of love to him and faith in my master Jesus Christ; when he, seeing me thus patient and quite willing to go, would not let me unlock the door but insisted then on my staying. I went then with Mrs. Clagget and her daughters and gave thanks for that great degree of faith working by

¹³Broadoaks Manor, the Claggetts' country home, was located near Wimbush, just northwest of Thaxted, Essex. CW visited there May 25–June 2, 1739; see MS Journal.

love I had been blessed with (for I at no time ever felt the like), and then prayed most heartily for him. O that our prayers may be effectual. You cannot think how miserable he is. O pray for him, I beseech you, pray for him.

He made me stay with him till Monday, but vows still he will certainly engage the civil magistrate to act against me whenever I come there. I told him I would not act in opposition to any law that was agreeable to the will of God, but speak I must.

On Sunday Mr. Carter preached against us and said we were a new sect and only wanted to make divisions.¹⁴ Pray for him.

O my brother, this thing has done me much good. I never had so great a trial of my faith before. But I am satisfied of this: had it been infinitely greater, God would have proportioned my strength to it. O that I may always behave with meekness in all my approaching trials. O Jesus, let [me] still follow thee if it is to death. Amen.

God has pleased to magnify his power in my weakness in another instance. One of the fellows of Magdalen College preached at St. Mary's last week upon whosoever offendeth in one point, etc.,¹⁵ where he asserted that God doth not expect an unsinning obedience now; that he will accept us for our endeavours, and that we are to supply all defects by repentance. These assertions grieved me much, and it was impressed much on me to go and speak to him. I prayed for direction and then consulted the Word. I pitched upon the following verses [in James 2]: the 8th, the 15th, but this sense not being complete, I took the 17th and the 24th; and the chapter I opened on was the third of Ezekiel. Surely there never was so plan an answer to prayer. I went the same morning to him. I begged to see him and his sermon, and told him upon what account. When he had read the passages to which I referred him I told him they were contrary to the gospel. He was so amazed and confounded that he knew not what to say. I told him God did expect an unsinning obedience now, and because man could not perform it he deserved nothing but hell, and was man to strive to eternity it would not go the least step towards his acceptance with God. God enabled me to speak with great boldness and to show him that he was by nature nothing but half an beast and half a devil, and that he deserved nothing but damnation. I talked thus for about an hour and was then obliged to leave him. O that it might be made instrumental to the saving of his soul.

I trust God still continues his blessing of your ministry. I hope to hear soon that Mr. Charles Wesley preached on Kennington Common, to his 2000s also.¹⁶ The Lord be with you in everything you undertake. May you be always approved in Christ. May you become a little child.

My love to all who love the Lord Jesus. Pray for
One who loves you much in Christ,

W. DeLaMotte

I want the advice of the society how to act in respect of going to Broadoaks; and if you think fit, would be glad if you would say lay the case before them at the next conference.

Address: "To / The Revd: Mr Charles Wesley / at Mrs Richardson's Silk Dier / in Upper Thames street near Dowgate / Hill / London."

Postmark: "13/IV."

Endorsement: by CW, "Jun. 12 1739 W. Del[amot]t[e] / at Broadoak / resolved delivered!"

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 2/20.

¹⁴Rev. Thomas Carter was the vicar of Wimbish 1716–69.

¹⁵See James 2:10.

¹⁶George Whitefield had preached there to a large crowd on June 3, 1739; CW would do so on June 28.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Bishop Sturford
June 22, 1739

My Dearest Brother Charles,

Indeed I take your letter exceeding kindly.¹ Would you and your brother be always more open, I should like it better. God knows I do not want to make a party. I wish you both may increase, though I decrease. I am not touched at present with the *least tincture of envy*. If you brother will be but silent about the doctrine of election and final perseverance, there never will be a division between us. The very thought of it shocks my soul. If I have been too credulous, God forgive me. Hereafter I will endeavour to be more cautious. Hence forward let there be a deep silence in the point. Let us love as brethren. Let us speak so far as we have attained, and wait on the Lord for farther light.

I shall pray, God helping me, as you desire. Oh pray and give thanks for, dearest brother Charles,
Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,

G. W.

I can gladden your soul with news from Broadoaks.² I shall see you on Sunday.

[On next page]

Dearest James [Hutton],

Prithee be not sick on my account. My resentment is over. Not a word shall be mentioned by me on this subject. Let us talk of loving one another. I am so full of love that I can scarce contain it. Ask John Syms if it be not so.³ Meet me at Blackheath on Sunday and confirm your love to, dearest James,

Ever ever yours,

G. W.

God willing, I will send a line to my honoured friend and father Mr. J[ohn] W[esley].

Address "To / Mr. James Hutton / without Temple bar / London."

Endorsement: "Give this to brother Periam to transcribe."

Source: holograph; London, Moravian Archive and Library.

¹CW's letter to Whitefield is not known to survive.

²I.e., the Claggett family.

³John Syms (1714–57) and his brother Peter Syms (1716–90), both currently bachelors, were in business together as butchers in or near Leadenhall Street. They were active in the emerging revival. Whitefield spells "Sims."

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Bristol
June 23, 1739

Dear Brother

My answer to them which trouble me is this:

God commands me to do good unto all men, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous.

Man commands me not to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all.

If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye.

"But" (say they) "it is just that you 'submit yourself to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake'."²

True—to every ordinance of man which is not contrary to the command of God.

But if any man (bishop, or other) ordain that I shall not do what God commands me to do, to submit to that ordinance would be to obey man rather than God.

And to do this I have both an ordinary call and an extraordinary.

My ordinary call is my ordination by the bishop: "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God."

My extraordinary call is witnessed by the works God doth by my ministry, which evidence that he is with me of a truth in this exercise of my office.

Perhaps this might be better expressed in another manner. God bears witness in an *extraordinary manner* that my *thus exercising my ordinary call* is well-pleasing in his sight.

But what if a bishop forbids this? I do not say as St. Cyprian, *Populus a scelerato antistite separare se debet*.³

But I say, God being my helper,⁴ I will obey him still. And if I suffer for it, his will be done ...
[pages 3–4 missing]

Address: "To [the remainder of the sheet is missing]."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "25/IV."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother]'s Apology, June 1739" and "J.W., Jun. 25, 1739."

Source: holograph (imperfect); MARC, DDWes.⁵

¹CW had begun to preach in the open air, on May 29, 1739, in a farmer's field, and had been present on June 14 while JW preached on Black-heath for Whitefield during a visit to London. A basic ecclesiastical problem about field-preaching, of course, was that it implied preaching in another man's parish, for in effect every acre was a part of some parish. The strong scruples that CW retained led to JW sending this brief apologia.

²Cf. 1 Pet. 2:13.

³See Cyprian, *Epistola*, LXVII.3, "*plebs ... a peccatore praeposito separare se debet*," which translates into roughly the same English—"a people ought to separate itself from a sinful overseer."

⁴BCP, Adult Baptism, Answer 4.

⁵Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:660–61.

From Christopher Wells

Oxford
June 28, 1739

Dear Sir,

I do indeed congratulate you upon your happy state in Christ.¹ And I do pray and hope that God Almighty, who has so far “begun that good work in you”² will confirm it more and more and make you the instrument and minister of his grace to others. It is strange your account of yourself, but I cannot doubt but it is your own feeling, and cannot but think it is most like the accounts in Scripture, and that such salvation as you speak of is most like or suitable to him who is the Worker. And to the truth, reality, and preciseness which I have always been inclined to imagine in the promises and expressions of Scripture. I can say nothing to it myself. Here I am, and you see me entangled and labouring in the same infirmity and sins, and miseries within and without. Nor am I yet deeply enough sensible of them, else I do believe that I too should be delivered from them. God Almighty give me such patience that I may both wait his time and freely comply with every offer of God and opening of my heart that tends to it.

Our friend Mr. [John] Gambold was so kind to let me have the reading of your brother’s sermon.³ I know I am not a judge of it, but I see nothing to condemn in the doctrine. I have had some discourse today with our acquaintance here who I was told themselves did not approve of it. I cannot tell, but I think their opinion not so different as they imagine it is. You see I am dead and can say but little with any clearness. It is you must open and forward all my thoughts.

I shall indeed be glad to see you when you can return here, and to have more particulars of what yourself have felt and others whom you know, because it plainly shows the glory of Christ and must be of greatest comfort to sinners. Is Christ thus present still to speak remission of sins so that it shall indeed be felt at the present and not only be trusted to that we shall not find punishment for them hereafter? And call you really so and give proofs? That looks, I own, more like the accounts in Scripture and it should seem that the effect should immediately follow when *he* speaks. You say that he cures now the infirm, the blind, and the possessed, these that are as really so as those he cured in the gospel, by as real and effectual a leave as when he was visible upon the earth? Were not those instances given to be our encouragement, I don’t know how far, nor for what, but not that we should hope for the like now? Is it so that the most infirm sinner and most hopeless in himself may yet hope to be relieved? Why then may I! May Christ himself increase my faith, and may you that are converted be the means to strengthen your brethren. But is the faith itself the same gift of God as the cure? I know it is the gift of God because Paul says it is, and because I feel that a human faith will not do these miracles. But if it is a gift of God, can you dealing with it so as to be the “condition” or means of the cure, or else it is in vain? Pray observe me in this, if I say anything, and make out my question, as well as give the answer.

Your brother [JW] and Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham I hear are gone into the land of faith, and of miracles, and of goodness.⁴ I hope to have great satisfaction from them, if I be disposed and worthy to receive it. Pray write to me and give me what news you can—I mean about these things and such as I do really think more important than affairs of this world. For if these things indeed be done by “the finger,” the power, of God, it is “the kingdom of God that is come upon us.”⁵

¹CW’s account of his current blessed spiritual state, sent in a letter to Wells, is not known to survive; but see June 24, 1739 in MS Journal.

²Cf. Phil. 1:6.

³JW, *Salvation by Faith, Works*, 1:117–30.

⁴They were travelling to German to visit the Moravian communities there.

⁵Cf. Luke 11:2.

I did your request to your sister [Kezia], whom I saw last Sunday, and am glad you would desire me. Pray what means shall I take to prepare my young people and old for confirmation, which is to be soon? And what books do you most advise me to be recommended to the bulk of people in a parish, because I was desired to inform myself of this by a friend, a clergyman in Wales. I came away myself and left them there as when I came. There is one person there I believe doing good, though I did not see him nor hear him—one Harris,⁶ who I was told was in Oxford of St. Mary Hall about three or four years ago, not in orders, who preaches (or as it is called there in a Welsh word, advises) from parish to parish, upon a mountain or a plain, and has thousands to hear him, to whom he speaks for three or four hours familiarly and strongly of all their vices, advising them all to keep firmly to the Church. That the churches afterwards are filled and many people much moved and reformed, as I was told. I hope it is the same “power of God” working there.

I have no more but to beg your prayers, and that I am as much as is possible for one in my state to be to anyone,

Your affectionate and real friend and servant,

C. Wells

Pray send me, if you can, a couple of Professor Francke’s Introduction.⁷

Endorsements: by CW, “Wells N.B.” and “Mr Wells, on my be/lieving, and on H. Harris / June 28 1739.”
Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/5.

⁶Howell Harris (1714–73), a Welsh schoolmaster, began to preach and found societies in Wales within a few months of his conversion in 1735. With Daniel Rowland, he was the founder of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism. Although on doctrinal grounds he was more attracted to Whitefield, Harris sought to avoid theological rivalries, and had generally friendly relations with the Wesley brothers. In 1744 he married Anne Williams (1718–70). The brothers often spelled his first name “Howel.” See *DEB*, 521–23; *ODNB*; Vickers, *Dictionary*, 149–50. CW had met Harris in April 1739; see MS Journal.

⁷August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), *Manuductio ad lectionem scripturae sacrae* (London: Downing, 1706).

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Savannah, Georgia
[c. August 1739]

Honoured and Dear Sir,

God has been pleased to send us a comfortable passage.

The Orphan House accounts come right within £10. I have great assurances given me that it will be a *Pietas Georgiensis*, equally remarkable with the *Pietas Hallensis*.¹

I shall continue in Georgia above six months. If Mr. [John] Hutchin[g]s would come to supply my place, I would keep the parsonage of Savannah. Otherwise, I will resign all but the Orphan House. I have read Guise and Doddridge on the Evangelists, and written to both.² The former I think excellent; the latter, ingenious, elaborate, but too superficial. Neal's *Lives of the Puritans* have been of use.³ I think they held the truth as it is in Jesus. The Quakers have set us an example of patient, resolute suffering, as the best means to weary our enemies. I want the lives of Luther and Calvin, to get some short account of the history of the Reformation. At my return, I trust I shall speak boldly, as I ought to speak. The account of my infant years was written by the will of God. Pray, let it be published without any material diminution or addition.⁴ He who hideth his sins shall not prosper. My *Letter to the Religious Societies* I give to the schools at Bristol.⁵ The Lord prosper the work of your hands upon you! I have written to the Bishop of Gloucester, and have delivered my soul, by meekly telling him of his faults.⁶ I long to hear how affairs go on in England. Are you yet the Lord's prisoner? If they make any laws whatsoever, I trust notwithstanding I shall preach with all boldness. Oh, dear sir, pray publicly, as well as in private, for

Your unworthy, loving servant,

George Whitefield

Source: published transcription; S. M. Houghton (ed.), *Letters of George Whitefield, for the period 1734–1742* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Trust, 1976), 504–05.

¹Whitefield had established an orphan house in Georgia, modelled on that described by August Hermann Francke in *Pietas Hallensis; or, A Public Demonstration of the Foot-steps of a Divine Being yet in the World. In an Historical Narration of the Orphan-House and other Charitable Institutions, at Glaucha, near Hall, in Saxony*. Parts I–III (London: Joseph Downing, 1705–16).

²John Guyse, *A Practical Exposition of the Four Evangelists in the form of a paraphrase* (London: Oswald, 1739); and Philip Doddridge, *The Family Expositor; or, a Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament*, vol. 1, (London: J Wilson, 1739).

³Daniel Neal, *History of the Puritans*, 4 vols. (London: R. Hett, 1732–38).

⁴Whitefield, *A Short Account of God's dealings with the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, AB, Late of Pembroke-College, Oxford; from his infancy to the time of his entering into holy orders* (London: Strahan, 1740).

⁵Whitefield, *A Letter from the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield to the Religious Societies lately set on foot in several parts of England and Wales. ... published for the Benefit of the School lately erected among the Coaliers in Kingswood, near Bristol* (London: Strahan, 1740).

⁶George Whitefield to Martin Benson (Bishop of Gloucester), July 24, 1739.

From John Edmonds¹

London
September 4, 1739

Reverend Sir,

My dear brother in Christ. The love I now feel in my heart for you moves me to take pen in hand. Oh may our hearts burn with this fire and that continually. Amen.

My dear brother, what shall I tell you but what my Lord have done for my soul? Before you left us and over till almost this time; nay, for two months, hath my soul walked in thick clouds and darkness. But my feet hath the Lord taken out of the deep waters. O my dear friend, we must follow our dear Lord and Master, who was crucified in weakness, but raised in power. It is he, it is he, with his own right hand that giveth the victory. He has put a new song in my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God. "Sing unto our God above, praise eternal as his love."²

Now my dear, dear brother, the trials and temptations I underwent were many and very great ones. But the Lord Jehovah is our everlasting strength. Now many of our dear brothers are, I find, under some of the trials I, through my Lord, got the victory over. I was tempted to slight the Church, the means of grace, and such like temptations beset me much. Nay, so strong [was] the conviction that my Lord would teach me himself that all the arguments [and] the reasons my brethren used were so frivolous and vain to me that I slighted them much. Now I observe I was carried on by degrees for a long while; all public worship was deadness, pain, and uneasy. Now I had given way, as being in much doubt whether it was the dictates of my enemy, or the impressions of the Spirit of God. I say had I given way to this temptation, and not have flown to my Lord as blind and weak, ignorant and helpless, which condition moved his great compassion; I find it would have been a false joy that would have deceived me. For when I gave way to and reasoned with the temptation, I could perceive joy to arise. This false joy deceiveth, I fear, many.

O pray, pray for us, for the enemy desireth to sift us as wheat. But I doubt not we shall be now the conqueror, through our suffering, conquering Lord, who loveth us and gave himself for us. Now as I mention love, the knowledge of which none hath; no, nor ever know, but the soul that is first born of love. The natural man, the pharisee, the legalist [are] those that have not tasted, nor found out this Christ of ten thousand. The predestinarian beholdeth not the full glory and extensiveness of it; who ascribe to one attribute (his infinite knowledge) but rob our glorious, and gracious, and merciful, and loving, and just Lord of what he most delighteth in, his own mercy and eternal love.

O my dear friend, the subject of predestination does my soul abhor. Was we to ask our dear Lord concerning it, would not he give us this answer, which is, "What is that to thee, follow thou me."³ Now what fruit does it bring forth but variance, strifes, contentions, and this among the children of one Lord and King. I observed that in writing, as well as talking, it robs us of better things. Oh that I could never, never hear it mentioned more. Amen.

Is not the subject of love more praiseworthy. Behold this is as extensive as our infinite, loving, dying, dear Lord's arms on the cross; extended to every creature [of] man; to all that will come with the power given. Or, our Lord mocks his creatures. I say, to all that will come to Jesus Christ that they might have life. Oh let us drink of this fountain, this fountain of love, which can never be drawn dry. Drink, O my dear friend, drink abundantly. O my dear friend cry aloud, tell the peoples; yea, tell all the people to

¹John Edmonds (1710–1803) a founding member of the Fetter Lane Society, London, stayed with the Moravians when the Wesleys left. When he and his wife, Mary, celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary on Feb. 22, 1781, he was one of the three oldest male members of the society at that time.

²CW, "Hymn to the Trinity," *HSP* (1740), 101 (again, being used in worship before publication).

³John 21:22.

come to this fountain of our dear Master's blood: quickening, cleansing, healing, life giving blood; freely poured flussing(?) out of Jesus for every creature. O my friend, proclaim abroad glad tidings of great joy to all the cursed race of Adam. Speak of the new world that grace will make in their hearts. Oh may your words be mighty, through the power of Jesus. Amen.

Now my friend, how can we speak good of sufferings in Jesus? Many excellent things might be spoken of them. It was by this our Lord learned obedience. And if we will reign with him, we must also suffer with him. May we look for no other way to glory. Now my Lord hath learnt me not to look at what I feel of love or joy, humility or weakness, or any other graces in my soul, but what my Lord has made unto me of God. Though I change, yet doth not he. By this I experimentally see what Saint Paul meant, "having nothing I possess all things."⁴ For when I am cold and dead, he is my life; weakness, my strength; darkness, my light; poor, my riches. Oh the Lord is become the strength of my song and my salvation. Oh let our talking be of his wondrous work. Our dear, dear, brother John [Wesley] is now, by the guidance and blessing of God, once more among us. Oh may he prove a great blessing unto us. Amen.

His beginning was prosperous. At our women's love feast, our Lord wrought wonders among us. The fire of love was kindled among us, the hard rocks brought forth living streams of comfort, our mouths were filled with laughter and our tongues with joy. Your brother's countenance was most pleasant unto us. Our prayers were heard. The promise of our Master was fulfilled upon us. The light of his blessed countenance shown upon us. Oh sing praise, sing praises to our God. Sing praises, sing praises to our King. Amen. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Dear brother Charles, I love you. I love you. I esteem you highly for your works' sake. May the spirit of our Master be plentifully poured upon you. Amen. May he teach you wisdom secretly. Oh may your thoughts, words, and works tend only to his eternal glory. Amen. May you see [the end] of the travail of your labour and be satisfied. May our Lord's work forever prosper in your hands. Amen. May you wax bold and valiant for your dying Master. Oh may you increase stronger and stronger in the Lord; and, in the power of his might, tread down all opposition. Amen. May you know your Lord's will, and have power faithfully to fulfil the same. Amen. May the Lord reveal the knowledge of himself more and more to your soul. May you be filled, filled, filled with love, and clothed with humility. Amen. Amen. Amen.

From your poor, poor, weak, blind, sinful, brother in Christ,

John Edmonds

P.S. Oh fail not to pray; pray for, and if worthy, favour with a line or [two]. Grace, mercy, peace, love, and joy be multiplied on all that love our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Westley / At Mrs. Gravils a Grocer in Vine / Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "4/SE."

Endorsements: by CW, "Edmonds / Sept 4" and "J. Edmonds in respect / love."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/55.⁵

⁴2 Cor. 6:10.

⁵For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From John Bray

London
September 6, 1739

Dear Brother,

Love constrains me to write something. Oh may Jesus, our friend and brother, assist me to do it to edification and comfort of all my beloved in the Lord, especially to you, who I love much more for your work of faith and labour of love, which doth abound to the glory of God. The Lord is with you of a truth. Oh may his power and his love be made effectual to all amongst whom the Lord hath now sent you.

We have been a praying and giving thanks to God for you. The Lord harkened and heard. Be strong oh my beloved, for Jesus hath been with you and will uphold you with the right hand of his righteousness, and will make bare his arm for your defence. Is he not high and lifted up? Hath he not all power in his hand? Will he not exert it in behalf of all those that confess him before men? Yea, he standeth at the right hand of his Father to fight for you, and will reign till he hath subdued all enemies under his feet, and men or devils may as soon [remove] him thence as one hair of your head shall fall to the ground without his leave.

O my brother, hath not the Lord been very gracious unto you? O speak good of his name. Tell it out amongst the people that Christ hath died; yea, rather is risen and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in our flesh, for us. If he be for us, who can be against us? What will he not do for us? Before we call, he will answer and will speak. He will say, "Here I am." His love is a mighty river wherein there is room enough to swim. It is as clear as crystal. It is as warm as milk.¹ It is as sweet as honey. It runneth very swiftly. It floweth over the banks. O all ye that want to be happy, come hither even to Jesus. He will receive you; nay, if you run not away, he will come to you. You say you are filthy; so am I. You know not the way; so did not I. But Jesus is the way. He came to me, wretched as I am, and told me he saved me. He is love, even the same loving Jesus to all that seek him. Nay, my friends, you need not go far to seek him, for he is near that justifieth you. Turn ye even unto me and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord. O be not satisfied without him, my dear brethren, for if you seek him only, you shall find him. O take no rest till you find him, who will cause you to inherit substance and will fill your treasures. And you that have found Jesus, keep your hearts with all diligence. He is very jealous. O keep your selves from idols. He will have the whole heart and he will fill it. O keep your eyes single and your whole body shall be full of light.

The hand of the Lord [is] graciously upon me for good. Since you left us I have been greatly afflicted in body and seemed as one forsaken, crying out in great distress of thought. My pain greater than I could bear. I thought the pains of hell were come upon me. I cried unto the Lord in this trouble, also which was greater than that brother [Francis] Okeley was within. But the hand of the Lord was not shortened, nor his ear heavy.² He delivered me at last and set my feet in a large room and renewed my strength like an eagle. That deadness in public prayers is gone. I am comforted on every side.

¹We have polished Bray's spelling throughout. Here is a good sample of his phonetic spelling; the original reads "... a mighty reveer where in there is roum enouf to swemm it is as clere as crestuall it is as wourm as melck."

²See Isa. 59:1.

I am in great doubts about Mary Plewit.³ The Lord has called me away from her finally by Mrs. Euster,⁴ so that if I meet her in the forest I must not speak to her; and gave her a promise that if I obeyed this word I should be stronger than ever before. The Lord had made good his word by his servant. O give thanks, for his mercy endureth forever. Amen.

My love to brother Okeley.
Farewell in the Lord,

John Bray

O may the work of the Lord prosper in your hand, and may your labour never be in vain in the Lord. O may the power of Christ rest upon you and fill you with all his fullness, and cause you to triumph in every place and cause you to abound in every good work to the glory of his grace. Amen.

Address: "To / Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at Mrs. Grevil's,⁵ in Wine Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "8/SE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Bray / Sept. 6. / 1739 / Rejoicing and encouraging."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/8.

³Mary Plewit was one of the "French prophets" in London; cf. JW, *Journal*, Jan. 28, 1739, *Works*, 19:32–34.vBray spells "Pluet."

⁴Susanna (Hathorne) Ewsters (c. 1691–1763). Her husband George Ewsters was a goldsmith with a shop on Aldermanbury Lane. Bray spells "Euster." Both of the couple were active in the Fetter Lane society.

⁵Elizabeth Whitefield (b. 1713), George Whitefield's sister, married James Grevil (1706–37), a Bristol grocer in 1732; after his death she ran a boarding house.

From Benjamin Seward

Bengeworth
September 8, 1739

My Dear Brother in Christ,

Yesterday morning I was greatly refreshed in the Spirit by the receipt of yours and dear brother [Francis] Okeley's letters.¹ I rejoice in the Lord with you that he sets his seal to your ministry, and pray that you may go on from strength to strength, and be mighty in his hand, to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan. I bless God that he made you instrumental in spreading his love abroad in my heart, my bowels being straitened before. I was convinced that he "would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus,"² being clearly satisfied that by the oblation of himself once offered he made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

The day after you left us I went to the society in a sweet frame, but so low and weak that I thought I should be able to say but little. But it pleased God to loosen my stammering tongue in so wonderful a manner that I gave an account of my conversion and expounded the 30th [chapter] of Jeremiah, and the 15th [chapter] of the Second Book of Chronicles—being the two chapters I opened on so remarkably—without the least hesitation, and was furnished with such a supply of words and matter that I really was a miracle to himself [sic], having never attempted the like before and not intending anything more than reading them with short remarks. I have expounded two or three times since, but not with half the strength and power, which I find of a truth to be of God and not of man. I am growing quite dead and diffident again. Pray for me that my faith fail not.

Poor dear sister Peggy³ was hurried away the Monday after you left us by my sp^(?4) jealousy of our being often together singing praises to our dear Redeemer. Satan is full of devices, but I trust God will confound them and turn all to his glory. [I] had a sweet letter from her, full of spiritual life, the same morning yours and Mr. Okeley's came. She is under the cross; pray for her earnestly.

I rejoice to hear that your dear brother is coming here, and hope to see you again in your return to London. Our society as yet stand steadfast, notwithstanding all the clamours of the town. I trust the gospel will be written in the hearts of many. O pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more labourers into his harvest. Friend Cartwright's family desire their love.⁵ Mrs. Canning⁶ and our other sister, with many others, taste the word of life. Pray for my dear wife.⁷ At present, I bless God, she is tender and affectionate, without opposition. O that her calmness might end in peace with God which passeth all understanding! Methinks I could sacrifice my all to that one consideration, but God's will be done. O pray that through faith and patience we may both be made one in Christ, as we are in the flesh.

Love to dear brother Okeley and the rest of our brethren unknown. Adieu dear brother.

Yours in much affection and great weakness,

Ben. Seward

¹CW's letter to Seward is not known to survive. Seward spells Okeley's name "Oakley."

²Cf. 1 Tim. 2:4.

³Margaret Seward/Sheward (1710–85) of London. In his letter of Nov. 10, 1739, Seward appears to refer to her as a cousin

⁴A small portion completing this word is removed by the wax seal.

⁵William and Mary (Freeman) Cartwright and their family were Quakers in Evesham.

⁶Jane (Belcher) Canning (b. 1702) was the wife of Thomas Canning (1698–1782), headmaster of John Deacle's charity school, founded in 1736 on Port Street in Bengeworth. Seward spells "Canon."

⁷Benjamin's second wife Elizabeth Seward (d. 1754) was ardently committed to the Particular Baptists.

Charles Wesley In-Correspondence (1736–40)
Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

(page 89)

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Chas. Westley at Mrs. Grevilles / in Wine Street / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Ben. Seward / Sept. 8. 1739 / testifying the truth."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP1 1/97.

From Joseph Williams¹

Kidderminster
September 19, 1739

Reverend Sir,

It is now about four years since, in a delightful evening's conversation with a young gentleman of London, lamenting the general decay of vital religion, and that the peculiar doctrines of the gospel were misunderstood, slighted, and even opposed by many of the ministers of it—that not only the clergy of the established Church preached down the Articles to which they had subscribed, but likewise many of our dissenting ministers, especially of the younger generation, made a light matter of man's original depravity and apostasy from God and seemed utterly unacquainted with the nature and necessity of the new birth and of the Spirit's agency in the work of regeneration—I was somewhat surprised to hear him say that a revival of those doctrines was even then begun, and he hoped would be carried on by some of the clergy of the Church of England. And I could not forbear answering (for so I then thought) that they were Arminians to a man, and that I least of all expected so strange an event from that quarter. But he assured me that his expectation of such a revival was not by the instrumentality of dissenting ministers, though himself a dissenter, but of the Church clergy. Little did I then think that was in the womb of providence, and hastening to the birth. God hath since then exemplified to me, in the Whitefields and Wesleys of the age (which indeed I never doubted) that when he hath a work to do he can never be at a loss for instruments, how difficult, how strange soever it might appear to the eyes of flesh. I know not whether I more admire or rejoice in that flaming zeal and undaunted courage he hath animated you with, and you have exerted in so good a cause. I heartily wish you Godspeed. I bless you in the name of the Lord. Fear not what men can do unto you. With him your judgment is, and your reward with your God.

I have long desired that God would put it into the heart of one or more of his servants, whom the world in derision calls "Methodists," to come hither and help us. I should have written to Mr. Whitefield several months since, had I certainly known how to direct to him; which I believe too I might have searched out, but that my hands were too full of earthly business,² which takes up more of my time and thought than I am will to allow it. It was at my instigation that my good friend Mr. Bingham, of Gloucester, desired you when last there to take Kidderminster in your return from Bristol, which he tells me in his letter of the 28th past he thought would be in eight or ten weeks. Your presence and assistance are desired also at Bromsgrove. I now am going a long journey and expect not to be at home before the middle of next month, when I would be very thankful for a line to, reverend and dear sir,

You hearty well-wisher and most obedient, humble servant,

Jos. Williams

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr Cha. Wesley / at Mrs Greville's / Grocer in Wine Street / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, and "Sept. 19. 1739 / Jos. Williams' Invitation / to Kidderminster."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/87.³

¹Joseph Williams (1692–1755), see *Extracts from the Diary, Meditations, and Letters, of Mr. Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster*, ed. Benjamin Fawcett (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, 1779). William made a visit to Bristol the following month, at which he heard CW preach; see his letter below of Oct. 17, 1739.

²Williams was a clothier.

³A transcription was published previously in *WMM* 51 (1828): 382–83.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Islington
September 21, 1739

My Dear Brother,

A Scotch gentleman who was present here gave us a plain account of Mr. Erskine¹ and his associates, the substance of which was this. Some years since Mr. Ebenezer Erskine,² preaching before the Assembly, reprov'd them for several faults with all simplicity. This was so resented by many that in a following Assembly he was required to make an open recantation, and persisting in the charge the Assembly determined that he, with three other ministers who spoke in his behalf, should be deprived, and their livings declared vacant. Four messengers were sent for this purpose; but they returned *re infecta*,³ fearing the people, lest they should stone them. In another Assembly directions were given to neighbouring ministers [to procure] informations concerning the doctrine and behaviour of [the two] Mr. Erskines and their adherents. Out of these informations an indictment was formed, to which they were summoned to answer in the next Assembly.

Here it was debated whether they should be suffered to come in, and carried by a small majority that they should. The Moderator then spoke to this effect: "My reverend brethren, ye are summoned to answer an indictment charging you with erroneous doctrine and irregular practices. But if ye will submit to the Kirk, and testify your amendment, we will receive you with open arms."

Mr. [Ebenezer] Erskine answered for himself and brethren (they were now increased to eight) to this purpose: "Moderator, both you and those that are with you have erred from the faith. And your practices are irregular, too. And you have no discipline. Therefore you are no Kirk. We are the Kirk, and we alone, who continue in her faith and discipline. And if ye will submit to us, and testify your amendment, we will receive you with open arms."

None answered a word; so after a short time they withdrew. The Moderator then asked, "My reverend brethren, what shall we do?" One replied, "Moderator, I must answer you in our proverb: 'You have put the cat into the kirk (i.e. churn); and ye must get her out again how you can.'"

Again silence ensued, after which the Moderator asked, "Shall these men be excommunicated, or only deposed?" Answer was made, "The question is not right. Let it be asked, 'Shall they be deposed or not.'" This was accordingly done, and it was carried by five votes "that they should not be deposed." Having received help from God, they continue to this day, declaring to all that their congregation is the Kirk of Scotland; that they (the ministers, now ten in all) are the proper presbytery, and there is no other, those commonly so called having made shipwreck both of the faith and discipline once delivered to the saints.

Friday, Sept. 14. I expounded again at Islington; but the house being too small for the company I stood in the garden, and showed them how vainly they trusted to baptism for salvation unless they were holy of heart, without which their circumcision was actually become uncircumcision. Afterwards I went to Fetter Lane, where [I] brought down the high looks of the proud by an exposition of those words, "All things are lawful for me; but all things edify not."⁴

¹This reference is to Ralph Erskine (1685–1752), whom JW had written on Aug. 24, 1739, see *Works*, 25:680–81.

²Ralph's brother, Ebenezer Erskine (1680–1754).

³"Without accomplishing their task."

⁴See 1 Cor. 10:23.

Saturday Sept. 15. I expounded those words on which the book opened, at Lady H[ume]'s,⁵ “The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires of other things, chokes the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”⁶ At Fetter Lane I was directed to those words, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.”⁷ Many were cut to the heart both here and at Mr. [William] Exall's,⁸ where I enforced those words of our Lord, “Except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God.”⁹

Sunday 16, I preached at Moorfields to about ten thousand, and at Kennington Common to between twenty and thirty thousand, on those words, “We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this sect, we know it is everywhere spoken against.”¹⁰ At both places I described in very plain words the difference between true, old Christianity, commonly called by the new name of Methodism, and the Christianity now generally taught. Thence I went to Lambeth, where I found our congregation considerably increased, and exhorted them to cry mightily to our Lord, that he might [say] unto them, as unto the sick of the palsy, “Be of good cheer. Thy sins are forgiven thee.”¹¹ From our love-feast at Fetter Lane I went to Islington House. Sufficient for this day was the labour thereof.

Pray my love to brother Mitchell,¹² and let the leaden cistern be gone about. On Monday sennight I intend, God willing, to set out. Tuesday I hope to spend at Oxford. On Wednesday night let Jo[seph] Ellis meet me at Gloucester. Then I will lay out the three or four following days as we shall agree, if God permit. I heartily thank our brothers Westell,¹³ Oldfield, Cross,¹⁴ Haydon,¹⁵ and Wynne,¹⁶ and our sisters Deffel, Shafto, Oldfield,¹⁷ Thomas,¹⁸ Stephens, Mrs. Thomas, and Mrs. Deschamps.¹⁹ I wish any would write by Wednesday's post. Pray for us.

Adieu!

Sat. night [i.e. Sept. 22.]. Mrs. Exall's.

⁵The full surname is given in the diary. Of several possibilities, the most likely seems to be Elizabeth (formerly Pettis), who in 1737 married Alexander Hume (1708–60), the second son of the 2nd Earl of Marchmont, Sir Alexander Hume (1675–1740).

⁶See Mark 4:19.

⁷John 4:16.

⁸William Exall, of Islington, was a founding member of the society at Fetter Lane in 1738.

⁹See John 3:3.

¹⁰Acts 28:22.

¹¹See Matt. 9:2.

¹²Thomas Mitchell, an early member of the society in Bristol; see JW to James Hutton, Apr. 16, 1739, *Works*, 25:631.

¹³Thomas Westell (c. 1719–94), currently apprenticing as a joiner in Bristol, became one of JW's first traveling preachers in 1741.

¹⁴Richard Cross was an apprentice upholsterer in Bristol and member of the society.

¹⁵John Haydon, a weaver, was drawn into the Methodist movement in Bristol in May 1739; see JW, *Journal* (May 2, 1739), *Works*, 19:54.

¹⁶Thomas Oldfield and William Wynne, currently in the Bristol society, would be part of a Calvinist splinter the following year; see John Cennick to JW, Aug. 16, 1740.

¹⁷Mary (Franklin) Oldfield, wife of Thomas.

¹⁸Margaret Thomas, who died on October 9, 1740; see CW to JW, Oct. 24, 1740.

¹⁹Jeanne (Ferru) Deschamps (1675–1740), mother of John Deschamps.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Wesley / At Mrs. Grevile / Bristol.”

Postmark: “22/SE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. Sept. 1739 / the Erskines before the Kirk.”

Source: holograph (in hand of John Purdy); MARC, DDWes 3/3.²⁰

²⁰Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:685–88.

From Samuel Wathen¹

September 28, 1739

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received your much enlivening and emulating letter,² and do not despair but that through mercy I shall be made a partaker of those blessed privileges therein described. O that Satan may never more sift and buffet me as he has hitherto done, but may I through the virtue of this prevailing faith not only prove victorious over him but also of the flesh and the world. I do, in the best manner that I can, give myself up to God and beg of him to do with me what seems best in his sight. I pray that God would show me the true nature of original as well as actual sin, and that I may feel it upon my soul, in order that I may the more earnestly cry out for a Saviour. Methinks I can see I am a very great sinner, and that I deserve eternal wrath and damnation. But I am well aware it is but too faintly and superficially. O that I may never rest satisfied, never cease hungering and thirsting, till I am filled with all the fullness of God, till Christ Jesus, the only hope of glory, is one with me and I with him. O I long to be set at work by my blessed Master, that I may labour more abundantly in his vineyard. I verily believe the devil and the world will lose their end in me. However, I pray God that they may, and I am resolved by the assistance of the Almighty to fight valiantly in my blessed Master's cause, though it may be through a sea of blood. I expect no other for my part than to be the offscouring of all things and to resist even unto the death, for I know that their spleen will be doubly increased at me. Let me entreat and beg the earnest and most importunate assistance of your prevailing prayers. And do not doubt but that God will hear and reward you. From

Your ever affectionate friend and servant,

Sam. Wathen

P.S. Pray my love to all.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Westley / in / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Sam. Wathen / Sept. 28. 1739."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/122.

¹Dr. Samuel Wathen (1720–87), a native of Stroud, was apprenticed to William Thornhill (a surgeon on Corn Street) when the Methodist revival broke out in Bristol in 1738. He emerged quickly as a leading member of the Baldwin Street society. He was presently seeking academic qualifications, would receive his MD at Aberdeen in 1752, and was granted a Licentiate of the College of Physicians in 1756. He settled in London and frequently offered care to the Wesley brothers

²This letter is not known to survive.

From Joseph Sanders¹
–A Dissenters Approbation

[Bristol?]
[c. October] 1739

Sir,

One that is a dissenter from your Church (in outward forms) came to hear you expound, and having received and experienced the love of God in his own soul, cannot but rejoice to see that love shed abroad in the hearts of others; especially when he sees that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church, is exalted above all and that gospel spirit reviving again in a church that has thus long lain asleep and depended so greatly on its own righteousness, which is and ever will be filthy rags.

I also know that whoever speaks in the cause of God to show man his hell-deserving state by nature, and his inability to get out of it without the righteousness of another (which is the Lord Jesus Christ), these people that do thus exalt the Lord shall have many enemies both in the world and from it. But, lest they should be discouraged, God says he that is for us is stronger than he that is against us (and so is Jesus), for all power is in his hand. And I, being a child of God's, rejoice with you to think that our Father is reviving his own work in this our day. O may this Spirit of God's be increasing more and more abundantly in every heart, especially yours, and all that love our Lord Jehovah in sincerity and truth. And may every one of you that expound God's word be blessed with a double portion of his Spirit, to strengthen you to go on in that good work God has called you too. And that you may be still more strengthened and comforted to go through your labour with patience, pleasure, and delight, the Almighty, which directs all our actions, guided my heart to let you know that he hears and answers all your prayers. And I doubt not but many sheep will be brought home. But this I am assured of and have experienced, that many are comforted and refreshed by your societies and the kind behaviour and disposition that is amongst you. And may the God of love increase his love and Spirit in every one of your souls. And as it is every Christian's duty to do what good he can in the world according to his ability, I send these tokens of my love to you and your brother and all the children of God; and humbly pray that the Spirit of love and meekness may reign more and more in every one of our hearts. And that every soul may be comforted and refreshed with these lines, is the earnest prayer, design, and desire of

Your unknown friend, but loving brother through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

Jos[eph] Sanders

Brethren, pray for me and my family.

God says out of the mouths of babes and sucklings I will perfect praise. O that it may be so here.

Address: "For / Mr. Charles Westley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Jos. Saunders a Dissenter's Approbation / 1739."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/125.²

¹The identity of Sanders is uncertain, beyond the mention that he is a Dissenter. One good possibility is Joseph Sanders (b. 1696), a Quaker in Bristol, who worked as a hooper. Since CW's ministry in Bristol began only in Aug. 1739, we suggest a date of c. Oct. for this letter.

²For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Joseph Williams

Kidderminster
October 17, 1739

Reverend and Dear Mr. Wesley,

Sir, amidst the loud, the ignorant, and malignant clamours raised up and down against the Methodists, and the floods of scorn and contumely from various quarters poured out upon them, I have a mind, if my design meet with your and your brother's approbation, to bear my testimony for them by publishing in the *Gentleman's Magazine* the letter written above.¹ If you approve it not, I shall submit entirely to your judgment. If otherwise, then I submit it to your correction; to expunge, alter, or add as you shall think proper. And in that case you may either send Mr. Cave,² at St. John's Gate, London, a copy directly from Bristol, or through my hands, as you shall judge most convenient.

I forgot, at parting, to renew my humble request to you for a line at your convenience, which I now humbly desire, to let me know when we may expect you or Mr. John Wesley here. I have provided you a field larger than any bowling-green, and enclosed with a high wall, to preach in. And [I] cannot but greatly hope, if you could continue awhile with us, your and our Lord might reap a plentiful harvest here and hereabout, and that a wide and effectual door would be opened to you. But you may be sure of many adversaries, and none more violent than our vicar.

The more I have thought of your definition of justifying faith, which is what I humbly trust God have given me, the more I am inclined to believe it right—though different from what I have been all along taught. And I want to be furnished with further proofs and arguments for it, as it is what meets with a general opposition from those good people I have mentioned it to. Yet two or three seem to give in to it. I therefore beg of you, as soon as you have leisure, to be a little particular on that head; which will, I hope, turn to good account, and more and more endear you to, dear sir,

Your much obliged servant and unworthy brother in Christ,

Joseph Williams

P.S. I dearly love your religious society. My heart is knit to them. And my prayers are daily for you and for them, that they may abound more and more in every grace, in every good word and work, and that “the God of hope would fill them with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.”³

Address: “To the Revd. Mr Chas. Wesley / at Mrs Grevil's / Grocer in Wine Street / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “N.B. Oct. 19. 1739 / Jos. Williams's / Vindication of Methodists.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/92.⁴

¹I.e., the letter appended to this one in this transcription. The account never appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, perhaps because CW was not comfortable with its laudatory tone.

²Edward Cave (1691–1754), editor of *Gentleman's Magazine*.

³Cf. Rom. 15:13.

⁴A transcription was published in *WMM* 51 (1828): 385–86.

[Enclosed Letter to *Gentleman's Magazine*]

Sir,

Amidst the diversity of opinions concerning the Methodists, and the various reflections made on their doctrine and practice, it is not the easiest thing in the world to come to a true knowledge of them. And so forcible a bias do education and prejudice set on the mind in favour of the religious tenets we first imbibe that it requires no small measure of impartiality, of humility, of disinterested love of truth, to enable us to judge coolly and equitably of whatever opinion contradicts or crosses that which we have long approved and embraced. If we are esteemed discerning and judicious persons (and no doubt we esteem ourselves such), and have numbers of wise and good men on our side, the difficulty increases upon us; and perhaps upon none so much as upon the divines and dignitaries of the Church. But I hope it will be allowed by the wise and good Christians, of whatever order or degree, that the holy Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments are the only infallible test of every point of doctrine, and of every action. “To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”⁵ Let this then be granted, and let both the doctrine and practice of the Methodists be fairly examined by that sacred rule; and be either approved or condemned, according as they are found to agree, or not agree, thereto.

As for my own part, when I first heard of the rise of the Methodists I considered them (if I may be said to have considered them at all) as an *ignis fatuus*⁶—a false or at least fallacious light, and of short continuance—and as such, not worthy of my regard. As repeated and still more particular accounts reached my ear, my attention to them began to be a little awakened, but not yet enough to engage my serious consideration. It is now somewhat more than a twelvemonth since Mr. Whitefield's discourse upon regeneration, or the new birth, accidentally fell into my hands.⁷ I gave it a hasty reading, and was thereby convinced of the goodness of the man's design. He seemed to discover a warm and real concern for the salvation of precious souls. His reasoning I thought clear and strong, and undeniably evincing that the most unblameable and inoffensive conversation in the sight of men, unless the natural corruption of the heart be subdued, and the very bent and bias of the will changed from a prevailing love of this world to a prevailing love of God and holiness, cannot entitle us to the kingdom of heaven. One or two of his *Journals* next fell into my hands, which surprised me. I wished he had concealed some things he thought proper to publish. But I was still more convinced of the piety and zeal both of the man and the minister, and of his extensive usefulness. However, by reason of the many clamours raised against them, and numberless reports spread about to their prejudice, my judgment on their method of proceeding was still held in a kind of suspense. I inquired of everybody I met with, but their accounts and opinions were so various that they afforded me but little satisfaction.

I often wished for an opportunity of hearing them, and of acquainting myself more thoroughly with their doctrine and ways, that I might the better be enabled to judge for myself. But none offered till the other day, that my business led me down to Bristol. My stay there was very short. However, hearing that Mr. Charles Wesley would preach in the afternoon, just out of the city, I got a guide and went to hear him.⁸ I found him standing upon a table, in an erect posture, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven in prayer, surrounded with, I guess, more than a thousand people; some few of them persons of fashion, both men and women, but most of them of the lower rank of mankind. I know not how long he had been

⁵Isa. 8:20.

⁶A marsh light, or will-o'-the-wisp.

⁷George Whitefield, *A Sermon on Regeneration* (1739).

⁸The text of CW's sermon and his exposition later that evening of John 12 indicate that Williams was attending the preaching at the Bowling Green outside Bristol that CW records in his *Manuscript Journal* on Sunday, Oct. 7, 1739.

engaged in the duty before I came, but he continued therein, after my coming, scarce a quarter of an hour—during which time he prayed with uncommon fervency, fluency, and variety of proper expression. He then preached about an hour, from 2 Corinthians 5:17–21, in such a manner as I have seldom if ever heard any minister preach: i.e., though I have heard many a finer sermon, according to the common taste, yet I have scarce ever heard any minister discover such evident signs of a most vehement desire, or labour so earnestly, to convince his hearers that they were all by nature in a state of enmity against God, consequently in a damnable state and needed reconciliation to God; that God is willing to be reconciled to all, even the worst of sinners, and for that end hath laid all our sin on Christ, and Christ hath borne the punishment due to our sins in our nature and stead; that, on the other hand, the righteousness and merits of Christ are imputed to as many as believe on him; that it is faith alone, exclusive entirely of any works of ours, which applies to us the righteousness of Christ and justifies us in the sight of God; that none are excluded but those who refuse to come to him as lost, undone, yea as damned sinners, and trust in him alone—that is, in his meritorious righteousness and atoning sacrifice—for pardon and salvation. These points he supported all along as he went on with many texts of scripture, which he explained and illustrated; and then freely invited all, even the chief of sinners, and used a great variety of the most moving arguments and exhortations in order to persuade, allure, instigate, and, if possible, compel them all to come to Christ, and believe in him for pardon and salvation. Nor did he fail to inform them thoroughly how ineffectual their faith would be to justify them in the sight of God, unless it wrought by love, purified their hearts, and reformed their lives. For though he cautioned them with the utmost care not to attribute any merit to their own performances, nor in the least degree rest upon any works of their own, yet at the same time he apprised them that their faith is but a dead faith if it be not operative and productive of good works, even all the good in their power.

Now, let any man show me in what respect this doctrine differs from the doctrine set forth in the Articles of our Church, or in the gospel of Christ; and wherein their preaching this and such like doctrine in fields or commons, or wherever people are met together to hear, transgresses the solemn charge given by St. Paul to Timothy, in which he does, as it were, conjure him to “preach the word,” to “be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.”⁹ If the Articles of our Church do not contain the true doctrine of the gospel, why is every Christian minister required to subscribe to them? But if they do, why are our clergy so generally, so notoriously, departed from them? Is it not lying both to God and men? And why is so loud an outcry raised against those who preach up that, and no other doctrine?

Afterwards I waited on Mr. Wesley, asked him many questions, and received much satisfaction from his answers. I then went with him to a religious society, which met about seven in the evening, and found the place so thronged that it was with very great difficulty we got to the centre of it, where was a convenient place provided for him either to stand or sit. When we came to them, they were singing a hymn, but ceased on Mr. Wesley’s mounting the rostrum. He first prayed, then expounded part of the twelfth chapter of St. John’s Gospel, then sung a hymn, then proceeded awhile in the exposition, then sung another hymn, then prayed over more than twenty bills which were given up by the society respecting their spiritual concerns, and concluded with the usual benediction. But never did I hear such praying, or such singing—never did I see and hear such evident marks of fervency of spirit in the service of God—as in that society. At the close of every single petition a serious “Amen,” like a rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole society. And their singing was not only the most harmonious and delightful I ever heard, but, as Mr. Whitefield writes in his journals, they “sang lustily, and with a good courage.” I never so well understood the meaning of that expression before. Indeed, they seemed to sing with melody in their hearts. It is impossible for any man to try another’s heart. Neither would I dare to invade the divine prerogative. But this I will venture to say, such evident marks of a lively, genuine devotion in any part of religious worship I never was witness to in any place, or on any occasion. If there be such a thing

⁹2 Tim. 4:2.

as heavenly music upon the earth, I heard it there. If there be such an enjoyment, such an attainment, as that of a heaven upon earth, numbers in that society seemed to possess it. As for my own part, I do not remember my heart to have been so elevated in prayer and praise, either in collegiate, parochial, or private worship, as it was there and then.

I found also, upon inquiry, that great numbers in Bristol, by attending the religious ministrations of Mr. Whitefield and the Wesleys, have been reformed from a vicious course—who now, without neglecting their necessary employments (as has been invidiously suggested), make religion their principal concern. And particularly that the case is remarkably thus with many of the colliers in Kingswood, whose wickedness a few years since was notorious. If therefore any inquire, as Nathanael, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Can any good come out of Methodism? I only answer, as Philip, “Come and see.”¹⁰

Yours,

J. S.¹¹

Source: holograph (sent to CW); MARC, DDP_r 1/92.¹²

¹⁰See John 1:46.

¹¹The “S” is clear; likely intended to disguise a bit Williams’s identity.

¹²Transcription published in *WMM* 51 (1828): 383–85.

From the Rev. John Gambold

Stanton Harcourt
October 28, 1739

Dear Sir,

Mr. Richardson¹ acquaints me there is a moneo² for you to respond in divinity disputations the 3rd of December,³ John Free and Mr. Robinson opposing.⁴ He thinks the question must be published the 1st of November. If you have anything to do in that, your notice is very short.

I should oftener write to you and your brother, but that I fear the letter might fall into other hands, especially if you should happen to be absent. And I should perhaps propose some scuples or queries that would not be convenient for others to see.

I am very languid and lazy. Yet I adhere to the doctrine of justification by faith, and recommend it to my neighbours. Though I have very little light, and less zeal, and feel no impressions like a work of the Spirit, but a general benevolence to mankind, which in some cool philosophical way I have had for some time.

I have some thought of writing, if I can, a small treatise on justification for the press, if it may be accepted there. The scriptural proof of it has been managed, and the most Christian handling of it exemplified (and still may it be) by you and my other friends. I think to attempt what you will scarce descend to, a defence and recommendation of it to the fine moralists of the age, upon their own taste—the dying what I can to please and pacify them in the manner, but insisting on the full truth of the doctrine. Something of this kind may have its use. At least, if I wish anything, it must be *meo modo et ad mei moduli homines*.⁵ I really think that my design executed by an abler hand might have a good effect, considering the genius of the age, to remove the grand prejudices of it and smooth and open a passage for the gospel.

My poor sister is very weak in body, and is very desirous at present to go to Holt, to use the waters there.⁶ Mr. [William] Morgan, I think, used them without success. I believe if her mind does not alter, and nothing hinders, she will try (if able, for she is very infirm) to go there soon. She would be glad, if she could, to know your opinion of the matters.

I am, dear sir,

Your much obliged, unworthy brother and servant,

J Gambold

*plura coram.*⁷

¹William Richardson (1698–1775), was current Master of Emmanuel College (*ODNB*).

²*OED*: “A reminder, a warning; specifically at Oxford University.”

³CW was considering seeking the BD degrees at Oxford (a degree subsequent to the MA, requiring seven years in that rank—which CW had earned in 1733). Participation in such disputations was an expectation in this process.

⁴John Free (b. 1711) matriculated Christ Church, Oxford in 1727, taking BA in 1730, MA in 1733, BD and DD in 1744. Matthew Robinson (1713–45) matriculated Lincoln College in 1730 and was a student of JW. He received his BA in 1734 and his MA in 1737.

⁵“In my way and within my human limits.”

⁶Martha Gambold (1713–41) lived with her brother in Stanton Harcourt.

⁷“More in person.”

Address: “For / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mrs Grevil’s Grocer / in Wine Street / Bristol.”

Postmark: “Oxford.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Oct. 28. 39 / Gambol / proposing to write / on justification.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/62.

From James Hutton

November 6, 1739

Dear Charles,

I received your dear letter.¹ I bear you record you have long time wished to be retired at Oxford, and I believe I have many times hindered you myself from going thither.² I will not anymore pretend to lead or guide others. But this I know, that if you give yourself over to Jesus Christ, having no idol in your heart, he will infallibly direct you whether you shall retire, and when, and how. He did never pass by a blind man when upon the earth that cried to him, and he never would receive those that thought they saw.

My heart is much knit to you and I cannot but love you tenderly. I wish you to be a spirit of the first order in self-abasement and in glory. I will lay myself with you at the feet of Christ. I will meet you there, though at this distance from you, and we will together hear his gracious words as when he was on the earth. And we will be given to him and be led by him, and you will then think more with tender compassion on

Your most affectionate poor brother,

J. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Chas Wesley / at Mrs. Greville's Groc / in Wine Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "6/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "J. Hutton / Nov. 6. 1739 / simple & faithful."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/69.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²CW had taken the call to participate in Divinity Disputations (mentioned in the prior letter from John Gambold), as a "plain call" to return to his life at Oxford University; see MS Journal, Nov. 2, 1739. Several factors, including the death of Samuel Wesley Jr. on Nov. 6 altered that resolve.

From Benjamin Seward

Bengworth
November 10, 1739

My Dear and Honoured Brother,

You letter, which gave me the expectation of seeing you here, gave me and our little flock much satisfaction.¹ We much longed for a second benefit from your ministry, but were disappointed of our present hopes by your summons to Oxford.² I trust nevertheless that it will not be long before you or your dear brother, or both, may impart to us some further spiritual blessings.

We meet constantly and, blessed by God, keep together, notwithstanding we are laughed [at] in scorn by many. But alas I am very weak, and more fit to be fed as a babe than to feed and instruct others. Therefore should [I] rejoice to see you again, as soon as may be.

[I] had a sweet letter some time ago from cozling Peggy,³ wherein she blesses God for his wonderful mercies in not only calling her to a lively faith in Christ, but also for working on the heart of him who, out of a carnal view, sought her to be his wife, and knitting them together in one spiritual mind in Christ. And sure she says they cannot enough praise him for his goodness to them, the unworthiest of all sinners. Her other friends (according to the flesh) continue to oppose, but she trusts that the same God which gave her her dear Mr. Smith will give her her dear mother also.

Our poor servant lad is fallen off again and left us.⁴ But I trust not totally [fallen], for he was sensible of and acknowledged his sin and folly, but had an inclination to go to London. He promised me to attend the societies there, and I hope will in time be wrought into a true obedience of faith.

May the almighty God give you a mouth of wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist, and may the kingdom of Jesus Christ come with power into the hearts of your learned auditory and root out the idolatry that so much reigns in the children of disobedience. How should I rejoice to hear that by the foolishness of preaching many were made wise unto salvation. My weak desire and prayer to God is that he would send forth more labourers into his harvest. Build thou the walls of Jerusalem, O God! Speak the word only, and great shall be the company of the preachers.

Remember me to your dear brother when you write; also to dear brother [Francis] Okeley.⁵ Salute all the brethren with you.

Forgive me not writing before. The expectation of seeing you much sooner caused me to defer it. Cousin Peggy desired to be remembered to her spiritual father in Christ; also to dear brother Okeley, whose letter gave her great comfort. Forget me not in your prayers. I am exceeding weak and have great reason to lament my sloth that I have not been more active in my dear Redeemer's service; but trust my love, though languid, is yet in some degree real. O that I might live wholly to him! And that my will might be offered up as a whole burnt offering to the will of God! Pray that if there be any root of bitterness remaining in me it may be discovered and that I may not be deceived in any wise in the important point of salvation.

Farewell my dear brother.

Yours sincerely,

B. S.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²See John Gambold to CW, Oct. 28, 1739.

³Margaret Seward/Sheward (1710–85) of London. "Cozling" was an endearing form of cousin.

⁴His name was Robin; see CW, MS Journal, Aug. 22, 1739.

⁵Seward again spells "Oakley."

Let me hear from you soon.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Westley / Master of Arts at Christ / Church / Oxford.”

Endorsement: by CW, “ Benj. Seward / friendly & zealous / Nov. 10. 1739.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP# 1/98.

From Amos Matthews¹

Tiverton
November 14, 1739

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I should have written you immediately on your dear brother's death,² had I been able of, which I hope you'll be satisfied when you have read this. However I desired Mr. Ellison to do it,³ which he assured me he did. But by what I perceive by your dear sister [Ursula], it is not come to your home.

Your brother, and my dear friend (for so you are sensible he was to me), on Monday, the 5th of November went to bed, as he thought, as well as he had been for some time before. He was seized about three o'clock in the morning very ill, when your sister immediately sent for Mr. Norman, and ordered the servant to call me. Mr. Norman came as quick as he could possible, but said as soon as he saw him that he could not get over it, but would die in a few hours. He was not able to take in anything, nor able to speak to us, only yes or no to a question asked him; and that did not last half an hour. I never parted from his bedside till he expired, which was about 7:00 the same morning. With a great deal of difficulty we persuaded your dear sister to leave the room before he died, fearing the consequence as to her if she should be present at that dismal hour, though I doubt not but a happy one to him. After much entreaty we prevailed on her, when I had promised not to move from him. I trembled to think how she would bear up, knowing the sincere affection and love she had for him, and no one in the house she could trust or confide in but myself, so that I leave you to judge what trouble I have had (though I think, and ever shall think, that I cannot do too much for her, or any of the family). She [is] not capable of anything, in a manner overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. But, blessed be God, he hath heard and answered prayer on her behalf, and in a great measure calmed her spirit, though she has not been out of her chamber yet, nor have I been out of the house two hours since being obliged to order the affairs of the whole family—which I shall readily do, and ten times more if it were in [my] power to serve her. She is an object of prayer and hope. You will never forget her there. She will write you herself the dreadful [news] as soon as she is able.

Your brother was buried Monday last, in the afternoon, according to his desire. He is gone to reap the fruits of his labour, and I doubt not but he is a glorious saint in heaven. I pray God grant that we may imitate him in all his virtues, and be prepared to follow. I should enlarge, my dear friend, much more, but I have not time; for which reason I hope you will excuse him who is under the greatest obligations to be, and really is, with the greatest sincerity, dear sir,

Yours in all things that I am able,

Amos Matthews

Endorsement: by CW, "N.B. Nov. 14. 1739 / Mr Matthews Acct of / my Brother's Death / Nov. 7."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWES 1/16.

¹Amos Matthews was a merchant in Tiverton, and friend of Samuel and Ursula Wesley.

²Samuel Wesley Jr. died on Nov. 6, 1739 in Tiverton.

³John Ellison, their nephew, currently studying at Tiverton.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[London]
November 29, 1739

Dear Charles,

Upon the first hearing of your brother's death,¹ I did immediately acquiesce in the will of God without the least reluctance. Only I somewhat marvelled that Jacky did not inform me of it before he left me, since he knew thereof. But he was unacquainted with the manner of God's dealing with me in extraordinary cases. Which indeed is no wonder, for though I have so often experienced his infinite power and mercy in my support and inward calmness of spirit when the trial would otherwise have been too strong for me, yet his ways of working are to myself incomprehensible and ineffable!

Your brother was exceeding dear to me in his life, and perhaps I've erred in loving him too well. I once thought it impossible for me to bear his loss, but none knows what they can bear till they are tried. As your good old grandfather² often used to say, "That's an affliction, that God makes an affliction." For surely the manifestation of his presence and favour is more than an adequate support under any suffering whatever. But if he withhold his consolations and hide his face from us, the least suffering is intolerable. But blessed and adored be his holy name, it hath not been so with me, though I am infinitely unworthy of the least of all his mercies! I rejoice in having a comfortable hope of my dear son's salvation. He is now at rest and would not return to earth to gain the world. Why then should I mourn? He hath reached the haven before me, but I shall soon follow him. He must not return to me, but I shall go to him, never to part more.

I thank you for your care of my temporal affairs. It was natural to think that I should be troubled for my dear son's death on that account, because such a considerable part of my support was cut off. But to say the truth, I've never had one anxious thought of such matters. For it came immediately into my mind that God by my child's loss had called me to a firmer dependence on himself. That, though my son was good, he was not my God—and that now our heavenly father seemed to have taken my cause more immediately into his own hand; and therefore, even against hope, I believed in hope that I should never suffer more.

I can't write much, being but weak. I've not been down stairs above ten weeks, though better than I was lately. Pray give my kind love and blessing to my daughter and Philly.³ I pray God to support and provide for her.

[...⁴] I doubt my dear you have been unmindful in this thing.⁵

Endorsement: by CW, "Nov. 29, 1739. / My Mother on my Br[other]'s Death."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/14.⁶

¹Samuel Jr. died on November 6, 1739.

²Rev. Samuel Annesley, Susanna's father.

³I.e., to Samuel Jr's wife and daughter.

⁴Three lines beginning a new paragraph follow, but are crossed out. The first two words are "Your sister"; the second is probably "Emily", but the rest is indecipherable.

⁵The concluding salutation and signature were likely on a final page that is missing.

⁶Transcription published in Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 179–80.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[London]
December 27, 1739

My dear Charles,

You cannot more desire to see me than I do to see you. Indeed, your brother (whom henceforward I shall call “son Wesley,” since my dear Sam is gone home) hath done more, I think, than could be expected to supply temporal wants. But though they were not small, and relief was welcome, yet that was not the principal thing which I desired. I am in a state of great temptation and want to talk with you about many things. I need your direction and instruction how to act in the present situation, particularly in relation to my very disagreeable companion, who does not scruple to declare that she hates spiritual people and looks upon them as the worst people in the world. If she hath talked at Mr. [Henry] Pier’s and among other true Christians as to me, no wonder that they showed a dislike of her company. Those with whom I lodge are an excellent people and would be glad to converse with me on spiritual subjects, but they are discouraged from coming to me (and to them I cannot go) by her either leaving the room as soon as they enter, or by something she says that discovers her aversion from them. Other matters I would speak with you about concerning my worldly affairs, but these are comparatively of little moment. Yet still they are by no means to be neglected. My dear son [John] Wesley hath just been with me and much revived my spirits. Indeed, I’ve often found that he never speaks in my hearing without my receiving some spiritual benefit. But his visits are seldom and short, for which I never blame him, because I know he is well employed and, blessed be God, hath great success in his ministry.

But my dear Charles, still I want either him or you, for indeed in the most literal sense I am become a little child and want continual succour. “As Iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.”¹ I feel much comfort and support from religious conference when I can obtain it. Formerly, I rejoiced in the absence of company and found the less I enjoyed of creature comforts (be not offended at the expression) the more I had from God. But alas, I am fallen from that spiritual converse I once enjoyed, and why is it so? Because I wanted faith. God is an omnipresent, unchangeable good, “in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”² The fault is in myself, and I attribute all mistakes in judgement, all errors in practice to want of faith in the blessed Jesus. Oh, my dear, when I consider the dignity of his person! The perfection of his purity! The greatness of his sufferings! But above all his boundless love! I am astonished and utterly confounded. I am lost in thoughts. I fall into nothing before him. Oh how inexcusable is that person which hath knowledge of these things, and yet remains poor and low in faith and love. I speak as one guilty in this matter.

You desired me to write to you,³ and I’ve a great desire to do it. But from the date hereof I have been prevented finishing my letter. I complained I had none to converse with me of spiritual things. but for these several days I’ve had the conversation of many good Christians that have refreshed in some measure my fainting spirits. And though they hindered my writing, yet it was pleasing and, I hope, not an unprofitable interruption that they gave me. I hope we shall shortly speak face to face, and I shall then, if God permit, impart my thoughts more fully. But then, alas, when you come your brother leaves me. Yet that is the will of God, in whose blessed service ye are engaged, who hath hitherto blessed your labours and preserved your persons. That he may continue so to prosper your work and protect ye both from evil—and give ye strength and courage to preach the true gospel in opposition to the united powers of evil men and evil angels, is the hearty prayer of, my dear Charles,

Thy loving mother,

¹Prov. 27:17.

²Jas. 1:17.

³CW’s letter expressing this desire is not known to survive.

S. W.

I wish you a happy year—and many, very many such

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr Wesley / at Mrs Grevill’s Grocer / in / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Dec. 27, 1739 / My mother / wanting faith.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/10.⁴

⁴Transcription published in Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 180–81.

1740

From Katherine Gilbert

[Bristol?]

1740

Reverend Sir,

With humility I make bold to write these lines unto you, it being my grief of heart which is the real cause, upon the account of your leaving us in this place, your great work which the Lord Jesus has done for me and in me through the operations of the Holy Spirit under your ministry, that I am constrained through love to acknowledge what the Lord hath done for my soul, for I am plucked as a firebrand out of the fire.

God [had] convinced me of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment before the Lord sent you and your worthy brother amongst us. I thought myself something but I can now see what I am by nature and deserve nothing but damnation. I knew nothing of faith alone in Christ, nor the operations of the Holy Ghost, nor what it was to be born of God and to become as a little child, a new creature in Christ Jesus. I was ignorantly led and taught. My soul longeth to become more and more in purity of heart and to receive greater measure of the love of God shed abroad in my heart. I humbly desire your prayers at the throne of grace that God in Christ would perfect and complete my salvation. I am not left without reproaches or threatenings by the children of the world for the word's sake. But I hope I am, through Christ, overcoming this world. I am not moved at their doings towards me, as the contempt cast upon God's word and children.

May the Lord our God, even Christ Jesus, fill you more and more with his Spirit and crown your ministry wherever you go with thousands of seals in the conversion of my guilty brethren. So continually prayeth,

Your handmaid in the Lord,

Katharine Gilbert

Endorsement: by CW, "Cath. Gilbert / 1740 / converted."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/6.¹

¹For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. Benjamin Ingham

[Ossett, Yorkshire?]
[1740]

I received yours, wherein you desire a particular account of the work of God amongst us.² Brother Töltschig, Telchig can inform you by word of mouth of most things.³ The clergy are in general against us, and some bitterly. They both speak and preach against us. Not one of them will come to see me, though I was intimate with several of them. Some of them say in the pulpit that I am led by the devil; others, that I am deluded. Some cannot tell what to think. They threatened persecution for a while, till they found it was to no purpose. A neighbouring justice of the peace ordered a constable to discharge me twice, but he did not execute his orders, and the justice says we are above his hands, and his wife has come several times to hear me.

Lies and calumnies and slanders are raised and spread continually. Some say we are Spaniards, Jesuits, etc.; that we are the cause of the war, of the wet season last summer; and whatever happens wrong, some say we are the cause of it. They say of our private meetings that we are carrying on some plot or design. And that we whore together; that I lie with young women when they come to speak with me; and a great deal more than I hear of.

I know of no instance in these parts of anyone being awakened, receiving remission sins, and the full assurance of faith all at once. Persons sometimes have great joy when they are awakened, but [it] is neither forgiveness of sins nor the assurance of faith, but it is given to draw them forward. Some souls are terrified greatly when they are first awakened, and maybe within a few days or week receive great joy and are in a flaming zeal; but neither is yet forgiveness of sin nor assurance of faith. Others are in great earnestness, and have great joy for half a year, or a year; but neither is the forgiveness of sins nor assurance of faith, but it is the good gift of God to help them forward in the way to heaven. Before anyone can receive remission of sin, he must first be convinced of sin—not only of his gross outward sins but of the whole body of sin that is in him, which the Scriptures call “unbelief.” That is a departing from God in every respect. This conviction of sin begets a godly sorrow or mourning, which brings the soul very low and makes it poor indeed. And when God sees the heart sufficiently broken and contrite, then he pardons the person, the fruit of which pardon or justification is peace, sometimes ushered in with great joy, and sometimes joy does not come till a good while after. However, the heart of the person is easy and at rest, calmly and quietly trusting in the Lord Jesus.

This peace and joy, to be sure, is a seal or fruit of the Spirit. But it does not [free] wholly from doubts and fears, at least in temptations, therefore it is not the seal of the Spirit or the full assurance of faith, for when anyone has got that he can hardly doubt. But this, my brother, is a precious gift. It is a pearl of great price. A person must be very humble, they must know themselves, before the Lord will give it to them. Yet all may attain it, if they do but go forward. When a person has it, he knows he has it, and all the world cannot make him doubt it. For if we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater. Some young converts take the first joys to be assurance, but they will find themselves deceived afterwards. We need not tell anyone that he is born again. When he is really so, and the Spirit witnesseth it, he will know it, though he cannot read a letter.

The most dangerous time in the Christian race seems to be when a person receives forgiveness of sins, especially if he is filled with great joy and of a long continuance. Indeed, all states of great joy are

²This letter to Ingham is not known to survive. Ingham was currently ministering in his native Ossett and surrounding areas in Yorkshire.

³Rev. Johann Töltschig (1703–64), a German Moravian, now ministering in England (although he was not ordained until 1742). See *DEB*, 1111–12. Ingham spelled “Telchig.”

dangerous if not humbly received. If persons have not now a guide, or are not guidable, its ten to one but they run into error and bypaths. Many souls miscarry here and never get further in their spiritual progress. They run on till all their joy is spent, and then they lose themselves and are all in confusion. I have met with several persons with whom it has been thus, and how to help them I know not. They do not get forward. I believe indeed they will be saved, yet their degree of glory will be low. They are but in the first state of the new birth.

You ask what are the marks of a person that is justified but not sealed? I cannot give you any certain infallible marks. But a person to whom the Lord has given the gift of discerning will tell, and without this gift we shall never be able to know surely. However, such persons are meek, simple, child-like. They have doubts and fears within. They are in a wilderness state. In this state they are to be kept still and quiet, to search more deeply into their hearts, so that they may become more and more poor in spirit or humble. They are likewise now to be taught wholly to depend upon Christ. By all means keep them from confusion. If they come into confusion, as they are very apt to do, they will receive inconceivable damage. But if they continue still meek and gentle, searching into their hearts and depending upon Christ, they will find their hearts to be sweetly drawn after Christ. They will begin to loath and abhor sin, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness. They will get strength daily. Christ will begin to manifest himself by degree, from strength to strength, till they become strong. And then they will begin to see things clearly and to understand what the Lord has done for them. So by degrees they will come to have the assurance of faith.

You ask whether in this intermediate state they are children of wrath or heirs of the promises? Without doubt they are the children of God. They are in a state of salvation. A child may be heir to an estate before it can speak or knows what an estate is. So we may be heirs of heaven before we know it or are sure of it. However, the assurance of faith is to be sought after. It may be attained. It will be given to all that go forward; but to none till they know themselves. We must first be humble and poor in spirit. We must be deeply so. We must have a constant, fixed, abiding feeling sense of our own weakness, unworthiness, corruption, sin, and misery. This it is to be a poor sinner.

If I was to be with you, I could explain things more clearly. But I am a novice, a beginner, a babe in Christ. If you go among the Brethren, they are good guides. But yet after all we must be taught of God, and have experience in our own hearts, or else it will not do.

May the Spirit of truth lead us into all truth.

B. H. [sic.]

Endorsement: by CW, “1740 Benj. Ingham / of the Newly Justified.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/50.

From Ann Martin

[Bristol]
[1740]

Ambassador of Christ and Well Beloved in the Lord,

Please to accept these from the simplicity of my heart, as a little child begging to speak plain. The Lord is very gracious to me. Oh I feel the fire of his love in my heart. Oh Lord how shall I express thy goodness who am unworthy of the least of thy mercies, but through the Son of thy love. Oh dear sir, join with me in prayers to praise the Lamb that sits upon the throne for ever and ever. Oh my dear Saviour, thou art now pleading to thy Father for me, thou art presenting my soul before thy Father. Oh glory be to thee, O God of love, who has brought me out of Egypt and led me through the wilderness to thy promised land. I begin to taste the fruits and rejoice in the hope of that glory which shall be revealed when Christ, which is my life, shall appear, when I shall behold the glory of thy Father. Oh thou art in the Father and the Father in thee. O holy Father, glorify thy Son for thou hast searched my heart and tried my spirit. Here in me thy Spirit cries. O Lord and heavenly Father, in me perform thy will, for in thee is my trust, dear Saviour.

The Lord was pleased to use Mr. Whitefield as the first instrument in drawing me to the Son of his love, but you I must own as my spiritual father. I was begott[en] to a lively hope in Christ Jesus my Lord before you first went to Bristol. First I was drawn to use the ordinances but I was afraid, I thought I was not fit. I came to ask your advice, you told I might expect to receive faith. I thought it was strange talk to me for I thought I loved religion better than ever. I went away from you very heavy and soon began to grieve that I grieved no more. I was reading when my heart was filled with joy, but soon I found it was deceitful, fearing I should deny the Lord and be worse than I was before. But the Lord gave me power to cry out, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon me.”¹ Sometimes I was dead and cold in prayer. I thought I could only lay before the Lord till he gave me power. Oh Lord make us all as clay in thy hands. Satan was nigh but Christ was nigher. I felt his Spirit interceding with groanings that cannot be uttered. Oh it is a good but painful fight. I was ready to say, “Father if this cup might pass from me, but thy will be done.”² In prayer I received the Spirit of adoption crying, “Abba, Father.”³

I had not yet seen the Lord the last time I heard you at Mr. Bray’s, but I had a greater gift, more than any before. The power of the most highest overshadowed me. I thought for some time I stood still and was the same, but glory be to the Lord, I feel I am grown in grace and feel the Lord always in my heart, waiting till faith to sight be changed, and I behold thy glory. O holy Father, as in a glass I seem to see the glimpse. Oh the Son of righteousness is risen with healings in his wings. Oh King of glory shine with full heat. He that shall come will come when patience has had his perfect work.

Our sister Mary Francis joins with me in duty to you and love to all our brothers and sisters in the Lord for ever and ever. Amen. The Lord has brought her out of darkness into the marvellous light and out of the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, “Sing we now to God above, praise eternal as his love.”⁴

Dear sir, we should be glad to hear from you if you will please to write to us. Though absent in body, yet present in spirit I trust, for ever and ever. Amen. The Lord strengthen you and your dear brother in the inner man and fill you with the fullness of God and assist you with that wisdom which cometh from above and give you the discernment of spirit as far as is needful. Lord, take all evil from amongst us and grant that we may be all knit together in one spirit as thou and thy Father art one.

¹Mark 10:47.

²Cf. Matt. 26:39.

³Rom. 8:15.

⁴CW, “Hymn to the Trinity,” *HSP* (1740), 101.

Now to him that is able to give more than we can ask or think, be all honour, praise, might,
majesty both now and for ever. Amen. From
Your unworthy sister in Christ.

Ann Martin

My dear brothers and sisters let me beseech you by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus that you hold fast that you have attained to. Still forgetting the things behind, press forwards towards the mark of your high calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. What he said unto one he said to all, “watch and pray lest you enter into temptation.”⁵ Take care of evil speaking and judging one another, but look unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his people. Amen.

Let the fruits of grace abound,
Let in us thy bowels sound,
Mutual love the token be,
That we Oh Christ belong to thee.
We for Christ our master stand,
Lights in a benighted land,
We our dying Lord confess,
We are Jesus witnesses.⁶

Address: “For the Revd. / Mr. Charles / Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Ann Martin’s Ex / perience 1740.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/4.⁷

⁵Matt. 26:41.

⁶This likely reflects an early form, being sung in worship, of CW’s five-part hymn, “The Love Feast,” published in *HSP* (1740), 181–87. It joins successively (from the published form) Part II, st. 3, ll. 1–2 (p. 183); Part IV, st. 4, ll. 3–4, (p. 185); and Part I, st. 3, ll. 5–8 (p. 182).

⁷For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Mrs. Plat¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Oxford]
[1740]

September 20th 1735 I received a present from a dear friend which was a book called *The Great Importance of Religious Life*, which when I came to open I found these words written, “Be faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life.”² When I had considered with myself my past life and the state I was in, then it made me cry out with the trembling jailor, “What must I do to be saved?³ Oh who can dwell with everlasting burnings?” At which, I was astonished to think what I had been doing, for I saw nothing but the sight of hell before mine eyes, which brought me almost into despair.

My friends being called from me by the will of our heavenly Father to preach unto the unconverted,⁴ I was left in a melancholy state; not considering that I had a gracious Saviour that had spared me in all my sins and hath promised to forgive me if I would but forsake my wicked ways and turn unto my Saviour. Which made me to consider what Solomon says, that “the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, and that evil pursueth sinners.”⁵ How can anything but misery attend me who had drunk iniquity like water and gone on in [the] deadly course of sin. And I, having no power in myself to turn from my evil ways, feel it pleased my heavenly Father who had compassion on me and opened my eyes and let me see that all the threatenings in the Scriptures were due unto me; so that I looked for nothing but the wrath of the Almighty to fall upon me.

I continued in that state of life till Thursday, August the 31st, 1738. I went to hear a sermon at the Castle preached by the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley, Master Servant of Christ Church, Oxon, which struck me with such amazing thoughts of the judgment to come, when I considered how I should appear before my Maker knowing I was condemned here already; which made my very bones and flesh to tremble and my heart to sink within me. I had such despairing thoughts upon me at that time so that the enemy told me it was in vain for [me] to go any more to hear their preaching or reading, for I knew very well that I was lost. Though you strove to comfort me, yet the enemy assaulted me in this manner so that I wandered from place to place seeking rest but finding none. And while I was thus musing in time of divine service, it was said unto me that if I could but touch but the hem of his garment I should be whole; but to trust in human flesh would stand me in no stead. For the Saviour of the world, that good Samaritan who can forgive me all, I willingly obeyed and went after him, not knowing whither I went. And still it was in my heart part of the day if I could but touch the hem of his garment I should be whole for I can give no other account than this how I came there. It was his heavenly will I should go to Mr. Mears’s house,⁶ though I was almost beside myself for the enemy told me that you did not desire me to come and

¹Her first name has not been determined. We know from George Whitefield to JW, Sept. 2, 1736, that she was the Mistress of a school for poor children in Oxford, that may have been established, or at least was supported by JW and the Oxford Methodists (see John Gambold’s comment in *MM* 21 [1798], 120). And we know from Elizabeth Holmes to JW, Jan. 20, 1742, that Mrs. Plat died in 1741.

²Cf. William Melmoth, *The Great Importance of Religious Life Considered* (London: Benjamin Barker, 1711), 67.

³See Acts 16:30.

⁴Likely referring to the Wesley brothers leaving Oxford for Georgia

⁵Prov. 3:33, 13:21.

⁶James Mears (1708–83) and his wife Elizabeth (Wesson) Mears (1701–83) were hosting Methodist gatherings at their home in Church Street, St. Ebbes by 1738. She was converted by JW in

your looking cold upon me gave me room to entertain those evil thoughts. For when Mr. Wesley came to read, he took no notice of me, which troubled me very much and made me think that all that the enemy said unto me to be true. For he presented nothing before mine eyes but the pit of hell, nor nothing could I behold but an angry God whom I had justly offended.⁷

Yet he was pleased to manifest himself unto me that night, the unworthiest of all creatures, for I saw not many minutes before that I hanged as it were by a thread over hell and that I saw myself in a damned state and did not but expect to be in hell. That night the room where I was appeared as dark and dismal. That bore witness with my conscience where I must have been. Had not my dear Saviour snatch[ed] me from the brink of the pit that moment I had utterly perished everlastingly. For which all praise, all glory be unto thee, O blessed Saviour, now and henceforth for evermore. Amen.

I joined in prayer with them, but nothing I can remember of the prayer. For while I was praying, my senses were taken away from me for some time, so that I thought nothing of God or my Saviour. Then did my Saviour manifest himself to me; for I felt such power came into my heart that I thought it would have rend my heart in sunder. I, not being sick at all, thought it was hard to “be born.” I gladly received it, not knowing at first what it might be for the space of fifteen minutes. Then was it replied unto me that it was the hand of the Lord that pierced into my heart and that it was the Holy Ghost that was upon me, wherein I have a sure pardon of my sins.

It is heart work to be born again. Oh the pangs of the new birth, who can express it but those that are born again. Left was this wicked enemy to leave me. But when my blessed Saviour came and demanded my heart he could not keep possession any longer, for he said, “Come out of her, thou unclean spirit, for she is mine.” O thou dearest Saviour, what return can I render unto thee for all those great and manifold blessings thou hast bestowed upon me; this in particular, thy free gift. Grant that I may walk humble before thee, ever fearing to offend thee either in thought, word or deed. And when I do fall, may I know thou art near to help me.

Oh what tongue can express what my soul do[es] feel. Now I am in Christ, there are joys flowing continually from a good and gracious Father, though bestowed upon the most unworthy of all living. Yet is he so good and gracious to give me all things and assurance of his being reconciled to me for which my heart burns with love towards him and my spirit rejoiceth in the Lord. O dearest Saviour, make me humble, meek and lowly in thy sight, that I may be a pattern to all my followers that are in Christ.

Endorsement: by CW, “[Mrs. Plat’s Account]” and “Mrs. Plat’s Justif[icatio]n / 1740.”⁸
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/10.⁹

Mar. 1739; cf. JW to George Whitefield, Mar. 16, 1739, *Works*, 25:606–07.

⁷CW, MS Journal, records that he preached on Gal. 3:22 that evening to the society, and remarks on Mrs. Plat’s reception of faith that follows.

⁸There is room to question this date, since it is a later addition by CW. We might expect an account written closer to the events recorded.

⁹For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Robert Dawson¹

[London]
April 10, 1740

O praise the Lord with me, and let us magnify his name together! Reverend Sir, I cannot forbear acquainting you how mercifully God heard your prayers for me. After you left me, I was deeply depressed, and went mourning all the evening, as I had done for months before; my prayers seldom reaching farther than sighs and groans. At waking, I offered up my first thoughts, and was presently answered with a comfortable power to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."² My heavy load is vanished. Blessed be his eternal goodness! Now can I praise him with joyful lips. O pray for me, my dear pastor, for to you and your brother I am a debtor more than I can pay. But my Lord will pay it for me. And now I *know* he has paid all my debts above, he will not forget these below.

From your young son in Christ,

Robert Dawson

Source: CW transcription in MS Journal; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 2:24.

¹Robert Dawson appears as a married man repeatedly in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46)

² Cf. Job 19:25.

From Elizabeth Bristow¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
Saturday, April 12, 1740

Reverend Sir, my Friend in Christ,

I cannot help letting you know the comfortable work the Lord began, he carries on. He hath showed me you are a minister of his own sending. He hath taken the scales off my eyes. I was lame, he hath made me walk. I was bound with chains of darkness, but he hath broken my bonds asunder. He hath plucked me as a fire brand out of hell. And shall I dare to hide this? Shall I not declare what the Lord hath done for me? God forbid. I am not ashamed to say I sat by the wayside begging, and as Jesus passed by I received my sight. I am not afraid to say a servant of Christ uncovered the roof and Jesus saw me brought unto him, poor and helpless. He looked on me and said, “Thy sins are forgiven thee, thy faith hath made thee whole.”² Oh this small grain is of matchless value. “Thy sins are forgiven thee.” Oh that word was Christ. Christ was the word that spoke it. Oh behold a miracle indeed, a greater one than if a dead body had been raised out of the earth. I was dead in trespasses and sin, and Jesus raised me. He brought me from the pit of hell into the kingdom of light.

Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to me but the spirit of God that dwelleth in me. O Jesus, make this light a continual spring of life, ever springing more and more. The Lord comforted the words to me you delivered on Friday concerning Satan’s devices. I thought much on them; that he wants no better force than to come in by way of ponderous thoughts. But the Lord is with me. He regards the low estate of his handmaid. I have some striving, but the Lord keepeth me. He that keepeth me neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. I now know I have no strength. He is my only support. I lean on him. I am as a new born babe. He gently leads me on. My Lord hath brought me into his banqueting house and his banner over me is love.

I would not have taken this liberty but I am sure you will rejoice with me. Oh may the Lord bless the world by your ministry and may there never be a want, but a constant supply of faithful labourers in his vineyard, is the humble petition of me, who am, with the sincerest thanks to the Giver of every good gift for the benefits I have received from Christ through your ministry,

Yours in Christ,

Eliz. Bristow

Sir, I beg your prayer for me that the Lord would send support to me, and that the Holy Spirit may dwell with me always—even to the end. I trust in the Lord, to have conversation with you, good sir, my chief friend in Christ. But I know you are always engaged in the work of the Lord.

Address: “To the Reverend / Mr. Charles Westley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “E. Bristow April 12. 1740 / Seal” and “El. Bristow. A seal / & witness.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/11;³ abridged in MS Journal; DDCW 10/2, 2:28–29.

¹Apparently Elizabeth Bristow, who died May 1741 in London. Her name appears in the early Foundery Band Lists (p. 17) with [[dead]] written in shorthand.

²See Matt. 9:5, 22.

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[London?]
c. April 13, 1740

Sir,

I beg leave to ask your opinion about my state. I do not doubt myself. For through the grace given me, I am confident God for Christ's sake hath forgiven and made me free. But it has been questioned by a believer whether I have received faith or not.

I was brought up an heathen in a D[octo]r of D[ivinity]'s house. After that I went to the Lord's table, and then thought myself a good Christian. But, blessed be God, I now see that I was an abominable Pharisee. For my pride God cast me out of his house, and I fell into the foulest crimes I could commit.

After some time, I had a sight of my damnable estate, and that I was nothing but sin. I daily dreaded God's vengeance. I durst not offer to pray, knowing my prayer was an abomination to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. I could not think it possible there should be forgiveness for me.

I had my punishment in view.
I felt a thousand hells my due.¹

I went twice to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield, but thought it did not signify. My misery still increased. But it pleased God, the last time you, his faithful minister, preached at Kennington, from [2] Corinthians 6:9, my blessed Saviour was revealed in me, in so glorious a manner, that I rather thought myself in heaven than upon earth. I thought I could meet death with boldness. I was ready to cry out to every one, "O taste and see how good the Lord is!"² I would not for a thousand worlds be in my former state again.

May God prolong your life and health in his service and kingdom!

Source: CW transcription in MS Journal; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 2:29–30.

¹ "Hymn on Gal. 3:22," st. 11, *HSP* (1739), 94 (*Poetical Works*, 1:85). The original couplet is in the present tense.

²Ps. 34:8 (BCP).

From the Rev. Henry Piers¹

Bexley
April 22, 1740

My Dear Sir,

I have heard lately of your being in town [London]. I hope that this letter will find you out, though I know not where you lodge. I wrote to you about four months ago, directing to where I heard you were in the country, but I suppose my letter miscarried.

Indeed, my dear brother, I thank my God upon ever remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine blessing God for you among the great means of grace which he had (in love) shed upon me within these three last years of my life. In particular, he sent you to me when I was lying in my blood; when the little religion I had did but render me more odious to him, being at best but a dead hypocritical formality, having no inward sense. He has prospered your endeavours so as to get the better not only of my indolence but even of the strong opposition which I made against you. So that though I have had, I thank God, more instructors since, yet I have not had many fathers. O that I could continue and go on to say I am begotten through the gospel! But though I am not yet so happy, I can in truth say that God has done great things for me already, whereof I rejoice. For he has shown me a great deal of the corruption of a very deceitful and desperately wicked heart, where there lay hid two (seeming opposite) evils: spiritual pride and an excess of wickedness. And yet this was not half humbled me. I pray God to spare me a little, till I recover my strength, and till he has turned the flint stone into a spring well.

And now (though there remains but little room) I know you expect some account of my people. I continue the meeting (I thank God) thrice a week, and though my number be but small (for there are numbers of opposers) I hope there are some of them sincerely seeking. I am thankfully surprised to see how full my church is on Sunday, considering the contradicting and blaspheming, and see the overruling hand of God in it. I have often said that there are many of them who begin to fear that what they hear is true. "Not unto us, not unto us, etc."

My dear brother, I long much to see you and have a bed at your service. My wife joins in the r^{(equ²)est}.³ We have you much in our hearts. I am as much \langle as \rangle imperfect a (may I say Christian) as can be.

Your affectionate b \langle rother in \rangle our dear Lord,

Hen. Piers

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at Mr. West's a Silk Dyer / in Thames Street / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "April 22. 1740 / Piers acknowledging / me his Father."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP^r 1/60.

¹Rev. Henry Piers (1695–1770) was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. After a curacy in Winwick, Lancashire, in 1737 he became vicar of Bexley, Kent, the parish of the Delamotte family. While visiting the Delamottes in 1738, CW befriended Piers and helped him towards a conversion experience, awakening his support of the evangelical movement. Through the 1740s Piers was particularly supportive of the Wesley brothers.

²The was seal obscures three small places, which can be reasonably reconstructed.

³Henry Piers married Elizabeth Robinson of Ashfordby, Leicestershire in Nov. 1736.

From Ursula (Berry) Wesley

April 23, 1740

Dear Brother,

[this letter, responding to CW's of April 16, is in some type of shorthand or cipher – it is NOT Byrom, Westin, or Coles; have still not deciphered]

Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/1 (cipher notes on back of CW letter Apr. 16) and cipher letter (separate sheet attached by preservationist at Emory and portion in MARC DDWF 27/1)

From Sarah Barber¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
May 1740

Reverend Sir,

At your request: I [recount] here, as far as the Lord gives me knowledge to see and know, my conversion; which before I heard the Reverend Mr. [George] Whitefield, I was a publican living in the world as if there was no God. But I did not know it because I was not a notorious open offender. I therefore thought myself a very good person. But the Lord was pleased to call me first by the ministry of Mr. Whitefield. I went the first time that he preached in Moorfields, but could not hear him.² Wherefore my curiosity was the stronger to return. So I went the next Sunday and the subject he was upon was Saul's persecution of the saints; and therein the Lord was pleased to show me I was that very Saul and from that time I was under conviction. For some time I saw nothing but hell and damnation before me and that humbled me at that time. So I had stronger desires, but I rested there, and thought those desires was the thing itself—insomuch that I got into spiritual pride, and not being convinced of my heart of unbelief insomuch that I thought I need not pray for faith.

But the Lord saw me in my sins, though I did not, and by the ministry of Mr. John [Wesley], on a time when the Lord saw fit (his subject was on the woman that stood behind our blessed Saviour when he was at meat in the Pharisee's house, that she poured the box of ointment on him³). There the Lord showed me I had no faith, though before I thought I had. Yet, I was very uneasy knowing I wanted something but knew not what till then; nor then neither, for then I thought I had faith though not such strong faith.

And at that time I went to sister Robinson's to get into the bands,⁴ but could not be admitted then. I told her my case but she told me I had no faith—which indeed was true. Then the Lord showed me more and more my unworthiness and the want of a Saviour. Then I saw the Saviour was not mine, for I was not saved from sin, neither could I call the Saviour mine. Then I walked on in a deep spirit of bondage. Afterward, I was admitted upon trial and then I was most time in great doubts. But then hearing the Lord justifieth the ungodly, then I knew I was ungodly. But then Satan would drag it away again and would make me believe it was not for me though sister Robinson would often bid me not believe him. Then I hoped and found comfort and indeed the band was of great service to me, for I never went away without some comforts.

Then, when the Lord sent you to town, I thought the Lord had something in store for me which should be revealed unto me by your ministry.⁵ Sister Robinson told me you gave her leave to bring us to hear your journals,⁶ for which I have reason to praise God. For in your prayers I saw my Saviour bleeding on the cross. And the Lord showed me my unworthiness in it so that I was astonished and stood amazed to think it was for me. I heard the voice saying: "This I do for my own sake." But Satan put me to doubt of [it] in such a manner that I had no power to speak of it to any. But at night when we met again, in your prayers the Lord was pleased to give me the second gift of faith, to believe that Jesus was my Lord. I was going to speak of it but Satan stopped my mouth because there were several sisters [who] had received the

¹Sarah Barber appears as a single woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²The first time Whitefield preached in Moorfields was Sun. April 29, 1739.

³Likely when JW expounded on Matt. 36 at the Foundery, Nov. 9, 1739.

⁴Likely Frances Robinson, who appears as a married woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

⁵CW arrived in London on Apr. 3, 1740 and began preaching a meeting the societies.

⁶I.e., CW was reading portions of his spiritual diary to the band.

same gift. When they spoke of it I was going to speak, but was stopped for [I] thought if I spoke it would only seem as if I wanted to be like them, insomuch that I did not speak.

But in coming home I told sister Robinson and she glorified God and said I was justified but was sorry that I did not speak that we might have praised God together to the shame of your enemies. So I went on till the Tuesday following in great calmness and in such peace that I never felt before. But then I went to sister Robinson and told her I was afraid that I was going into that “stillness” that was talked of. But she told me it was the peace of God, that my sins were pardoned and that I had peace and was in a very safe state.

On the Wednesday I found it true, for I found the pardon written in my heart. Blessed be the Almighty for what he hath done. But I find there is still a great deal more to do in his good time for there is great corruptions still in me and I doubt not but he that is the author will be the finisher of my faith. Indeed, before I was justified, Satan threw his daughter at me to keep me from the ordinance. But the Lord gave me power to go and when I was at the table, the voice of the Lord said unto me, “This is the way, walk ye in it.”⁷ And the Lord enabled me to go on, not trusting in them but in him alone.

Reverend father in the Lord, I beg that you would remember me among the rest of your spiritual children in your prayers. I beg leave to subscribe myself

Your young babe in Christ,

Sarah Barber

Address: “For the Reverend / Mr. Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Sarah Barber’s 1740” and “Sarah Barber’s / Experience / May 1740.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/7.⁸

⁷Isa. 20:31.

⁸For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Grace Murray¹

c. May 1, 1740

My Reverend Father in Christ,

My heart being now open before God, I write as in his presence.

The first gift of faith I received after I had seen myself a lost sinner, bound with 1,000 chains, and dropping into hell. Then I heard his voice, “Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee”² and could say, “The Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me.”³ I thought I saw him at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for me. I went on in great joy for four months. Then pride crept in, and I thought the work was finished, when it was but just begun. There I rested, and in a little time fell into doubts and fears whether my sins were really forgiven me, till I plunged myself into the depth of misery. I could not pray; neither had I any desire to do it, or to read, or hear the word. My soul was like the troubled sea. Then did I see my own evil heart, my cursed, devilish nature, and feel my helplessness, that I could not so much as think a good thought. My love was turned into hatred, passion, envy, and “I felt a thousand hells my due,”⁴ and cried out in bitter anguish of spirit, “Save, Lord, or I perish.”⁵

In my last extremity, I saw my Saviour full of grace and truth for me, and heard his voice again whispering, “Peace, be still.”⁶ My peace returned, and greater sweetness of love than ever before.

Now my joy is calm and solid, my heart drawn out to the Lord continually. I know that my Redeemer liveth for me. He is my strength and my rock, and will carry on his work in my soul, to the day of redemption.

Dear sir, I have spoke the state of my heart, as before the Lord. I beg your prayers, that I may go on from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer, till death is swallowed up in victory.

Grace Murray

Source: CW transcription in MS Journal, May 2, 1740; MARC, DDCW 10/2, 2:36–37.

¹Grace (Norman / Murray) Bennet (1716–1803) was born in Newcastle upon Tyne (maiden name unknown) and married a Mr. Norman. Left a widow, in 1736 Grace Norman married Alexander Murray, a seaman, who also died six years later. She first heard JW preach in Moorfields on Sept. 9, 1739, and in the early 1740s was a member of bands for married women at the Foundery. In 1748 JW nearly married Grace. But CW intervened, and quickly officiated her union with John Bennet.

²Matt. 9:2.

³Cf. Gal. 2:20.

⁴Hymn on Galatians 3:22, st. 11, ln. 4, *HSP* (1739), 94.

⁵Cf. Matt. 8:25.

⁶Mark 4:39.

From the Religious Society in Brick Lane¹

May 3, 1740

Sir,

We, in the name of the whole society in Brick Lane, makes bold to invite and entreat you to come and visit us—who dearly loves your reverend brother and yourself, and esteem you as true ministers of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you purpose to go any more to the other societies, we hope you will not disregard us, though it may be we have been misrepresented to you on the account of the laymen. For we had heard them often, and found some of them were governed by a spirit that was opposite to peace and order. Nothing would content them without we would leave aside the service of the Church of England in our society. For whenever they came among us, they never failed to cast slights and reproaches on it, and severe censures on us for liking and using of it; which we that heard can testify, was there a necessity to recollect or trouble you with them. To give but a single instance out of many, to show how one of them (in his zeal against us) made use of the holy word: “That they compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, . . .”² Which text must be strangely forced to concern us, but he applied it to us, who we hope desire with all our hearts to be made able to follow our Lord and Master, and to be led by his Spirit. Which is so contrary to the blessed gospel of love and peace which you continually preach that we know you will not wonder why we rejected them, and gave so little encouragement to them to come among us.

The truth is easy to be seen, for from their sermons part of our members fell into a dislike of the prayers of the Church in the society, and that caused endless disputes, coldness, and misunderstandings amongst us, [so] that we were at last for peace sake contented to divide. And some of the laymen, to show their approbation of this division, went often to Gray Eagle Street to preach to our separate members, and we were left to say our Form to ourselves (as they called it). But since your reverend brother and yourself hath maintained and vindicated the holy ordinances of our Church in so bold and godly a manner, of late we have heard but little of this matter.

Dear sir, we are persuaded your patience will excuse the trouble of this letter. And we think it is our duty to give you some account of this thing from ourselves. If nothing else be objected against us but our adhering so closely to the liturgy, and the preferring it at all times to the extempore performances of the laymen, I know we shall not be condemned by the judge we now appeal to. For at the first, before we were taught in this manner by the laymen, the Rev. Mr. [George] Whitefield and yourself did advise us to keep close to the ordinances of our Church, as a means and a way to meet the Holy Spirit of God in—to prevent us (being young) from running into error and from being led about by any vain doctrine.

N. B. Whenever we objected anything against these teachers, their admirers’ reply was always [that] we did not understand them. Which we conceive is the worst excuse that can be made for a minister of God’s word, and what you would not have to be said in your behalf: that your people cannot understand you.

Endorsement: by CW, “ May 3. 1740 / call from Brick Lane / Society – against the / Germans.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/90.

¹Brick Lane ran through Spitalfields Market in London, an area with many Huguenot residents. This society predated the Wesley brothers, but clearly felt closer to them than those teach quietism. The society was the seed for the formation of La Neuve Église, a Huguenot church, in 1743.

²Matt. 23:15.

From Thomas Keene¹

[London]
May 15, 1740

My Friend,

I hear there are divisions among you. For some say “I am of Wesley,” and others “I am of Molther.”² But I say I am of Christ, and what he bids me do I will do, and not trust in any man.

Here some will say, “What Christ bids you do, is to believe and be still.” True, but does he bid me do nothing else? He bids me let my light so shine before men, that they may see my good works, and glorify my Father which is in heaven.³

He likewise says, “The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ chair. All therefore whatsoever *they bid you* to observe, that observe and do.”⁴ But how can I know what they bid me do, except I go to hear them?

Again, Christ bids me observe all things which he commands the apostles, and with such he will be to the end of the world.⁵ But if I do not observe and do his commands, he will not be with me.

He bids me “do this in remembrance of” him.⁶ Now, if any man can prove this is not a command, I will obey it no longer. “But whosoever breaketh one of these least commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.”⁷

As to stillness, our Saviour saith, “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”⁸ And “strive to enter in at the straight gate.”⁹ And St. Paul saith, “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.”¹⁰ And, “God is a rewarder of them that *diligently seek him*.”¹¹ Now these scriptures imply somewhat more than barely sitting still.

Some deny that there are any means of grace. But I will be thankful for them, since it was in them I first heard you preach faith in Christ; and had I not been there, I might have been without faith unto this day.

One told me when you preached you had nature in your face. So will everyone have who speaks with zeal. But no matter for that, if he has but grace in his heart.

My friend, there are many teachers, but few fathers. But you are my father, who begot me in the gospel and, I trust, many more.

May the Lord “lead you into all truth!”¹² So prays

¹Thomas Keene (c. 1693–1766) was “a mild and candid Quaker” which whom CW formed a long friendship; see MS Journal, Aug. 9, 1739. See the comment on Keene’s death in John Jones to CW, Feb. 23, 1766.

²Cf. 1 Cor. 1:12.

³ See Matt. 5:16.

⁴Matt. 23:2–3.

⁵See Matt. 28:20.

⁶Luke 22:19.

⁷Matt. 5:19.

⁸Matt. 11:12.

⁹Luke 13:24.

¹⁰Phil. 2:12.

¹¹Heb. 11:6.

¹²John 16:13.

Your friend,

Thomas Keen

Source: published transcription; *Wesley Methodist Magazine* 63 (1839): 995–96. Appears without name in CW, MS Journal (on May 16 entry). DDCW 10/2, 2:46–47

**From Maria Price¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
May 18, 1740

My Dear Father in God,

I now declare unto you with a joyful heart, as well as I can remember, how the Lord worked in my soul by you, my own father. I came to [you] about the beginning of March last year [1739], by the desire of a friend as dead as myself. The morning we came it rained very hard, and as soon as I had got out of [the] door I said it is not the will of God that we should go; if it were, it would hold up. We went in again. But we had no sooner got in but it stopped raining till we had been with you and came home again. Then it rained the whole day. I think it never ceased.

Dear sir, I came to you as dark as a blind man from his birth, that never had [any] thought of sight, and if he heard that there was such a thing, he did not believe it because he had it not himself. I had been a partaker of bread and wine for some months, but not of the body and blood of my loving Saviour. I did exhort men to lead a good life, as to the body; but as to the spirit, I had heard of such a thing but I never felt that I had got one, for it was dead. I did not know that it was ever to live in this world.

Dear sir, my heart longs for words to tell how good my dear Saviour is to save such a dark, dead, stony-hearted, damned, unbelieving Pharisee as I. I did often repent for one sin and did not know I had any more. But I had no sooner repented for it than I committed it again and was twofold more a child of hell than before. Thus was I mourning, and sinning, and wondering that I could not overcome it myself (that one sin was passion). I told you how I did weary myself with it and said I, “God knows my weakness and what I can do. Why does he try me so?” You answered me [that] God did it to let me know what I could do. That word was of much comfort to me. Your discourse and your prayer give me so much comfort that when I came home I said to the same purpose, “this is the day of salvation.”²

You bid me read the seventh [chapter] to the Romans. You said that was my state. I did read it and found much comfort insomuch that I began at the first chapter, in order to read them through, to see what was in them. As I was reading, I think it was the sixth chapter, I was forced to lift my eyes off the book and look about me like a person that was born blind and that moment received sight. I wondered I so often read and never understood before. I was almost lost with wonder at my new eyes. I saw myself as an unbeliever and was greatly ashamed of my past life and came to the words where the apostle says, “what fruit had you there, in those things whereof you are now ashamed.”³ That increased my wonder a great deal more to think it so suited me. And at that moment when I received such sight as I never had before, I as plainly felt a burden taken off my heart as I could feel one took off my back. It was done in a moment. It was such a work, so plainly felt and so wonderfully wrought, that I almost lost my senses to explain it and cannot do it. Neither all this time I had not the forgiveness of my sins.

But soon after you expounded at Fetter Lane,⁴ and then I was at that time and ever since, filled with joy and peace in believing. I received the forgiveness of sins and the witness of the spirit and a dominion over sin at that very time. I said to you in the midst of the people how if I had ten thousand souls, I could trust them all in the hands of God. I trembled so with joy and cried that I did not know how to bear myself. You asked me if I found that peace that passed understanding. I said, “Yes, indeed, I have and it doth pass understanding.” Dear sir, these two talents have gained [an]other two. God hath, to me that had little, given more and I trust will increase me daily.

¹Maria Price appears as a single woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²2 Cor. 6:2.

³Rom. 6:21.

⁴CW expounded there Mar. 20, 1739.

Dear sir, I am
Your own daughter in God

Maria Price

Endorsement: by CW, “Maria Price’s Experience / May 18. 1740.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/12.⁵

⁵For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Margaret Austin¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
May 19, 1740

Reverend Sir,

This, as far as the Lord enables me, is to show you the state of my soul. As far back as I can remember (which [is] before I was married) I was exceeding proud and had a great idol which was my reputation. That I cherished and hugged; but marrying very young, [and] having a cruel husband, that brought down my pride very much. But that was but forced away by the cruel usage of an unkind husband; and in that time of my affliction, I had crowds of temptations, though the Lord would all that time have directed and led me. But I find now that I would not let him lead me. But yet he was merciful unto me; yea, abundantly merciful. And seventeen months ago my husband left me with two children.

Then the Lord called me to hear the Reverend Mr. [George] Whitefield. His subject was Zaccheus,² and then brought in the rich man of the gospel, how he had laid up treasures on earth but none in heaven. And there I found I was that person, though as to worldly treasure I had none. But I had a great deal of desire. But the Lord was pleased to press the words home to me that very first time, for though I went to church as often as I could, I never was struck in such a manner as then. And the next time I heard him was the second time he preached in Moorfields.³ His subject was on Saul's persecuting the saints.⁴ There again I was much affected with the word, finding myself to be the very person, and so continued to follow him wherever I could. And indeed the Lord, by his ministry, did awaken me and I saw myself to be [a] lost, undone sinner.

When the Lord saw fit to let me see myself, [it] was by Mr. John [Wesley] at Wapping. He was explaining the sin of [i.e., against] the Holy Ghost.⁵ There I was struck, though Satan had not power to make me believe that I had committed that sin.

The Friday following,⁶ I heard you, sir, and there I plainly saw my Saviour bleeding on the cross, and the soldiers piercing his precious side, and the blood falling to the ground. Oh, thought I, that I had but one drop of that blood to wash away my sins. But [I] could not apply it to my heart, [though I] was under great convictions.

¹Margaret Austin had recently been converted under CW's preaching; see MS Journal, April 5, 1740. She appears as a married woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). She is likely the Margaret Nutting who married Richard Austin in London in 1733.

²This sermon on Luke 19:8 was preached Oct. 20, 1737, at St. Mary at Hill church in London (reported in *Old Whig, or The Consistent Protestant*, Oct. 27, 1737).

³Whitefield arrived back in London in early Dec. 1738 and preached a few times through Jan. 1739, before leaving town until May. On his return he preached at Moorfields on Apr. 29, and then this "second time," on a newly raised rostrum, on May 6, 1739 (see *London Evening Post*, May 5–8, 1739; and Whitefield's *Journal*). No text is mentioned in the *Post* or *Journal*.

⁴I.e., his sermon on Acts 9:22.

⁵JW had been preaching to a society in Wapping on occasion since Oct. 6, 1738; see *Journal, Works*, 19:16. This instance was likely before Mar. 27, 1739, when he went to Bristol for a period.

⁶Likely Apr. 6, 1739; see CW's account in MS Journal, though he does not specify Wapping.

Then I heard Mr. Whitefield at Bexley on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and I saw I was really half a beast and half a devil.⁷ Then he preached on the blind man being restored to his sight.⁸ Then I found I had received some light. And the last time I heard him was, “Know ye not that Christ is in you, except you be reprobates.”⁹ Oh, thought I, Christ is surely in me. I am no reprobate. From that time I become dead to the world.

I heard Mr. [William] Delamotte next, after Mr. Whitefield was gone. He was expounding on the sower that went out to sow, and there I found my heart was that stony ground, for while I was hearing the words, my thoughts were filled with other things, but the Lord enabled me, and I went to the Lord’s table. When I went to kneel down, I had such joy that I thought heaven was within me. Really I cannot express the joy, for it is inexpressible. Then I heard Mr. Delamotte as often as possible, as his words were very penetrating to me; in so much that I was in great agonies grieving over my stony heart, and the people would pity me. But I thought I had rather they had beat me, for I deserved no pity.

After that, I came to sister Robinson, and she saw me in such conviction.¹⁰ She bestowed much pity on me, prayed and comforted me very much. I told her my state, and she told me how she had received faith under the ministry, and by the prayers of you, sir. She also bade me go to Mr. John [Wesley] and tell him. I told her I could not. So, she wrote a note and sent me with it. But he said nothing to me nor took no notice of it, which gave Satan great advantage over me. He persuaded me I was so bad that there was no mercy for me. Afterwards I went to church, and the text was the Lord’s visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and the fourth generation. Then I thought there was nothing but hell and damnation for me, for I knew I had sin enough to damn me without the sins of my parents. And here I was in despair of finding mercy. Satan bid me be quiet and give it all up for I should never be saved. But then again in the midst of temptation, the Lord spoke to me, and it gave me comfort. The words came fresh into my memory “he that perseveres unto the end shall be saved.”¹¹ Then I heard Mr. John [Wesley] at Fetter Lane. There he told us of our unfaithfulness to God, by which we lost what we had received.¹² Then I found I had been unfaithful, and Satan would have had me gone from the place and hear no more. But then again I thought, “Oh, must I go to be damned? No, I will stay and hear the word.” So the Lord enabled me to stay, but still I was very much tempted, and I prayed for your coming up, for I thought I should receive something by your ministry.

Then I heard the Rev. Mr. [Jacob] Rogers, by whom I received much comfort. Then I heard Mr. Brown.¹³ He said that if we read, the devil read with us; and likewise, if we prayed, he prayed with us; and when we went to church for sacrament, the devil went with us. Mr. Bell said if we had any doubts or

⁷Austin apparently was present all three times Whitefield records in his *Journal* preaching at Henry Pier’s church in Bexley: June 7, 8, & 10, 1739. Whitefield does not give his texts for these sermons, but this first would be Acts 19:2.

⁸I.e., his sermon on Mark 10:52.

⁹2 Cor. 13:5.

¹⁰Again, likely Frances Robinson, a married woman later active in the Foundery society.

¹¹Matt. 10:22.

¹²Possibly Sept. 14, 1739, when JW spoke on 1 Cor. 10:23; see JW to CW, Sept. 21, 1739, *Works*, 25:686,

¹³John Brown (1712–94), a woollen draper in St. Martin’s-le-Grand parish, was converted under CW’s preaching on June 3, 1738 (see MS *Journal*). He was now siding more with the quietist Moravians. See *DEB*, 148–49; and Benham, *Hutton*, 89.

fears, then we had no faith.¹⁴ So that I neither prayed or went to the sacrament.

But after some time, the Lord spoken to me by that text of Scripture to Peter when Christ said to him, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”¹⁵ By which, I went again to the sacrament. As I took the cup, Satan told me I should be damned for all that. But when we had done receiving and the minister was covering the cup, I saw Christ lay with his open side, and I thought I could see his heart bleeding for me. Afterward, I had a strong desire to get into the bands. I went to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley and he admitted me.

The first night we met, hearing the others tell the state of their souls, it was of much strength to me to speak the state of mine. One morning I went to sister Robinson, and she sang, and prayed, and I was convicted stronger than ever before, for I had such a sight of my heart as I was frightened at. I saw I was leper, and was sick from head to foot. In the evening I was reading, and I saw the devil in my soul; so that I cried out, “O Christ, do not let me go.” But then the happy minute came when you came, and on Good Friday, the words which you spoke in your sermon concerning the creditor and the debtor (if a man owed another a sum of money, and another paid it for him, he could in no wise ask him for it again).¹⁶ There I saw I was free, and that Christ had paid the debt, so I came away with great joy. And at night your text was, “Who hath believed our report, or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed.”¹⁷

Then I had such joy that I could scarce forbear speaking. I came to you, the next day being Saturday, and told you. You told me I was justified at Wapping.¹⁸ I found your prayer very helpful that morning. And on Sunday morning one of my sisters in band told me that my coming to you was self, and that did me much harm; for then I thought all that I did, or all the joy I had, was self. Yet I went to the Lord’s table, and as I went, still I thought I was as the prodigal returned. But at night, while you preached, Satan pressed the word self to me [so] that I thought self had brought me there, insomuch that I wished the ground would open and swallow me up. But then I knew Christ would find me at the last, so I found I must press forward to find Christ. And the Lord was pleased to let the comfort return, so that I found I was clear before God by the blood of his Son. Then, when you were reading your journal and said, “the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead shall quicken thy dead body,”¹⁹ then I felt that Christ would finish what he had begun.

The Monday following we heard another of your journals, and that day two year[s before], you said you had received remission of sins.²⁰ And in your prayers I found great comfort.

The next morning, as I was arising, the voice of the Lord said to me, “Thy sins are forgiven” twice over. I heard it a third time, “Daughter, be of good cheer. Thy sins are forgiven thee.”²¹ Then I felt old things passing away and all things becoming new. Still, Satan began to reason with me to make me doubt whether it was so or not. But still the Lord enabled me to withstand him, and I bid him go and ask Christ, and then you said all fear was of the devil. That strengthened me again, for I found that very true. Then I prayed to the Lord to show me my heart, and I found I was [a] brand plucked from the fire.

¹⁴Richard Bell, a watch-case maker in London, was active in the Fetter Lane society and sided with the Moravians in the later split within the society. See Benham, *Hutton*, 89.

¹⁵Luke 22:32.

¹⁶CW was preaching on John 1:29; see MS Journal, Apr. 4, 1740.

¹⁷Isa. 53:1.

¹⁸See CW, MS Journal, Apr. 5, 1740.

¹⁹This phrase is not found in any of CW’s surviving journal letters.

²⁰See CW’s account of his personal “Pentecost” on May 21, 1738 in MS Journal.

²¹Cf. John 9:2.

Last Friday, when you were at prayer, I found myself to be the person that crucified Christ; that I wished my flesh accursed for Christ sake. The Wednesday before that I saw so much of the love of God for me, and saw myself so unworthy, that I was melted down in tears. And last Sunday, hearing Mr. [Westley] Hall, I found myself to be a Judas. So that, if I was to see myself as I am seen of God, I could not bear myself. But while this was writing, it was the pleasure of God to manifest himself to me, and his voice told me that what he did was for his own sake. I see there is a great work to [be] wrought still in my soul. But he that has begun this work will surely finish. He that is the author will be the finisher. Pray, sir, remembering me in your prayers.

Reverend father in Christ, I beg leave to subscribe myself,
Your young babe in Christ,

Margerit Austin

Awakened by the Reverend Mr. Whitefield: Convicted by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley: Converted by the Reverend Mr. Charles [Wesley]: for the truth of whole doctrine, in the strength of the Lord, I am ready to lay down my life.

Endorsement: by CW “Margaret Austin’s / May 19 1740” and “May 19 1740 / Marg. Austin’s exp[erience]. / A seal.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/1.²²

²²For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Margaret (Coults) Ibbison¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
May 23, 1740

This is what God hath done for my soul. I went sometime since to Kennington Common to hear Mr. Charles Wesley preach and he preached out of the First Corinthians, the sixth [chapter], ninth and tenth [verses].² But I cannot tell anybody what a great sinner I was, for no tongue can express the grief of my soul. I thought that he had spoke it all to me, for I saw all that I had ever thought or done in my life, so that I was the greatest sinner that ever lived. And had not my husband been there I should [have] told all the people so. But it came into my soul, “What will my husband think that I have been some vile woman.” Alas, it was always what my soul abhorred. No it was my wicked heart that I saw now and I never saw it before. For before this day I was well. I thought I was very good because they would call me so. But alas, I had broken all his commands. It was now that I wanted a Saviour. I said: “Oh, what shall I do to be saved?”

I am sure that this I spoke from my very soul, for before he had done praying my joy was as great as my sorrow. There was something that told me my sins were forgiven and that I might go to the sacrament, for I had never been. I thought that I was not holy enough, and I always had a great desire to go. But something fell out that I never went, for I was for making myself holy. But now I was resolved to go. So I went, and when I came into the church I could not hold a bone of me still. I was so afraid and I began to doubt whatsoever this was but a fancy that came into my head, “Can my sins be forgiven here?”. For I was a stranger to the doctrine, for I never had anything like this in my soul before. I was amazed at myself. Well, nevertheless, notwithstanding all my doubts and fears, I received it and I was filled with love as well as joy. I prayed for all, for I can say that I loved every soul. Well, I thought, I will never sin any more as long as I live.

I began to wonder what was come to me. I was not acquainted with any that I could tell my mind to, but I was all changed to what I was before. But I began to reason with myself and I fell into doubt and I fell into a passion at a trifling thing. But when I came to myself my soul was as black as hell, for I thought there was some thing told me in my soul: “Well, now you have broken your promise, you need not go to church any more nor hear Mr. Wesley preach.” Now did my grief return and my soul was in hell. I could not rest day nor night. I was worse than ever. I prayed for a new heart day and night although I do not remember that I ever read it to take notice of it.

Well I was resolved to go again to hear them preach, so I heard Mr. John [Wesley] and he, in his sermon, told me that I wanted a new heart, for I thought that it was all spoken to me.³ So I was glad that I had prayed aright.

So I begin to look into my Bible and then I saw that what he had told me was true. Oh what grief was I in for a long time and under great temptation. But still I prayed always and hoped. And I was sorry that I did not see every one weep, for I thought if their souls were as black as mine we should all cry. And then I could freely tell them all my grief. But as I sat in Fetter Lane by myself in great sorrow, for my soul was in hell, there came in such joy into my soul and all my grief was gone.

¹Margaret Coults (b. c. 1707) married Robert Ibbison (b. c. 1706) in 1731 in London. They both appear in the Foundery Band Lists for Apr. 1742, but not after. They may have immigrated about that time to North America. Margaret’s spelling is fairly good, but she uses very little punctuation in the letter.

²See CW, MS Journal, Aug. 12, 1739.

³Likely JW’s sermon at Kennington Common on Sept. 9, 1739, see *Journal, Works*, 19:95.

I lay at my dear Saviour's feet and I prayed that he would bless me. And I am sure that he did, for I had no condemnation in my soul and how did I love my dear loving Saviour and all people. Now could I pray indeed to my dear Saviour that he had called me who was such a worthless worm. Now did I hope indeed with joy. Now I began to pray for the two Mr. Wesleys. But more for that dear soul Mr. Charles for he had preached my soul out of hell and I am sure I can not forget him so long as I live. I can as soon forget myself. Can any be so vile and ungrateful as forget the person that leads the way to so good a Saviour.⁴ This love that I have is not such a love as the world knows anything of, neither can those but those that hath received it.

When I was on Friday at prayers I was in such joy that I can not express it.⁵ You spoke something of the holy sacrament. It came with such power into my soul that I prayed, "Oh that I might but receive it from your hands, then I should be free indeed." For I knew I had received so many gifts from my dear Saviour by your preaching and prayers. Although I at the same time knew not which way that I ever should. But when I had done praying, and all the rest of the people, you called me and told me that I should go with you to receive the sacrament for you were going to a sick woman.

I wondered at the love of my dear Saviour and then I was amazed how you came to know what was in my soul, for I had not spoken with you. So I was sure that the Lord heard me and that he told you to call me from all the rest. And I prayed all the way and thought what a good Saviour we have. Oh that all the world but knew him; how good he is!

But when we came to the house, you told us that you would not give it [to] her if she had not forgiveness of sins, which was a surprise to me. But I thought, well, if she has not, the Lord will hear his prayers for her and forgive her. So he did; all the glory be to God who heareth them that put their trust in him. So we received it and I was filled with love as well as joy, so that I prayed for all and I wept to see so many dead people in the streets. I could hardly get home without telling them so.

But alas, I began to think what a deceitful heart I had, and that it was past finding out, and that I must put a door before my lips and watch over my deceitful heart. For I am sure that I abhor myself when I see what a good Saviour I have.

When I was at Mr. [Westley] Hall's I was taken so full of love that I thought I would get him to pray to my dear Saviour, that he would keep [me] always in that state. But I did not, for it came into my soul: "What am I going to do! Who knows what the Lord will give me if I wait upon him as a poor sinner". I desire to be led as a little child and that I may ever watch over myself, for now I cannot see anything in any. I find that I have done my soul [a] great deal of harm by speaking too much. But since it is my dear Saviour that has told me so, I hope I shall never forget him. No, I cannot. Oh that I might keep him ever before me. If I do not I am sure that I shall fall. Oh that I might not let go my hold but press forward for that great salvation.

Pray for me I beg of you and that you will not forget me.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Ibson]] / May 23 / 1740" and "S[ister] Ibson's Exp[erience] / May 1740."
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/8.⁶

⁴The previous three sentences are underlined; likely by CW when he read the letter.

⁵This appears to be May 23, 1740, the day she dated the letter.

⁶For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Elizabeth Hinsom¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
May 25, 1740

[Her Enclosed Initial Summary²]

I was a Pharisee. But God was pleased to convince me, by hearing Mr. [George] Whitefield's sermon, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection.³ But now further it pleased God to send your dear brother, to whom I am bound in duty to pray for so long as I live. It pleased God that I went to Mr. Parker's and he [JW] was upon the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians.⁴ And there I knew myself a damned sinner. I came home and I thought I was then sinking into hell. This was in March, I think, but it did not please God to reveal himself in me till last September, the fourth day. I went to Mr. Crouch's with a desire to stay, but the crowd was [so] very great that I could hardly get in.⁵ But God would not suffer me to come away. I got in but could hardly stay for fear I should be killed. Satan raged within and I have reason to bless my God for he justified the ungodly in me. Your brother expounded the sixteenth chapter of Saint John and the Lord work[ed] mystically in me.⁶ And I felt a strong conviction and would have hid it, but my Lord, who loves sinners, still carried on his work and brought all my sins to my remembrance. And then I trembled and should have fell down, but the people held me up and I was out of my senses. But the Lord awakened me with "Peace be unto you. Your sins are forgiven you."⁷ I went home full of joy, not knowing what was to become [of] myself. So I continued all [the] next day and then my joy left me. Satan came in and told me I had lost Christ and I might as well hang myself. But God, who is rich in mercy towards all, delivered me from the evil of this temptation. I was in darkness and knew not God and was ready to cry out with many, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him."⁸ But the Lord came comfortable into my soul with a promise: "I will heal thy backsliding and will love thee freely."⁹ This gave me much comfort.

And then it was impressed on my mind that when you came that I should be delivered and set at liberty by your ministry. According[ly], on Wednesday, as you was at prayers the Lord came again into my soul with power.¹⁰ I was filled with love to all mankind. I felt uncommon power in my soul and could

¹Elizabeth Hinsom appears as a single woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²This document, filed by CW with the following letter, is an initial summary of Hinsom's spiritual experience, written in a much more polished hand than her letter.

³Whitefield's sermon on Phil. 3:10; preached while he was in London Dec. 1738–Jan. 1739.

⁴The date was around March 20, 1739; see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19:37. Mr. Parker hosted a society in Wapping. He may be the John Parker who appears as a married man in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

⁵Mr. Crouch hosted a society at his home in Dowgate Hill (see CW, MS Journal, Mar. 13, 27, 1739).

⁶Hinsom appears to have written the "6" backwards, so that it looks more like she is saying the "12th" chapter of John. But Mary Jane Ramsey below specifies it was on John 16:16.

⁷Cf. Luke 7:48.

⁸John 20:13.

⁹Cf. Hos. 14:4.

¹⁰CW's first Wednesday back in London was Mar. 28, 1740.

hardly contain myself. I was so filled I could hardly work, and so I continued. I thought I was a new creature. This continued a week and then Satan buffeted me with unclean thoughts one day for three hours. That terrified me much, and now and then a wicked oath. I prayed to the Lord and then I was filled again. I see so much of my own unworthiness that I am lost in wonder when I see what God has done for my soul. I have now peace with God and I know that my redeemer liveth to make intercession for me. I can now look up and say, “Christ is full of grace for me.”¹¹ I have gracious visits from God, and I trust I shall not rest till I find Christ, the hope of glory, formed within me. I wait upon God in the ordinances.

Endorsement: by CW, “Eliz. Hinsom’s Case / 1740.”

[Her Letter dated May 25, 1740¹²]

Reverend Sir,

After I was justified I went on looking for a gradual sanctification,¹³ not so much as dreaming of a new heart. I thought I should receive another gift, but did not know when. Nor did not trouble myself, for I thought I had a great gift already. So I went on.

At last I could not pray. I did not know what held me. I did not pray for a fortnight. I went to my band and told them I could not pray. I asked if I should sin if I did not. They said yes. I found I had no desire to pray, neither could desire. They bid me lift up my heart to the Lord for desires. So I did, but I thought it was a will worship. So I went on.

It pleased God to send your dear brother.¹⁴ I went to hear him. His text was “Marvel not that I said unto thee you must be born again.”¹⁵ He pulled down what I had built up. He said a person might go on forty years for a gradual sanctification, and then if one came and did even but hit their elbow they were in a passion. I found it was so with me. He preached again. I wondered at him [for] he told me my heart. I thought he spake to me, and when I look[ed] at him I thought he spake to me only. I went to hear him again and his text was in Exodus the 14th chapter. I found I was in that net which he described. I found my ill tempers begun to stir in me when I went to hear the word preached. I could not bear the people to touch me. I was so cross I was entangled. The wilderness had shut me in. I thought I would not go to church nor to the sacrament. So I went home, not thinking to go. But my mother ask[ed] me and I was ashamed to deny her. So I went, but the Lord showed me I should wait in the means. I went to church and those words I could say [were] cold, weary, languid, harmless, dead to thy dread, [be]cause I oft repeat [them] by conscience goaded, nor custom bid I come, nor know that God art there. I could not pray for my heart abhorred the irksome prayers I said. All my corrupt passions came in and pursued hard after me. I would have cried to the Lord, but my mouth was stopped. I could do nothing but weep. I spoke this in my band. They said it was good prayer, but I did not think so. I thought if I spoke it would be better. I went to the sacrament, but found myself still cold. These words of this hymn I knew to be my case:

¹¹CW, Hymn on John 16:24, st. 7, l. 4, *HSP* (1739), 220.

¹²The letter is in Hinsom’s own hand. Her spelling largely phonetic and she uses virtually no punctuation, capitalization, or division into paragraphs.

¹³According to her earlier account, she experienced justifying assurance in Sept. 1739.

¹⁴After leaving London the end of Sept. 1739, JW was back there briefly Nov. 4–12, 1739, Dec. 19, 1739 to Jan. 2, 1740, and Apr. 23–30, 1740. We have his diary for the first and third of these visits, and none of the texts mentioned by Hinsom appear there. So this series she described most likely fit within (and provide us information) JW’s preaching in Dec. 1739.

¹⁵John 3:7.

Nigh with my lips to thee I draw,
Unconscious at thy alter found;
Far off my heart: nor touched with awe
Nor mov'd—tho' angels tremble round.¹⁶

I could hardly help saying that I had better served the Egyptians then to die in the wilderness. I went to hear your brother as his text was “Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.”¹⁷ In that he described the whole state of my heart. I found that I must stand still, for I could do nothing.

Thus I went on some time. At last one day the Lord came to my soul again with power. I could not contain myself. I was so filled I could not bear myself. For I was forced to cry to the Lord to enlarge my heart or I could not have bore it. My flesh failed and had not the Lord enlarged my heart it must have broke. So I went on, till Sunday I went to the sacrament and this promise was applied to my soul the moment the minster gave me the bread: “To him that overcometh will I give him to eat of the hidden manna.”¹⁸ This well filled me with comfort.

Then Satan thrust sore at me with this temptation: “Curse God and die.”¹⁹ This frightened me and I could not tell what to think of myself. This hung upon me a fortnight. When I was at prayers this would come in two or three times: “Curse God and die.” I sweated to my fingers' ends, and I would cry out, “How can I curse that God to which I am praying?” And I would pray to be delivered from it, for I was so terrified I could not bear myself. At last this was taken away from me.

And then I had such unclean thoughts. And then I thought I was as bad as I was before. For I could not look but such thoughts came in to my mind that I was surprised at it. I never had such thoughts in my life before. There was scarce a moment in [a] day for a fortnight that anything else came into my mind. For when I spoke some times I put my hand before my mouth, for fear I should speak the words. But I did not look to the Lord for to be delivered. For when I did, they were ten times worse than they was before. I went out into the world, for when I was talking I was well enough. And the moment I came alone these thoughts came again. I hated myself and I wished everybody else hated me too, for I was a devil to myself.

When I was at church it was all the same. Once I was going to the altar and I was half persuaded not [to go], for those thoughts came so fast that I thought God would not accept me. But I did not stay away, though I had a mind to. I wish everybody knew that though, for I feared they would think me something when I thought my self a devil. I had a good mind to tell them sometimes, but did not. At last I thought God had forgot me, for then I prayed and still they continued. I reasoned so much about it that I brought myself into darkness, even darkness which might be felt.

And so I contined till the Lord sent you with a fresh blessing to my soul. I know the Lord often begins and ends his work by his messengers. And as through your ministry I am brought thus far. By your ministry I doubt not but the Lord will carry on his work. Worthy sir I beg leave to sign myself,

Your unworthy servant,

Elizabeth Hinsom

Endorsement: by CW, “Elis. Hinsom's / May 25, 1740” and “Elis. Hinsom's / May 1740 / Experience.”
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/2.²⁰

¹⁶CW, “In Desertion or Temptation,” st. 8, *HSP* (1739): 149.

¹⁷Exod. 14:13.

¹⁸Rev. 2:17.

¹⁹Job 2:9.

²⁰For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk>.

**From Sarah Middleton¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

May 25, 1740

Reverend Sir,

I write these lines to let you know what a Pharisee I was. I went to church and sacrament constantly; and I thought I did very well, for I was a strict Pharisee. I would not be in anyone's company that said an ill word. Nor would I go a-pleasuring as others did, for fear of sin. If I did at any time, and miss[ed] my church, I thought some judgment would follow me. So if anyone had asked what hope I had of my salvation, I would presently have said I never did any harm. For I always did to others as I would they should do unto me And I thought I was very sincere, so I did not fear but God would accept me.

That is the most account I could give of myself then. But thanks be to God for his unspeakable mercy in bringing me by his free grace out of darkness in which I sat. I thought myself a Christian, but I found myself mistaken when it pleased God to reveal his dear Son in me and to show me the way of salvation. As for the Articles of our Church, the doctrine of the Spirit of God, of regeneration, and of justification by faith, I was a stranger to them all. Nor do I remember to have heard any of them preached or explained by our clergy. Indeed I went to church, and said my prayers, and had a form of profession, but nothing of the power. I had no oil in my lamp, no inward principal of holiness in my heart. What was I but a whited sepulchre? The harlots and publicans would have entered into the kingdom of heaven before me.

How shall I sufficiently praise the Lord for first drawing me to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield.² But Satan would fain a-kept me from hearing him, but the Lord drew me with the cords of his love. So that I could not keep from hearing him wherever he went. But when I have heard him say that every person born into this world deserves God's damnation, and though we went to church and did all the outward things we were but baptized heathens, them words used to sink deep into my heart. I had a great deal of sorrow under his preaching.

But when it pleased God to call him away, I went to hear Mr. John Wesley. His words was sharper to me then a two-edged sword, and I cannot but always honour him as an instrument in God's hands of showing me the true way of salvation by Jesus Christ. September 10th, 1739 I heard Mr. Wesley take the 16 chapter of Acts verse 30, the words as flows "What must I do to be saved?"³ Then he explained the ten commandments, which wounded me so much that I was hardly able to stand under him. For I thought I had kept them, as touching the law blameless from my youth up. But hearing them explained, I felt I had broke all of them. So that I could take no rest night nor day by reason of that load of sin which I felt within me. For I felt a hell within me, so that I often cried out in the agony of my soul "What must I do [to be] saved?"

For my soul was like the troubled sea, so that it weighed my body down. So that my mother and others thought I should hardly overcome it. They would [have] had me taking many things. But I knew it was for sin, so that I refused all outward comfort. It used to press much upon me that the power of the Lord was present to heal me, so that I had hope against hope. For I could plead with my dear Saviour, "O

¹Sarah Middleton appears as a single woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). Her hand is legible and spelling in this account fairly good, but she uses no punctuation or paragraphing. She died in early 1753; see CW to SGW, Apr. 16, 1753.

²Whitefield preached several times in London in Jan. 1739, and then again in late May to early June, before departing for North America.

³Middleton appears to misremember the date; according to JW's *Journal*, he preached on this text in Moorfields and Kennington Commons on Sept. 9, 1739; see *Works*, 19:95.

Lord thou hast said ‘come unto me all that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest’.⁴ I felt myself so vile that I thought hell was ready to swallow me up. But I found Christ’s everlasting arms was under me.

The 14 of September, when I was in the greatest agony of soul I heard a voice say unto me, “Daughter be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.”⁵ At the same time I felt so much love in my heart that I could hardly contain myself, for I wanted the whole world to feel what I did. I was at the same time restored to my bodily health as well as ever I was in my life. But I was much tempted to keep it to myself and not to tell Mr. Wesley what the Lord had done for me. But that saying of our Lord’s pressed much upon me that “there were ten cleansed, but where are the nine; there is none that is returned to give thanks save this stranger.”⁶ So that gave me courage to go to him and lee him know how gracious the Lord had been to me.

For I was caught as a fire brand out of the fire. I was full of pride and passion and everything that was evil, but did not know it, for I never remember our teachers to speak against it. For I was alive without the law once, but when it came in a spiritual meaning sin revived, and I died. But thanks be to God for his free grace, for showing mercy to the chief of sinners. For it is not of him that willeth, nor him that runneth, but God that showeth mercy.

Blest be the name that set me free,
The name that sure salvation brings!
The Sun of righteousness on me,
Has rose with healing in his wings.⁷

Blessed be God, now I can say “Whom have I in heaven but thee and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.”⁸

Thee I can love and thee alone
with holy peace and inward bliss;
To find thou tak’st me for thy own,
O what a happiness is this!⁹

Glory be to the Lord I feel a continual peace and love springing up in my heart day by day. I know I do not commit sin, for my soul is always hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and I know I shall be filled. I used to rest in going to church and sacrament; but now I do not rest upon them, but upon Christ Jesus my Lord and my God. But I find it a glorious liberty to use the means of grace and not abuse them. Glory be to thee, O Christ. I find I gather strength daily, for I used to be afraid to speak to my carnal relations what God had done for my soul, but now I find I am constrained to speak, though I know they will cast me out as a byword and a proverb of reproach. When I was of the world, the world loved its own. But now Christ has choose me out of the world, therefore the world hates me. But this I rejoice in,

⁴Matt. 11:28.

⁵Cf. John 9:2.

⁶Cf. Luke 17:17–18.

⁷CW, “Congratulations to a Friend upon Believing in Christ,” st. 4, *HSP* (1749), 204. In her rendition Middleton inverts “has rose” and “on me,” obscuring the rhyme.

⁸Ps. 73:25.

⁹Antoinette Bourignon, “Renouncing All for Christ,” st. 8; as published in English translation by JW, *HSP* (1739), 124.

for it only sets a mark upon me to show what master I belong to.
I am, dear sir,
Your affectionate but unworthy sister in Christ,

Sarah Middleton

Endorsement: by CW, “Sarah Middleton / May 25. 1740” and “Sarah Middleton’s / Experience / May 1740.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/5.¹⁰

¹⁰For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[London]
May 31, 1740

To the Ministers called Methodists,

Sirs, for the glory of God, which I think is here deeply concerned, and at the earnest request of several Christian friends who I am persuaded love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, I have been induced to write the following lines. Whether they will meet with a favourable acceptance or not, I do not know. But sure I am, the honour and interest of my Master the Lord Jesus's cause not only constrains me to speak but also to cry aloud against those lying dreamers who cause his people to err, and thereby to pervert their ways. These false, dissembling hypocrites, who by falling into diverse strange postures, and their frightful shrieks and groans, and other ridiculous gestures, would make the world sensible that the work of conversion is manifestly wrought upon their souls. Whereas it is greatly to be questioned whether they are not entire strangers even to the base, real, or effectual impression of God's Holy Spirit.

Indeed Mr. [Howell] Harris, on Wednesday the 21st of May, to justify these strange methods was pleased to allege the example of the 3,000 convicted at the preach of Peter, [and] the conviction and conversion of the trembling jailer. But we must observe that the latter of these (as that of St. Paul and of a few others) was preceded by some miraculous circumstances, and those too of an extraordinary kind. But as to the former of which, as also of all others, we only read this bare affirmation—viz., that they believed. Which plainly shows that the dew of the Holy Ghost falls in mild and gentle showers on the hearts of the unconverted; and not in storms of sundry violent passions, and other foolish and wild extravagances. I do not indeed deny, or disbelieve, but that there are some pious and well-meaning souls who are troubled with great spiritual conflicts and inward struggles of the mind; but not to these excesses neither. And besides, those who are sincere are always careful to conceal these things from the world, lest they should be thought guilty of hypocrisy and affectation.

O then my dear brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, suffer not yourselves to be deceived. Indulge not your heart in the belief of these things, because they may seem as seals to your ministry. Consider that the heretics of all ages found some followers, who pretended to experience those things in their souls which they falsely and blasphemously taught.

A little while ago the fields seemed white unto harvest. But now [they] are in great danger to be blasted by the spreading infection of these false brethren. Already the atheist and libertine begin to rejoice and triumph in that disgrace which, by these means, is brought upon the glorious gospel of our God. The deist continues still more rooted and confirmed in his obstinate notions—viz., that Christianity is all a cheat. And you will find in the end, by encouraging and countenancing such practices, you will lose the good seed, which is the sincere people, and retain the chaff only, which are the hypocrites.

O my brethren, I believe you are harmless as doves. But be ye also wise as serpents! You may perhaps think me uncharitable because I speak so freely of these things. But consider they are not according to Scripture, and God himself declares that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Address: "To Mr. Charles Wesley."

Endorsements: by CW, "Anon. May 31. 1740"; "May 30 1740 / of the cryings out"; and "May 31. 1740 / I judge nothing before the time. / I know nothing yet as I ought to know. / I am not God and Counsellor."

Additional Endorsement: by CW, "Feb. 1751. He now seems to have much reason on his side."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/144.

**From Martha Jones¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
June 1, 1740

Reverend Sir,

I should have been very glad if I had been excused from this task and was in hopes you would forget to ask me for it again. I knew it was my duty to obey you as my spiritual pastor but in this I thought I could not indeed. It was a secret pride in my heart which made me so unwilling. I knew my incapacity to write anything of this kind as it ought, and was loath to have my ignorance discovered. Oh pray for me that all self may be utterly rooted out; that I may become as a little child in all things. And now, according to the ability God shall give me, I will proceed.

I was brought up in all the outward duties of religion. At the age of fourteen I was confirmed and solicited by my parents to receive the holy sacrament. My father had taken care to provide me books of instruction, the authors of which were, as he called them, sound Churchmen. Thus I went on for some time and thought I should be saved for these things. But this shadow of goodness cast aside the form of godliness. Instead of the church, the playhouse was my greatest delight. Thus I sought death in the error of my ways and grieved the Holy Spirit. But God, out of his tender love, hedged up my way with thorns to stop me in my sinful course, and embittered all my pleasures by continual crosses and disappointments in all my affairs. I sought after creature happiness, but it pleased him to deny me in what went nearest my heart. I could find no rest in anything. Yet still I would not come to him in whom only true rest is to be found.

And now behold the amazing mercy of my offended Lord. He would not let me escape him but let his terrors surround me that my sins might not destroy me. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me and his hand pressed me sore. A horrible dread overwhelmed me, my sins were set in array before me and now I felt I was a damned sinner. I strove all I could to stifle these convictions, but neither company nor my beloved amusements, seeing and reading plays, would not do. The fire of God's wrath was kindled in my soul and I could not put it out. I thought every moment the hand of God was upon me to slay me and send me down to hell. My heart was so hard I could not pray.

I continued in this terrible condition some months, when on my birthday, as I was thinking on my miserable state and wishing I had never been born, and despairing of mercy, on a sudden I was strongly moved to pray. I immediately retired, cast myself on the ground, and cried for mercy. My dear Saviour heard my prayer and comforted my heart. My terrors ceased and every fear was gone and I thought my sins were forgiven; though then I had never heard of any such thing.

Now I began to work and amend my life, and sought righteousness by the works of the law, being ignorant of the righteousness which is of God through faith in his Son Jesus Christ. I went on in this dead way upward of two years. At last I heard of Mr. [George] Whitefield a little before he went to Georgia.² I heard him preach four times, but the account I had of his life had much more effect upon me than his sermons. The piety of the young preacher made a deep impression and I had a glimpse how far I was from being a Christian. I now grew very uneasy. The preaching in the churches afforded me no comfort. Then I was told of Mr. Broughton, but found his doctrine the same with what I had all along heard.³ The people praised him, but I found no benefit. However, I went of a Tuesday night to hear him and happy was it for

¹Martha Jones (b. c. 1722) appears as a single woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46) through Aug. 1742. She likely died about this time, given CW's later endorsement.

²This would have been during Whitefield's earliest ministry in London, before departing in early 1738 for Georgia.

³Thomas Broughton currently held a lectureship at St. Helen's Church, Bishop's Gate, London.

me, for there I first saw and heard your dear brother, but was little the better.⁴ The next night at [St. Michael's] Basingshaw I heard him and felt he was a teacher sent by God, my heart was knit to him and I thought I could follow him over the world. I heard him whenever he preached and receive the word with gladness and was much comforted and instructed thereby.

The Holy Scriptures, which were before but as a dead letter to me, were now spirit and life. I prayed day and night for faith to believe in those precious promises, and God gave me to believe they should all be accomplished in me in his due time. Your brother's departure to Germany grieved me very much,⁵ but I was not a little comforted when you came amongst us. Then I blessed my dear Lord, who out of his tender love did not in this sense leave us comfortless. Your sermon of the threefold state, which I often heard with tears, showed me I was one of those that was seeking God but as yet had not found him.⁶ I went on my way sorrowing, waiting, till Jesus should reveal himself unto me.

I have already mentioned how I was delivered three years before from fear of punishment and could not be brought under bondage to fear again. This may seem strange to some, but known to God are all his works. It pleased him as I was sitting at home one night to give me to believe my sins were forgiven, that Christ died for me and his righteousness was imputed to me. This came with such power into my soul as I cannot express. I was filled with joy and wanted to declare it. Brother Thompson came to see me soon after and I told him, he rejoiced with me and said he would tell Mr. Wesley. The next Sunday night when your brother had done expounding at Mr. Syms, they said I must stay for Mr. Wesley was coming to me.⁷ When I heard this I was so terrified by Satan that I trembled exceedingly and began to doubt. I thought I heard the devil say, "Do not dare to tell this lie, your were not justified." Mr. Wesley was now come. I told him as well as I could what God had done for my soul and was much strengthened by what he said. After this the devil left me and my faith increased. I walked for some time in the light of God's countenance and was at peace.

But the Lord began to show me my heart and I was much cast down. Many temptations surrounded me and fear was on every side. But my dear Saviour succoured me in all my sorrows, that I did not utterly faint. Indeed it pleased God always greatly to comfort me by your ministry, so that I could not help being greatly troubled at your departure from London. You and your brother gone we were left as sheep without a shepherd.⁸ Those who were left to guide us, led us into strange paths. I was brought into great confusion. Then I cried unto the Lord to help me, for vain was the help of man. But he hid his face from me and I was sore troubled. Satan vexed me with all his storms and said, "Where is now thy God?"⁹ Thus I was distressed on every side. It would be endless to recount every temptation that beset me and conflict which I endured, by which my soul was brought nigh unto hell and I almost despaired of seeing this great salvation. Yet, I was enabled to say unto the Lord, "Though thou slay me yet will I trust

⁴This was apparently Tues., Feb. 21, 1738, when JW preached at St. Helen's (see *Works*, 18:226). JW does not record preaching anywhere the next day, but would preach at St. Michael's, Basingshaw on at least two occasions after his return from Germany.

⁵JW had departed June 13, 1738, to visit the Moravians in Herrnhut, Germany.

⁶This was CW's sermon on 1 John 3:14, preached first at St. George's church in London on July 16, 1738. A manuscript copy of the sermon survives in shorthand, including a register on the inside flyleaf of where CW preached it in the coming months (MARC, MA 1977/597/5).

⁷JW expounded at the house shared by John Syms and Peter Syms on Sunday evening, Jan. 14, 1739; see *Journal, Works*, 19:31.

⁸In part because of the death of their older brother, Samuel Jr. in Nov., JW and CW were away from London for most of the last quarter of 1739.

⁹Ps. 42:3.

in thee.”¹⁰

Though I much doubted of my justification because I did not always feel it so strongly as the first, yet I could not but think—nay, I could not but believe—I was. Indeed, I was confounded when so many of our sisters gave it up, who were so much stronger than I and thought it was presumption in me. Yet I dare not say I was not, I was not justified. I poured out my complaints to my dear Redeemer in tears and groans, for otherwise I could not pray. But he was as one that heareth not. I would not consent to leave the ordinances, though they said we should not go to church nor pray nor receive the sacrament. These things shocked me. Not that I trusted in any of these things, God by your ministry had taught me better. It was Jesus Christ I wanted and him only I sought in them. But indeed I feared these men were bringing another schism into our church. This grieves me very much and I earnestly pray, and doubt not but you will join with me, that God would preserve her and restore her to her primitive purity; which I trust he will do since he hath raised two or three faithful ministers and has made them instruments in his hand to carry on this great work.

I continued in great perplexities and had almost given up my hope when God sent you to us again and on Easter Sunday I heard you preach and the Lord strengthened and confirmed my faith.¹¹ My doubts and fears vanished and the Lord made his way plain before my face. And now I believe I shall see his full salvation. Oh praise the Lord on my behalf and let his name be glorified for all his great and undeserved mercies to me. Dear sir, accept this imperfect account, which in obedience to you, I have wr[itten] much against my will. From

Your weak sister in Christ,

Martha Jones

Endorsement: by CW, “Martha Joan June 1. 1740” and “Martha Joan’s / Experience / Now with God!”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/3.¹²

¹⁰Job 13:15.

¹¹CW preached both morning and evening on Easter Sunday, Apr. 6, 1740, at the Foundery; see MS Journal.

¹²For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Mary Jane Ramsey¹
(a solicited testimonial)

June 4, 1740

Reverend Sir,

With the woman of Samaria I may say, “Come see a man that told me all that ever I did in my life.”² For the man Christ has turned my eyes back to the tender years of my childhood, wherein are set before me many sins that I had quite forgotten. I shall mention some particulars that the Lord has set before me and how graciously he has from time delivered me from some of them.

The first [sin] was passion, which I brought into the world with me. And as I have heard my parents say, I was very passionate in my infancy. But when I grew to the age of two years my parents began to check those evil tempers. From four years of age I can remember many things, particularly the death of my brother who was twelve months old when he died. I was then four years of age. I was very inquisitive to know where he would go and what must become of him. My mother talked to me as my tender age could then bear, telling me he was gone to God. But I said he was here still. “He lays in the coffin,” said I. She then told me his soul was gone into the Golden City but what must be done with him now when we go to the burying. They told me he must be put in a hole in the churchyard. Then I cried. But they pacified me by telling me he was to be fetched out by angels. But when we returned from the grave and I saw not the angels came, then again I wept sadly. But they told me the angels did not come while the people stood there. But still I was very much concerned, and I thought I could willingly go to the Golden City also.

I was soon after sent to school where my parents took great care to keep [me] constant. There among the other children I did not fail to observe pride, and would not go to school without I was dressed clean and in such and such a dress as such and such other children had. I cannot but observe how natural these things come into the world with us, and how soon the old dragon tempts us. From about the age of six or seven years, one morning as I was going to school it was very cold, and my mother gave me a pair of gloves and I did not like them. But she bade me put them on and charged me to go with them. Away went I in a passion but did not dare let her know. I murmured and contrived which way I should do, for I was resolved not to go quite to the school with them on. “Well,” said I as I went along, “where shall I pull them off?” Not in this street, thought I, for several people that live in this street know me and if they see me they will tell my mother. At last I appointed that I would pull them off when I came to the corner of such a street. And Satan he came in and caused me to know he should have me if I did not pull them off just at the place. Well after that, as [I] walked along, my anger began to abate, so that when I came to the place, I forgot the vow and passed the place and went directly to school with the gloves on. But when I came to the door I could not go in for some time, for it came fresh into my memory what a bargain I had made with the devil, and I trembled very greatly to think he had cheated me. So which way to turn I could not tell well. Then there came a thought, “Go back to the place and pull them off and then you’ll be secure.” So I was going back, but again I remembered that I not only said I would pull them off there but also that I would not go so far as the school door with [them]. I was quite confused and knew not what to do, but thought the devil would have me. At last I said, “Lord, don’t let him have me.” And so trembling I

¹Mary Jane Ramsey (b. c. 1717?) was apparently of Huguenot lineage, residing in Spitalfields, where she ran a school (her spelling is fairly good, and she uses basic punctuation, but there are no paragraph breaks in the original). She is surely one of the two Mary Ramseys that appear as single women in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). It is less clear whether she is the Mrs. Mary Ramsey whom JW buried in Bunhill fields on Mar. 11, 1762 (see *Journal, Works*, 20:349); this may have been her mother, though “Mrs.” was often used of older single women.

²Cf. John 4:29.

went in with my gloves. But God's preventing grace from that time prevented me ever calling to the devil in that manner.

Some [time] after he tempted me to keep from school. For as I was going, he suggested such evil thoughts against my mistress, telling me she had beat me in the morning. "Don't go to her again. Don't you see what a cross old creature she is! What [causes her to] be so cross to you, that are her sister's daughter?" (for she was my aunt). So I was already puffed up with pride. Oh, thought I, she ought to be very good to me, better than to the rest of her scholars. But instead of that she is worse to me. So I went not that afternoon but walked about the street, for I did not dare go home till the school was done. And all my school fellows were at school, so that I did not know where to go. But [I] thought I would walk about the door to watch when the children came out, that I might go home at the usual hour. But mark how the devil cheated me again, for there were two or three children that came out together. So I thought to be sure the school was over. So away ran I home. But when I came home it was an hour too soon. And my mother began to question me how I came home so soon, and withal bade me [be] sure to tell her the truth, telling me she would go and see if I had been or not. But if I would tell her the truth she would forgive me for that time. So that time I came off without being beat.

Well after that I took a great dislike of the school and became a tell-tale. Sometimes my mother would rebuke me and sometimes she would hearken unto me. Then I thought I had got the day, when she did but say, "Well, I will speak to her. The child shall not be abused."

When about ten years of age I began not to be so obedient as before but would stay a great while at an errand and play by the way, so that my parents was daily grieved at me. Well sometimes I would sit and think and consider and found that I did not do right. But still after I had promised to myself to do better, and so I did for a day or two. But then I forgot again and began again. Oh the infinite goodness of God, now I can look back and consider his great mercy towards such a young devil as I. For by a particular dream, I was startled to amend and in a great fright I told the dream.

Another time I thought I saw the devil standing upon the bed with great claws over me, ready to take me, and with the fright I shrieked. My mother asked me what was the matter. I told her and she bid me pray to God and she would pray God for me too. So these things left a great terror upon me for some time.

But at thirteen I began again, and getting acquainted with a neighbour's daughter, a polite young lady. Oh good Lord, how dangerous is evil company, especially to youth. For then had it not been for the preventing grace of God through the care of my parents, I had doubtless run into all manner of vice. For I was puffed up with pride to excess, and was ready to go anywhere with Miss Polly. They would send their servant for me to go with her to see plays, but glory be to God, my parents would not give me leave. But then I thought they were very cruel not to let me go. Many tears would I shed for this. O devilish nature in youth! What, cry when we are kept from going to the devil? O amazing love of God that shows me how his mercy has always been over me.

Now I can admire the goodness of God towards me and can say, "Praise the Lord, Oh my soul!" For the poor soul [of] this young gentlewoman ran quickly to destruction and was cut off in her youth in the midst of her sins. But my dear tender mother kept me from her long before she run so fast to destruction. And I much about that time began to think what a wicked creature I was. I had a great sting of many disobedient acts towards my parents, though I had scarce ever been two hours at once from the sight of my parents. But the devil don't want a great while to act his part. For I very well remember I was very proud and wanted to climb higher and to follow the fashions as nigh as I could. But when I went to lay me down to rest at night, then I was frightened lest I should never awake. I felt the pangs of hell and misery very plain. But then I would forget it and divert myself from it in the day. But at night the pangs would return. I said nothing to no one. I told nobody of it, but I became a little more thoughtful and prayed God to forgive me and I would do better.

I forgot to make mention what a young pharisee I was all this while, for I would not go to bed at night nor forget when I was up to pray. But hold— not pray, but say my prayers as I called it—for I could say as many prayers by heart as anyone of my age. But I remember one particular thing, which was thus.

My parents were in great grief, and I being left alone in a room, I looked up to God and thought he could help us. I threw myself on my knees and prayed, I think for almost an hour, and certainly I did not want words. The Lord opened my mouth. I prayed and praised the name of the Lord and the Lord heard me and at that time wonderfully granted the request. Yet sometimes afterwards I began to doubt whether there was a God or not and to reason how God could be from all eternity without beginning or end, especially without beginning. There I stumbled insomuch that I would study on that till I was not able to stir nor move.

About fifteen years of age I was taken into the number of the communicants in the French church. Before this I began to be very uneasy and desirous to go to the Lord's table. But when I had been, then I thought I was safe and that I had done something very well. And I here declare that I have received [the sacrament] this eight years—being not a weak believer, for I was no believer at all. And yet the Lord has been pleased to manifest himself greatly to me lately. I believed something, so far.

The first time I heard Mr. [George] Whitefield was the second of June last.³ His text was out of the Gospel of Saint John, the seventeenth chapter, the third verse, "This is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." I thought the doctrine to be very true. Nay, I was assured it was. I agreed to everything he spoke, but did not apply it to myself. Yet I believed all he said. Then I heard him the Monday following [June 4], at Blackheath, the text was, "Watch for ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."⁴ I liked the discourse exceeding well, but applied it to myself so well that I scold[ed] at a young gentleman that was a scoffer. He called somebody that was by him "Whitefield's disciple," and laughed and scoffed; and I told him he was the devil's disciple. Still while I was looking at another, I forgot to look at myself. For Mr. Whitefield was speaking of what the world called "Christians": that they would go to plays, games, public houses, and such and all manner of what is called harmless diversion. Still I could find nothing for me because I did not do just this in effect, still [I] did not see the evil that was in me. But coming home, I hushed everyone that offered to speak one word against him.

I did not hear him for some time after, but I went on as usual to church every Sunday, to the sacrament every month, preparing myself the whole week before—using much the preparation books, else I thought it was not right to go to the preparation sermon. So I came with a whole week's righteousness, or rather a whole week's pharisaical hypocrisies. Yet I had a longing desire to hear Mr. Whitefield again, and was very sorry that I had not gone to hear him before I did.

Well, when Mr. Whitefield came to town again, which was July twenty-first on Saturday evening, I went to Kennington.⁵ His subject was from the third chapter of Genesis, the nineteenth verse, and he there showed us our sinful nature and our fall. Well I agreed to everything he said, but still was unconcerned.

I went the next day to that same place and hear him on the thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, [and] part of the thirty-ninth verses of the ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, where he showed that believers had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit now as well as formerly.⁶ And there I was sadly stumbled, in that he said we might have the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, but if we had not its sanctifying graces we might go to hell at last.

³According to Whitefield's *Journal*, he preached in Hackney on June 2, 1739; he does not give his text.

⁴Matt. 25:13. Whitefield again notes the occasion, but not the text, in his *Journal*.

⁵Whitefield records this sermon at Kennington Common in his *Journal*, but not the text.

⁶Ibid.

The next day I went to Hackney. His text was, “What think you of Christ?”⁷ But that time I heard little of his sermon (being full of the devil but knew it not), for there was a fine dressed up gentleman and his spouse in the place where I stood that mocked every word he said and much interrupted those that stood by them. And I, thinking myself much better than them, I scolded them all the while and was so angry that when he had done preaching, I called them infidels, but knew not that I was then one myself.

The Thursday following, being the twenty-sixth of July, I went again to Hackney and he was then on Abraham’s faith in offering up his son Isaac.⁸ I hearkened and began to have, as I thought, to have some comfort more than usual. But my comfort was thus: there was that day a horse race a little distance from us and his soul was moved much towards them, and [I] was rejoiced to see that I was one of them that he called God’s children that came to hear the word, rather than go to see those poor souls that were labouring to serve their master. There I thanked God I was not as other men, especially those.

The next day I went to Kennington [Common] again. The text was out of St. Matthew the eighth chapter [and] the twenty-eighth verse,⁹ when the whole city of the Gergesenes came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him they besought him that he would depart out of their courts. And there he showed how we were in a worse condition than the two men possessed of devils. For though they were bodily possessed, they knew it; but we had the devil in our hearts and souls and knew it not. Well, but I thought I had not the devil in me, because I did not those gross outward sins.

The Sunday following I heard him again.¹⁰ His text was “Be not righteous overmuch.”¹¹ Well, there I was very joyful and began to think he spoke very much to my purpose. Well, thought I, surely there must be some change wrought in me, for he speaks nothing but Scripture. But from that time I rested very easy, thinking that the Lord was able to work this change.

Then I did not hear him for a fortnight. After which was Thursday, August the second.¹² His text was “Old things are passed away and behold all things are become new.”¹³ There he showed how we must be renewed in this life, but I was much startled at that. He said the soul, when it departed, carried the faculties with it. Well, thought I, “What must I do now?” For I began to find I had many bad faculties in my soul.

The Sunday following I was at Bexley. He expounded in the morning, part of the sixth chapter of St. Mark from the thirty-fourth verse to the end of the chapter.¹⁴ There indeed the words were¹⁵ more impressed upon me than ever they had been before. I received the blessed sacrament that day at Bexley

⁷Matt. 22:42. According to Whitefield’s *Journal*, this sermon on July 23 was in the evening, at Hackney Marsh.

⁸Whitefield’s *Journal* account mentions the horse race too; but does not note that he preached his sermon on Gen. 22:12.

⁹Orig., “twenty-seventh chapter [and] the thirty-eighth verse”; an error. Whitefield’s *Journal* agrees on the date, but gives no text.

¹⁰On July 29 Whitefield preached in the morning at Moorfields and the afternoon at Kennington Commons; in neither case does he give his text.

¹¹Eccles. 7:16.

¹²According to Whitefield’s *Journal*, this sermon was in Newington.

¹³2 Cor. 5:17.

¹⁴According to his *Journal*, the exposition on the morning of Aug. 5, 1739 was outside the door of the home of the Delamotte’s in Bexley, the communion at Henry Pier’s church there, and the afternoon sermon back in the Delamotte’s yard. Again, Whitefield does not give his texts.

¹⁵Orig., “was.”

church, and heard him again in [the] afternoon, on Abraham's faith.¹⁶

In all I heard him thirteen times. But all that while I did not apply anything to myself, but was very glad and thought "Ah now he gives it home to you all," especially to his adversaries. But [I] thought it did not belong so much to his followers. But however, I was very willing to be one, and very much admired him, and was exceeding glad to hear of so many converts. But [I] thought I did not want so much conversion as those outward notorious sinners.

But the Lord has shown me since that I was worse than any one of them all. For indeed I do perceive that no one had such a stony hard heart as I. For though in that time I would go home in a great hurry, with a great deal of the sermons in my head, so that I could repeat half or sometimes three-quarters of the discourse—but, O Lord, how gracious is thy goodness in keeping me and leaving me out of hell. For though I had that memory, how did I look on those relenting souls that wept and were in strong conviction? Them I called hypocrites, everyone that I saw weeping; and thought I, "You are an hypocrite to be sure, for anyone can be as much affected without all that." But since, I have often wished that the Lord would be pleased to work so in my soul. But he has shown me that his time is not ours, nor his ways ours.

I forgot to mention when Mr. Whitefield told us we were by nature half beast and half devil there was something in that heart of mine that showed me it was very true. Though it was such a hard heart, those words made some impression that I was really convinced that I was inwardly very wicked. And another thing that worked in me was some words of that hymn called "Christ, the Friend of Sinners." These words, "his bleeding heart will make you room, his open side shall take you in,"¹⁷ remained with me so close that I believe there has never been a day since, nor scarcely an hour, but those words were with me. But to return to his [statement that] I was half a beast and half a devil. Well, thought I, how can I help it if I am so by nature. But after he was gone I set about to help it, and would read nothing but good books and would pray more. Instead of going to the sacrament once a month, I went every Lord's day and was very desirous to be taken notice of that I was a constant communicant. And also I entered into a society.

But alas I was just where I was before, or rather worse. So I went on until Mr. John Wesley came up, which was the fourth of September. At Dowgate Hill he expounded the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, beginning at the sixteenth verse.¹⁸ And there indeed I was shown my state and my wants, both spiritual and temporal, in that he said we should have sorrow in the world and the world would rejoice. Every word spoken that night did much concern me, for I found a trial was coming on.

For before that, as soon as my neighbours and acquaintances knew that I went to hear the field-preachers, they began to persecute and took their children from me and put them to other schools. But I admire how the Lord works everything for the best, for the words have all come to pass that were spoken that night, and the remembrance of them has been a great comfort to me continually in the midst of many troubles. But many temptations came in between, that whispered in my ear and bade me, "Leave off, then you will get in business again as before." But the Lord would tell me on the other hand, "Think you that my blessing will sooner attend thee if thou leave off and go away." But then the deceiver would tell me: "You have heard a great deal. Keep close to what you heard." But then I found the soul wanting food as the body craves temporal food. So I went on. As often as possible I would come and hear the word.

The second time I heard Mr. John [Wesley] was on the twelfth chapter of the second book of Samuel. The Lord that time plainly showed me I was the person guilty of all those crimes that I had

¹⁶His sermon on Gen. 22:12.

¹⁷CW, "Christ the Friend of Sinners," st. 8, *HSP* (1739), 103.

¹⁸JW records being at the society hosted by Mr. Crouch at Dowgate Hill this night, but not the text; see *Journal, Works*, 19:94.

disdainfully looked on others for. I could not creep out no manner of way; there was no room. I stood as if I had been outwardly guilty of all notorious crimes, insomuch that I was ashamed to look back and see how I had set myself at a great distance from such.

The thirtieth of September I heard him again in Moorfields. The text was the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew, the twenty-eighth verse. And till then I always brought home great pieces of the discourses that I was very proud and was much admired by some. But that time I stood till Mr. Wesley had done collecting,¹⁹ and got in talk with somebody and afterward must go see him as far as the coach. So that when I returned I began to consider how I should talk of the comfortable sermon. I had forgot every word, text and all. I believe if [I] must have been condemned to die or tell three words, I must have died, for I did not remember one. Ah, thought [I], what is come to me? Well the Lord has justly punished me. And from that time I became very dead to the word, though I began to feel it went deeper. So I continued under the word, and heard Mr. [Westley] Hall, Mr. [Jacob] Rogers, and was the more calm, expecting something of the Lord but I knew not what, nor what to ask for. I found I had many evil tempers which had dominion over me and could not tell how to get rid of them. They began to be a great burden to me. But hearing the word often and reading some of Mr. Whitefield's sermons [helped?].

In February last I was meditating on what I had heard and saw I wanted the remission of my sins. And the Lord spoke unto me saying, "I am nigh that justifieth. Thou art justified. Believe and thou shall be saved." Then I said, "Lord I will believe." And then I found myself quite another. I was, as I thought, passed from death to life. I thought I was in another world. But my ungratefulness unto God was very great, and also the temptations very strong. The devil would have persuaded me it was a delusion. The twenty-first of February I heard your dear brother [JW] again, on the seventh chapter of the Romans and there he described my very temper. And the devil told me, "There, are you justified? You that have so many evil tempers? No, surely you are not well." But I said, "I believe I am." And I began to reason with him saying, "Well, but I have not all those evil tempers now. Sometimes there is something stirs but it does not reign in me." So that I did not quite let go, for the Lord answered me several times telling me [it] was not a delusion. But I told him my heart was hard. But the Lord bade me believe, and I should have a heart of flesh. But I found my heart was still harder. And [I] saw one weeping and another in strong convictions; other[s] would rejoice in the Lord for what he had done for them. So that on either side the Lord worked in some soul. Now I did not call them hypocrites, as formerly I had, but desired that the Lord would work in me. But still I was the same, hard as a stone. So that when I was alone I could not so much as sing a hymn. There was one that I indeed used to sing, that hymn called "The Method."²⁰ That I thought suited me very well. But at last I could sing none, except when I was among some of the brethren or hearing the word. But when I was at home by myself I could not sing at all. If I offered to sing, I could not tell what to sing; there was nothing I could see that was fit for me. Sometimes I could not open my mouth, I was just as if I had been asleep.

I continued still constant in coming to hear the word and on Thursday, the twenty-eighth of February, Mr. John [Wesley]'s text was out of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the fourth chapter, the twenty-fifth verse. In that sermon I was very much comforted. But the Saturday and Sunday following I was again as dark as ever, but was in great expectation that the Lord had still something in store for me. I continued to go to the Foundery Sundays and Thursdays, and to the society in Brick Lane.²¹ And there was great division in the society, that grieved me very much and I knew not what to do. I was very loath to leave them; and staying with them, there was disputes and animosities. And here I was very much troubled and I came away from them.

¹⁹I.e., summarizing his main points at the end of the sermon.

²⁰George Herbert, "The Method," adapted by JW in *HSP* (1739), 46–47.

²¹See the letter to CW from this society dated May 3, 1740, above.

At last the Lord sent you, reverend sir. I can but admire the wisdom of God in seeing how he sends out the labourers one after another—that what one has planted, the other waters, and the Almighty gives the increase. I had never heard you before, but had been desirous of a long time to hear you. The Thursday that you came I heard you and received much comfort;²² and also the Friday and Sunday following I had great comforts. But still when I was at home I could not raise my heart to God, and began to be also very dead in prayer. Then again when I heard the word I was a little comforted. And so I went on, mourning that I could not mourn more. And about a fortnight after you were come, I fell into such mourning that my heart was ready to break. I came on Monday morning to speak with you.²³ But when I came I could not speak. You asked me if [I] was justified. I said yes, but I could not tell when. Nor I don't know what you said to me after. For I was quite stupid, and so continued for some time. Then you admitted me into the society.²⁴ I was much rejoiced at that and then, when your dear brother came up,²⁵ I received much comfort by him again. But the Sunday before Ascension Day I was frightened, and saw myself in such a manner that I loathed myself. Your subject was then on the forty-third chapter of Isaiah beginning at the twenty-second verse.²⁶ There you showed that in our best we had eaten and drunk damnation, and that we were but moral devils. This frightened me and I saw myself so black that I thought I must not go to the Lord table any more. And the devil suggested such thoughts that I had eat[en] and drunk damnation enough. So that I had a great mind not to go, though I had purposed to go. This was the first time that even I had a mind to keep away, but I thought there was as much danger in staying away. So the Lord permitted me to go, black and devilish as he had shown me I was. And I received much comfort in the evening by Mr. Hall. And the Thursday following, being Ascension Day, I had so much joy when you were preaching that I thought my soul seemed as if it was ascending into heaven.²⁷ Indeed the joy began in the morning when Mr. [Howell] Harris was preaching on the words “Thy kingdom come.”²⁸ And it so increased in the evening while you were preaching that methought I saw my Saviour in glory. And so [it] continued, or rather increased, for in the society the soul seemed as if it was out of the body.

I cannot utter the joy I felt. Words cannot express it. Indeed, after I was first justified, I several times had joy and manifestations. Sometimes I thought when I was at the sacrament that I did not dare lift my eyes, for I stood as if Christ was just there on the cross and his blood descending into my heart. Particularly about five weeks ago. My father was then sick. He sent for the minister to administer the sacrament to him. And while the minister was giving him the bread and wine, the blood of Christ dropped into my heart. I burst out into tears, and wept for joy. My father thought I cried because he was sick. He would have comforted me, but I could not speak. But I knew it was not for the cause that he thought. And many such joys I have had. But none like that of Ascension Day. And since there remains a small still joy that in all events it springs up and comforts me against all the temptations of the world and the devil.

I also find much comfort in the meetings at sister [Frances] Robinson's. And the state I now feel myself in I cannot describe. For sometimes I feel my heart hard as a stone, yet there is no anger. I don't find any anger at all arise, but could embrace anyone that speaks all manner of evil against me—even taking my bread away, for that they do daily. Yet I could willingly do them good and am in nowise angry

²²CW arrived in London on Apr. 3, 1740; see MS Journal.

²³This would likely be Apr. 21, 1740; CW mentions neither that Monday nor the prior one in MS Journal.

²⁴This would be the society at the Foundery.

²⁵JW arrived back in London on Apr. 23, 1740.

²⁶This was CW's topic in the morning at the Foundery; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 62.

²⁷CW's text was Rom. 8:33–34; see MS Journal.

²⁸Matt. 6:10.

with any. But truly there is not much room for any, for self fills up every corner. It follows me everywhere and stirs up in almost everything that I do. [So] that sometimes I am frightened to see the corruptions of my filthy heart. The Lord shows it [to] me more and more.

O dear sir, reverend father in Christ, remember me in your prayers. Pray that the Lord would cleanse my heart by the inspirations of his Holy Spirit, and that the Lord will be pleased to carry out the work that is began in me. For Satan is very busy and would persuade me that all this is presumption. Indeed I do fear presumption, insomuch that I dare not speak sometimes for I know that is a dreadful sin. But the Lord I hope will keep me from that and all sin. O pray for me that I may never fall away. Cry unto the Lord for me. Pray unto your God and my God, to our Lord Jesus Christ, for me, a corrupted wretch. Oh admirable goodness of God that has sent such faithful labourers into his vineyard to deliver and bring his people out of the Egyptian darkness. I know not how to conclude, for at present methinks my spirit is spread among all the brethren, and a hearty desire to the Bristol brethren. I am often present with them in spirit, though absent in body.

Reverend sir, I beg leave to subscribe myself
One of your young babes in Christ,

Mary Jane Ramsey

Endorsement: by CW, “Mary Ramsay / June 4. 1740” and “Mary Ramsay’s / Experience / June 4. 1740.”
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/13.²⁹

²⁹For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Ebenezer Hewlett¹

August 1740

Tuesday, July 24, 1740, Mr. Charles Wesley, expounding the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, insisted much on verse 8 concerning Stephen full of faith. He affirmed:

First, that justification and pardon of sins are of the same import.

Secondly, that pardon of sins are by faith and not by repentance.

Thirdly, that God cannot forgive sins, but that Christ satisfied for the sins of all the whole world.

Fourthly, that after men are thus justified, they may notwithstanding finally fall away and be damned, taken from Nicholas, one of the seven deacons, verse 5.

Fifthly, that God will not pardon sins because men repent, but because they believe.

Sixthly, that faith is the new nature, the power of God in them.

Seventhly, that good works are not the cause of man's salvation, but the imputed righteousness of Christ is the only cause of it.

Eighthly, that the lowest degree of the mark of a Christian is that they know their sins are forgiven.

These propositions, the most of them, are contrary to Scripture and reason. Yet they are not only affirmed in public assembly but confirmed also by their printed works, as their *Hymns* published by John and Charles Wesley, 2nd edn.² page 51, 75, 108, 113, and many more of their writings which I can prove if disputed.

First, Mr. Charles Wesley will have it that justification and pardon of sins is of the same import; and yet the word "justify" signifies to acquit or to declare the person thus acquitted not guilty, but pardon presupposes the person guilty. This is so evident from all our ideas of the obvious meaning of these words that we are certain it is a manifest mistake in Mr. Wesley.

Second, Mr. Wesley was again mistaken when he affirmed that pardon of sins are by faith and not be repentance, whereas the Scripture frequently joins repentance and forgiveness of sins together. Repentance is said to be preached in his name for forgiveness of sins (Acts 5 and Acts 3:19). Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Thus Mr. Wesley has contradicted the plain word of God.

Thirdly, Mr. Wesley affirmed that God cannot forgive sins, but that Christ has given satisfaction for the sins of all the world. And yet the Scripture saith he is a God pardoning iniquities, transgressions, and sins; and that he is a God ready to pardon sins (Nehemiah 9:17). Let God be true and Wesley a liar.

Fourthly, That men thus justified may yet fall away and be damned, this I own to be true. And thereby he has contradicted himself, for if men are justified by Christ paying their debts for them, yet afterwards may be damned, how then is the debt paid? These are contrary propositions, and so its Wesley against Charles.

Fifthly, Wesley will have it that it is faith, and not repentance, on account of which men are forgiven. And then John the Baptist taught false doctrine when he taught repentance for remission of sins (Luke 3:3). But faith without the work of repentance is dead, and Wesley is very ignorant.

¹Ebenezer Hewlett (d. 1748), a Baptist, self-published several tracts in the last decade of his life challenging other religious writers. This entry is not a letter. It is included due to its rarity and because it reflects one strand of criticism CW was facing at the time.

²I.e., the 2nd edn. of *HSP* (1739).

Sixthly, that faith is the new nature, the power of God in them. Here, if he man's faith without works, he is mistaken. Which I take to be his meaning because he says,

Seventhly, that good works is not the cause of salvation. So that he manifestly makes a separation between faith and good works. I suppose he cannot vindicate these his errors.

Eighthly, he said that the lowest mark of a true Christian is to know their sins are forgiven. Yea he said they must know the time when and the place where their received their pardon. He cites John 2:12, "I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you." Here St. John did not say that they knew the time when, nor the place where, they received their pardon. No, nor that they did so much as know that they were pardoned. But St. John only affirms it of them. It rather looks as though the apostle had a better opinion of them than they had of themselves, as has oftentimes been the case with good people. Is not this man a fine interpreter of Scripture, to beget doubts and fear in the ignorant, contrary to Scripture?

See how he contradicts himself.

First, if as he said God cannot forgive sins, then how can any know their sins are forgiven? A plain contradiction.

Secondly, if God cannot forgive sins, how then can faith be the cause of pardon of sins?

Thirdly, how can any for whom Christ died in their stead to satisfy for their s[ins] fall away and be damned? How is their debt then paid for them?

Fourthly, how can men be pardoned because they believe, if Christ have given satisfaction by his death and sufferings for their sins?

Fifthly, how can God the Father and his Son be alike, if the one cannot show mercy and the other is full of compassion? I confess I shall think Mr. Wesley, as well as Mr. [George] Whitefield, very much mistaken til they can clear themselves.

Source: Ebenezer Hewlett, A Vindication of Archbishop Tillotson and the Author of "The Whole Duty of Man" from the Censures of Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley (Bristol: for the author, 1740), 13–14.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

Foundry, London
October 2, 1740

Dear Charles,

I do heartily join with you in giving God thanks for your recovery. He hath many wise reasons for every event of providence, far above our apprehension, and I doubt not but his having restored you to some measure of health again will answer many ends which as yet you are ignorant of.

I thank you for your kind letter.¹ I call it so because I verily believe it was dictated by a sincere desire of my spiritual and eternal good; there is too much truth in many of your accusations. Nor do I intend to say one word in my own defence, but rather choose to refer all things to him that knoweth all things. This I must tell you, you are somewhat mistaken in my case. Alas, it is far worse than you apprehend it to be! I am not one of those who have never been enlightened or made partaker of the heavenly gift or of the Holy Ghost, but have many years since been fully awakened, and am deeply sensible of sin, both original and actual. My case is rather like that of the church of Ephesus: I have not been faithful to the talents committed to my trust, and have lost my first love.² “Yet is there any hope in Israel concerning this thing?”³ I do not, and by the grace of God I will not, despair. For ever since my sad defection, when I was almost without hope, when I had forgotten God, yet I then found he had not forgotten me. Even then he did by his Spirit apply the merits of the great atonement to my soul, by telling me that Christ died for me. Shall the God of truth, the Almighty Saviour, tell me that I am interested in his blood and righteousness, and shall I not believe him? God forbid. I do, I will believe. And though I am the greatest of sinners, that does not discourage me. For all my transgressions are the sins of a finite person, but the merits of our Lord’s sufferings and righteousness are infinite! If I do want anything without which I cannot be saved (of which I am not at present sensible), then I believe I shall not die before that want is supplied.

You ask many questions which I care not to answer; but I refer you to our dear Lord, who will satisfy you in all things necessary for you to know. I cannot conceive why you affirm yourself to be not Christian—which is, in effect, to tell Christ to his face that you have nothing to thank him for, since you are not the better for anything he hath yet done or suffered for you. Oh what great dishonour, what wondrous ingratitude, is this to the ever-blessed Jesus! I think myself far from being so good a Christian as you are, or as I ought to be. But God forbid that I should renounce the little Christianity I have. Nay, rather let me grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.⁴ Amen.

I know not what other opinion people may have of human nature, but for my part I think that without the grace of God we are utterly incapable of thinking, speaking, or doing anything good. Therefore, if in any part of our life we have been enabled to perform anything good, we should give God the glory. If we have not improved the talents given us, the fault is our own. I find this is a way of talking much used among this people, which has much offended me, and I have often wished they would talk less of themselves, and more of God. I often hear loud complaints of sin, etc.; but rarely, very rarely, any word of praise and thanksgiving to our dear Lord, or acknowledgment of his infinite ...⁵

Source: published transcription; Jackson, *Life of CW*, 1:269–70.

¹While this letter is not known to survive, some of its content is clear from her reply.

²See Rev. 2:1–7.

³Cf. Ezra 10:2.

⁴See 2 Pet. 3:18.

⁵The manuscript letter Jackson was transcribing has been lost, and breaks off in mid-sentence.

Howell Harris to John Lewis¹

Trevecca
October 4, 1740

Self is the idol that would keep us in opposition to Christ. When Christ offers us his righteousness, self cries, “I am not naked and destitute.” When he offers us his power, we cry, “What! Can I *do nothing*? Have I not power of myself? Am I a stock, or a stone?” We are indeed as hard, dead, and senseless to his calling and love as a stone. But we are worse than this. The stone abides where you leave it, but we run from God. When he would be our light, we say, “What! Am I blind? Have I not light already? Where is my *reason*?” Thus are we rich in our own esteem; and who can take the veil from our understandings, and the rebellion from our wills, but he who spoke light from darkness, order from confusion, and life to dead Lazarus? And what can move him to this, but his own free, sovereign will and good pleasure? And what can his end be, but his own glory?

For this let us contend, with all meekness, gentleness, and love towards those who have the will to give him all the glory, though they are not yet taught of him to do it. They think they glorify him most by contending that he loves all his creatures with an equal love; but I am taught otherwise, not of men, but of God. O my dear brother, the sight of God’s distinguishing love to me quite overcomes me. When I might have been an Indian, I am a Christian! When I might have been lifting up mine eyes in torments, I am favoured with the tender mercies of the Lord! Why am I not a blasphemer, a persecutor, a total backslider? Is it because I was more careful and watchful, and made better use of the grace given me than others did? No! No one has been more trifling and unfruitful. Is it not then because he who loved me changes not? O my dear brother, this is food to those who have the law of God written in their hearts, that they are safe not because they are faithful, but because God is unchangeable; and while he remains faithful to his word, no one shall pluck them out of his hands. O glorious covenant, well ordered in all things and sure! This covenant, I think, is too little studied and known. O that I knew how to set forth the glory of God’s distinguishing and unchangeable love.

I received a letter from brother Charles Wesley, and one from brother [William] Seward, from which I find that some misunderstandings have arisen between them, so as to cause them to separate. I fear that our dear Master is not pleased with this, and that his kingdom will not be thus established. Labour for peace, my dear brother; for though our brother John Wesley is not yet enlightened to see God’s electing love, yet, as I firmly believe that he is one of the elect, God will, in his own time, show that to him which is now, for some wise end, hid from him. In the meantime, let him not oppose it, and we will agree in other things, until he sees with us.

Last Thursday I had the honour of being apprehended by two justices, and next Tuesday I am going to take my trial, and expect to be imprisoned. My Lord not only bids, but enables me to “rejoice and be glad.” O that the children of God did taste what sweetness there is in the cross! If they did, they would never be terrified at the thought of it, but would be almost tempted to long for it. When my trial is over, I shall send you a particular account of the whole. And from my new lodging I hope to write to brother Seward and the Wesleys. I shall labour to unite them in affection, till the Lord more fully unites them in judgment. Shall the servants of Jesus contend for anything but love? May the same mind that he has given you, be more abundantly bestowed upon

Your friend and brother in the Lord,

Howell Harris

Source: holograph; National Library of Wales, Trevecca Letters, #272.

¹While this letter is not to CW, it provides helpful context for letters between Harris and CW. John Lewis, a participant in Whitefield’s Tabernacle community in London, was a printer who published books for Whitefield and edited *The Weekly History*.

From the Rev. John Gambold

[Stanton Harcourt]
November 28, 1740

Dear Sir,

I long to hear how it is with you. I was in hopes we should have had your company here before now.¹ Would not a retreat be proper after so much labour? Are there not reasons in your body, in your mind, or in the affair itself that you are engaged in to persuade some intermissions?

I am no judge indeed of what is proper in your undertaking—the feeble condition and, as it were, fate of my soul keeping me still that double-minded man who is blind as well as unstable in all his ways. I esteem you very highly in love, both for your work’s sake and your precious faith, yet am not likely myself to have part or lot in that matter. The light of God’s countenance, which I have enjoyed something of in my past years, seems to have quite forsaken me. The very few moments that I can conceive somewhat of the sweetness of the gospel, it seems to me a thing impossible to be retained long, or to be brought down to common use and enjoyment at the same time that it is highly right and excellent in itself.

I cannot tell you all the torment of my unbelieving heart, nor all the marks I have upon me of one that is ἀδόκιμος² for the work and kingdom of Christ. Yet he knows that I have a love for him, and greater now in the midst of such sin as frequently leaves me no other prospect but to be a castaway, than heretofore when I seemed to have (and I think really had) some degrees of piety and virtue. Not that I can confidently rely on the doctrine of justification by faith in his only merits—I mean so as to find that support and comfort from that light in and zeal for that doctrine which those commonly do who make a practical application of it and bring it home to themselves. But in general I look upon our Saviour as the great friend of mankind, who eased their burden and encouraged our whole race by the glorious salvation which he hath raised and doth raise a few to. For which I love him, whether I shall be of the number of those few or no.

I should be glad to see you and have you abide with us some time at Stanton Harcourt. My sister [Martha] desires to be remembered to you, and so does Betty.³ What you left in my custody is ready for you now, if you will please to call for it.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate,

J. Gambold

I would tell you all my thoughts about the present preaching of the gospel, and all the scruples I want to have solved, if I were sure my letter would not fall into other hands. Till I see you, I will consult the New Testament by myself for the resolution of the most. Only two must be answered from experience. I mean whether the privileges of the gospel (in the highest sense of them) are *merely* and *permanently* to be assumed by those that seek them in this age? And whether (at least in the method things are in at present) such seekers have not a prospect of downright want and real straits before them, were it only (to omit indirect neglect of labour, affectation of setting up for teachers, etc.) from the hatred which the nation has for them and the consequent loss of esteem and business? I can’t tell how it is in the primitive times. It is true the rich at first sold their estates and relieved the church. But that kind of fund could not last always. I am apt to think they kept a fair correspondence with the world with respect to business and commerce. Otherwise it would have been impossible for the primitive Christians to have had bread to eat in the midst of heathen countries or cities. It is another case when persons like-minded can

¹CW had left Oxford on July 7, 1740, and been engaged since in ministry in Bristol and Wales.

²“Unfit,” or “unable to stand the test.”

³Apparently a maid; Gambold had not yet met Elizabeth Walker, whom he married in 1743.

settle by themselves in some remote place, and there work and enjoy the fruits of the earth according to their own laws. Were it only from this one difficulty, I look upon your preaching in England only as a providential alarm; not as a thing designed to continue.

Note added: by CW, “So do I. At this day, Oct. 28, 1775, I believe our preaching only as a providential alarm, not as a thing designed to continue. CW.”

Address: “For / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at the School-House / near S. James’ Church / Bristol.”

Postmark: “Oxford.”

Endorsement: by CW, “NB Nov. 28. 1740 / Gambold’s l[ette]r / to be well considered.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/12.

From the Rev. Nathaniel Wells¹

Cardiff
Saturday night [December 6?, 1740²]

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter with the same brotherly love and affection with which it was wrote,³ and as heartily join in hoping it may be the foundation of an eternal friendship between us. The love and kindness I showed you at Cardiff being far short of what you deserved, was not worth your notice or thanks. Much less can it hope for a better reward. Only as we know who has declared it that “a cup of cold water only, given to a disciple in his name shall in no wise lose its reward.”⁴ And “he that receives a prophet” (gives him entertainment and shows kindness to his person) “in the name of a prophet” (not because he is his kinsman or his friend, or of the same side or party, but merely on the account of his office and the relation he bears to God) “shall have a prophet’s reward.”⁵ The reward a prophet has to give, an interest in his prayers; or that peculiar reward which God will hereafter bestow on a prophet.

But perhaps you chiefly intend my appearing in your behalf in the time of danger, and carrying off in my arms the proud Pharisee, who—provoked at his being stripped of the filthy rags of his own righteousness, and enraged to find himself on a sudden empty, naked, and bereaved of his false props and confidences—was forcing his way through the faint resistance of some standers-by like a roaring lion to devour you.⁶ This indeed has had its reward already, in that inward joy, peace, and satisfaction which, every time I reflect upon it, more and more fills and refreshes my soul for being an instrument of almighty God in delivering you from the strivings of the people, from the hand of the ungodly and wicked man.

Ever since I have been the object of their displeasure and resentment. They have not only whetted their tongue like a sword and shot out their arrows, even bitter words, but have communed and taken counsel together how they may take away my being. One result of the secret counsels (I am informed) was to write a complaining letter to the Bishop of Llandaff.⁷ Another, to deprive me of part of the salary of my school. In this last they have been disappointed. And I am so far from being disturbed or uneasy at the other that I even wish his Lordship may be apprized of it, as it will probably give me an opportunity of vindicating your doctrine, as well as justifying my own conduct. If his Lordship should concern himself so far as to write me about it, I promise you a sight of his letter and my answer. In the meantime I joy, yea and will still rejoice in God my Saviour. In him is my truth and he is stronger than they. He will send from heaven, and will save me from the malice of them that would eat me up. And under the shadow of his wings shall be my refuge, till this tyranny be over and past.

What tho’ proud Pharisees contest,
And Satan’s host combine.
While faith in Jesus arms my breast,
The victory is mine.

¹Rev. Nathaniel Wells (1695–1779) was rector the parish church in St. Andrews Major, Wales. He hosted Whitefield in his churches in 1739, and had brought CW over to preach there in November 6–20, 1740; see MS Journal.

²Comments in the letter place it about three weeks after CW left Cardiff.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴Matt. 10:42.

⁵Matt. 10:41.

⁶See CW, MS Journal, Nov. 18, 1740.

⁷John Gilbert (1693–1761) was in the process of being seated as the new Bishop of Llandaff.

When wicked men their secret schemes
For utter ruin form,
The heav'nly light with stronger beams
Dispels the gath'ring storm.
Jesu! Thou know'st my feeble heart,
To thee my wants are known,
Thy sacred aid and pow'r impart
And seal me for thine own.⁸

What affects me the most, and gives me the greatest concern is the behaviour of the vicar.⁹ The very same gentleman that told you if an angel came from heaven and preached, he could not please everybody. That thanked you for your assistance and wished you a good voyage! Yes even this gentleman (the first Sunday he was able to officiate after his illness) preached the most violent sermon against you, and laboured all he could to bring our society into the dislike and contempt of his hearers. But the most sensible and impartial amongst them conceive it was done out of gratitude, and by way of compliment to the enraged doctor,¹⁰ who declined accepting any fees for visiting him. Alas! What an odd method was this of returning thanks to that almighty Being—who gave to every herb its healing virtue, and who alone could bless the doctor's prescriptions with success; who killeth and maketh alive, and in whom we live and have our being—to expose in so virulent a manner a person whose sole views were the glory of God and the salvation of lost sinners. And to endeavour to discourage a set of people (of whom the congregation at weekly prayers and at the communion chiefly consists) only from embracing more opportunities of praying to and praising God than his zeal thinks fit to give them.

It seems a second part is to come out tomorrow. Being unwilling to depend upon the memory of others as to what he may say against us or lay to our charge, I have engaged our worthy brother Mr. Hodges to officiate for me at St. Andrews,¹¹ that I may be at liberty to hear him myself, in order to wait upon him to expostulate with him on the subject, and to vindicate you and the society. You will learn of Captain Phillips more particulars that I have time now to tell you how we go on, etc.

My wife returns you thanks for the hymns.¹² She is so angry with the old vicar that, were you sometimes by her, you would have occasion to reprimand her for handling the old gentleman a little too roughly.

We join in love and sincere affection to the truly good-natured and worthy Mr. Farley,¹³ to Mr. Maxfield,¹⁴ and entreat you to continue your prayers for all spiritual grace and blessing upon, dear sir,

⁸No source has been located for this verse; it may be Wells's own composition.

⁹Rev. Thomas Colerick (c. 1680–1761), vicar of St. John's in Cardiff; see MS Journal, Nov. 8, 1740.

¹⁰The physician who had been upset with CW's preaching; see MS Journal, Nov. 18, 1740.

¹¹Rev. John Hodges (1700–77), rector of Wenvoe, was one of the Welsh clergy most sympathetic with the Wesley brothers' early work in Wales.

¹²Nathaniel Wells married Joan Eyett in 1723 in Hinton Parva Wiltshire. CW had likely sent her a copy of *HSP* (1739).

¹³Felix Farley (1708–53), a Bristol printer, had been drawn into Methodist circles. He was accompanying CW on this trip.

¹⁴Thomas Maxfield (d. 1784) was converted by Whitefield in 1739 in the earliest stages of the revival in Bristol. He had accompanied CW on his recent trip to Wales, and would soon be embraced by JW as the first Methodist lay travelling preacher. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 266–69; *DEB*, 756–57; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 225.

Your sincere and unworthy brother,

Nathl. Wells

Endorsement: by CW, “Dec. 1740 / Mr Wells [[Cardiff]] hearty in God’s cause.”
Source: holograph; MARC, DDP# 1/103.