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1741

From Sarah Perrin¹

Bristol
January 24, 1741

My Dear Friend,

I am constrained to write to thee for thy letter has deeply affected me.² In the reading of it my soul was seized with heaviness but I felt no doubt arise concerning ye for I well know the grace of our Lord will be sufficient for thee. I soon got an opportunity to pour out my soul in prayer and was greatly comforted. Methinks I am certain that God will not suffer this darkness long to overshadow thee.³ Perhaps before this time the light of his countenance is risen upon thee. I know I am not deceived in thee. Thy heart cannot be worse than mine, unworthy as I am. I have often admired at the condescension of our Lord in giving me so much peace and comfort, and have thought if it was his will I would gladly bear a part of the burden of others. But alas, he knows I am but a weak vessel and in compassion to me gives me the breasts of his consolation. But he designs thou shalt be an able soldier, therefore suffered these fiery trials to come upon thee. It seems to me as if Jesus was now clearing his temple of everything in order to come and take up his abode in thee. If possible get into a true stillness and the small still voice will soon speak peace unto thee.⁴

Has the enemy prevailed with thee to desire to escape both cross and crown? No my brother, I rather think it is his desire for thee and not thine. Our dear Lord has not suffered it to be. Thou now endures the cross and doubtless will receive an everlasting crown of glory.

What shall I say? Great are the conflicts you meet with. But consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest thee be wearied and faint in your mind.

How does thy brother [JW] bear up under this trial?⁵ I earnestly beg our Lord to support and comfort him. For surely he is a minister designed for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ. And notwithstanding many false brethren are amongst you, yet God will certainly

¹This is the first known surviving letter of Sarah Perrin (1708–87) to CW. The daughter of a well-to-do Quaker family in London, after the death of her parents Sarah had moved (with her sister Mary) to live with an aunt in Bradford-on-Avon. By January 1739 the sisters had also acquired property in Bristol, where Sarah met CW during the fall of 1740. She was writing CW after his recent return to minister in London. Interchange with the Wesley brother led Sarah to join the Church of England within a couple of years. At JW's invitation, Sarah would become the housekeeper at the New Room in Bristol in Feb. 1744. And she would be one of three women that JW suggested as a possible wife for CW in 1748. Instead, Perrin became the second wife of John Jones (1721–85) on May 20, 1752.

²None of CW's letters to Perrin are known to survive.

³CW had returned to London in late Dec. 1740, where he faced the ongoing debate over the "quietism" that had fractured the Fetter Lane society in July 1740. At the moment he was struggling with JW's defense of Christian perfection and being drawn toward the "quietist" model of trusting solely in the imputed righteousness of Christ. On Jan. 20, 1741 he broke off preaching at the Foundery, vowing never to preach again. Since the first three months of 1741 are missing in CW, *MS Journal*, we must glimpse these developments through JW, *Journal*, Jan. [19]–Feb. 12, 1741, *Works* 19:178–81. See also LH's comment to JW, in a letter dated Oct. 24, 1741 (JW, *Works*, 26:67–68).

⁴Remember Perrin is a Quaker; her commended "stillness" is a posture of resignation to God, not abandonment of the means of grace.

⁵JW rushed back to London, from Bristol, on Jan. 21, 1741, after hearing of CW's "quietism."

raise up an undefiled church. His Spirit will never fail nor forsake such ministers. You surely will have cause to rejoice in your labour of love. If possible, keep this device of the enemy a secret from the world until thou art restored to freedom, let the gainsayers of the truth get any advantage by it. Preach perfection if possibly thou canst. Surely every sincere soul amongst you will be inwardly moved fervently to pray that utterance may [be] given thee boldly to make known the ministry of the gospel.

May I venture to advise one whose experience is so far beyond my own? But what we feel any advantage from we cannot help communicating. Therefore suffer me to recommend a silent waiting upon God. I well know we have a form of silence amongst us which cannot be acceptable to God. It is not that I plead for, but my soul cannot rest without spending some time of the day in waiting on him, for I find it renews my strength in him. And if at any time my spirits are discomfited, I find this quickly brings me into a sweet calm. I often feel when I am thus waiting the Spirit of supplication to come upon me. How frequently Lord thou knowest have I been made to pray with fervency for these my servants when I have been thus silently seeking after thee. My feeling the divine Spirit often to quicken me to pray for you has united my soul to you.

I know people think I am gone out of the way in following of you, and that I lead others after me. But I know my love is wholly disinterested and flows from the fountain of love, and therefore must be acceptable to him who sees the heart. If it is proper for me to know what inroad Satan has made in the church, acquaint me with it, for I am sure I shall sympathize with you. Pray let me hear from thee soon, for I long to know how it goes with thee. O may the God of all truth strengthen, [e]stablish, and settle thee, and make thee a pillar in his temple to go no more out. Our friends at Stokescroft join with me in kind love to thy brother and self.⁶

In haste.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/4.

⁶Perrin refers to a group of Quaker women living in the Stoke's Croft neighbourhood of Bristol, who were supportive of the Wesley brothers. Chief among these, besides Perrin, were Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor (1697–1774) and some of her unmarried sisters: Ann ("Nancy," 1710–92), Love (1708–63), Mary ("Molly," c. 1713–80), Sarah (1703–70), and Susanna Stafford (1706–90).

From Howell Harris¹

[Trevecca²]
February 1741³

My Dear Brother,

Let us look up to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Let us look at him as searching and trying our hearts. Let us speak and write in his presence and then we will bear with one another and deal faithfully. Let me tell you in the Spirit of my dear Lord my whole heart. Great indeed is the work we have in hand, and vast is the importance, and well have we need to walk with caution, lest we speak in anything our own minds and not the Lord's. We know as it were nothing, yet we are full of confidence in our little attainments and are very apt to take up with some particular thoughts, and then much to insist of scriptures which favour that and not to weigh those which are against it. My dear brother, this is what I have often learned, and yet I am full of pride in my understanding, being ready to bring Scripture to my notion and experience, and not bring them to the law and to the testimony.⁴ It is by the Word we are to try the spirits, for when something whispers in my mind that God is my God, how shall I know it is the voice of God and so to be embraced, but by the fruit that follow it—viz., meekness, love, humility, peace, joy, longsuffering, hatred to sin, and concern for God's glory, etc.—all which the Word declares to be the work of the Spirit of God? And so when another spirit secretly says in the soul this is presumption, spiritual pride, that all in me is hypocrisy, how shall I know this to be of the devil and so to be repelled, but by hardness, darkness, and confusion it brings to the soul—which I shall find by the Word is the work of the devil?

After I parted with you,⁵ I was much concerned in hearing how you had preached on the Beatitudes⁶—that a man may be poor in spirit, thirst after righteousness, be meek and merciful, and yet fall away for want of the pure heart.⁷ My dear brother, you know my spirit, I write not to dispute but to tell you my thoughts. It appears to me this is false, because our Lord pronounces a blessing on every one of those, and likewise gives a promise of the kingdom of heaven to the poor in spirit, of comfort to the mourners, and poverty of spirit and the kingdom of heaven are linked together by the Lord, and what he has joined together let no man put asunder. And indeed where there is one grace, in truth there are all graces in some measure. Where there is poverty of spirit, there is mourning, meekness, hunger[ing] and thirst[ing] after righteousness, mercifulness and purity of heart. For the Holy Spirit does not infuse his graces now and then to the soul but the beginning of every grace He infuses at once. For I take when

¹This is the first known surviving letter to CW by Howell Harris (1714–73). Harris, 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 when he visited London in Apr. 1739. (Harris's writing is typically very hard to read. This letter is an exception, generally quite legible. However, like others, it generally lacks punctuation and paragraph breaks.)

²The name is spelled variously in contemporary sources: Trefeka, Trefecca, Trevecka, etc. We follow the most common current spelling.

³It is endorsed by Harris: "Wrote in 1740, went about Febr. 1740/41."

⁴I.e. Scripture; see Isa. 8:20.

⁵Harris had been back in London, and frequently with CW during the month of May 1740.

⁶Matt. 5:1–12; CW records in *MS Journal* that he preached on at least one of these beatitudes on July 15, 1739, at Kennington Common.

⁷This letter would have added to CW's current questioning of emphasis on Christian perfection.

Christ comes to the soul that then a principle of purity and holiness comes in, and diffuses itself through the whole soul (Matt. 13:33). Our Saviour said to his disciples (John 15) now are you clean through the word which I spoke to you; and yet there was in them then self-love, which caused them to leave him at the worst. God requireth truth in the inward parts, and when Christ takes his abode in us, then is the truth in us. And then we are cleansed from all unrighteousness, when God does not impute it but is satisfied in his Son, freely forgiving us. Which I think, my dear brother, you mentioned as if it means the utter taking away original pollution, that it should not appear in us. The heart of stone seems to be the obstinate, senseless, rebellious, unbelieving heart, that will not submit to receive Christ on his own terms, in all his offices. And the new heart, in my apprehension, is the renewed will, and hearing ear; the yielding, believing heart submitting to Christ's righteousness, which is the free gift of God given in the day of his power. From such as receive this new heart the curse is taken away and God becomes his God. Such a one seeks continually for the love of God to be more abundantly shed abroad in his heart, and the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of adoption, leading him and sealing him by some word of promise to the day of redemption, and to sanctify him by a continual application of the blood of Christ, and so to come more and more conformable to his image.

When a soul has a witness in himself that Christ died for him, and is able to say "My beloved is mine, and I am his," then [he] will not fear to say that there is no condemnation to him. He that has heard the shepherd's voice will not grow lazy and presumptuous by telling him that God has loved him with an everlasting love and he has now set his fear in him, that he shall not depart from him, that none shall pluck him out of his hands. I'll tell him now to be confident of this very thing, that he which hath began a good work in him will finish him to the day of Christ; and that none shall now separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Though we have need to guard against presumption and false peace, and to show that we may taste the good word of God and feel the power of the world to come, and be made in some measure partakers of the Holy Ghost, and be enlightened, and tremble with Felix, be almost persuaded with Agrippa to renounce all, keep the commandments with the young man, have a lamp with the foolish virgins, take great pains to build on the sand, have another heart and be among the prophets with Saul and Balaam, and give all to the poor and have zeal to lay down our lives; and after all these finally fall away!

Yet where the Shepherd's voice is heard, when Christ has cast Satan out and taken away his armour, and has changed the principle of action and given that faith which vitally unites to Christ; that soul is safe. And it would be feeding unbelief in him, and bring him back again to the yoke of bondage, by setting upon him the danger of finally falling away. For that fear is a slavish fear, which by no means is to be cherished in the children of God. That fear draws none on but such as are altogether carnal, or so little renewed that they have the name of carnal.

When I read some passages in your second volume of *Hymns*,⁸ I was shocked and surprised to see such downright Arminianism and popery set forth without any dress. That all may turn, so often repeated, savoured strongly that there is meant that the power of saving himself is in man. But when I saw there God set forth electing some on the foresight of their faith and repentance, yielding, consenting, bearing fruit, and glorifying him, I did not know what to say. I saw myself bound in duty either to betray my master (who declares by his apostle, Rom. 9:11, 15, 16, that it is nothing in us that makes the difference), or to expose that part of the book.

Pray dear brother, what difference did God see between us and those that are now in hell? O hellish pride! O diabolical delusion! I have a witness within me that tells me if it had not been for distinguishing, irresistible grace I would have been in my blood and in my sins; and that I deserve to be damned forever, as much as the vilest reprobate. The seed of all sin is in our flesh, and there is no evil but that we would fall into should God withhold his restraining grace. Let us look back on the evil of our ways and see how we have cast God out of our thoughts for many years, having no regard to his laws,

⁸I.e., *HSP* (1740).

having spent and employed our time, strength, learning, riches, wisdom, and all the faculties of our souls, and all the members of our bodies, to dishonour him and rebel. And when the law came to stir us up, how have we then fallen to show him seeming reverence. But we did not make him a glorious Spirit, requiring truth in the inward parts, but rather like ourselves, one that saw no farther than the outward man. And so calling and moving of the lips and bending of knees, adoring of God before we are awakened, we make him all mercy. It must not be told us that this is any justice.

And when we come to confess that, how do we make him like ourselves by offering our obedience, penance, fastings, prayers, and alms; which are all, as we do them, sin—being not done as commanded or from the right principle, by the right rule or to the right end. But if done perfect, it had been but our duty; therefore no virtue to atone or satisfy divine justice. And how proud do we go in our rags? What peace do we speak to ourselves when we have done some duty in this provoking manner? And how horribly will we rage, and how dreadfully condemn one that should attempt to say what we are: no better now in the sight of God than publicans and harlots? “What,” says self-righteousness within, “shall I have nothing for all my works?” No, for it is ordained that you must have the righteousness of another, imputed by faith to you. And come as a poor, lost sinner, condemning yourself for it; setting yourself on the level with the blackest of sinners. Then self and unbelief rages, “What, will you make me despair? This is preaching despair!” No, for you have righteousness here offered you, if you are made willing to accept it. “That is no comfort to me.” Why? Unbelief answers in the bottom, “He is a liar. I can’t believe him. If I had heard it was in myself, though I must fast and pray continually, there had been some hopes. But now,” says unbelief, “there is none.” Thus we make God the Father a liar in the declaration that he makes in his law, saying cursed is everyone that abideth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. And [we] make God the Son a liar in the gospel, who says whoever will come to me, I will in nowise cast out. And [we make] God the Holy Ghost [a liar], in denying his will and power to work grace and act it. Thus self sets itself to do the work and take the honour of all three persons.

And when sovereign love has subdued this rebellion, immediately unbelief (though the Father says he is well pleased in his Son, and the Son says he casts none away that will come to him; and though the Spirit sweetly breathes upon him and inclines and encourages him to throw himself down before the throne of mercy) yet makes the Father, Son, and Spirit a liar as long as he can; until free, distinguishing grace conquers this again and makes the stubborn obedient, the rebellious willing, the proud to submit, and the unbelieving to believe. And after he gave us to taste of his love, and gave the testimony of his Spirit, and his word and oath and a covenant sealed with the blood of his dear Son, and showed us time after time his forgiving love, and made us to prove his faithfulness, etc; how suspicious of his truth, forgetful of his care, faithfulness, and promises over us have we been? How have we every moment forgot our obligations to him, and offended against all his glorious attributes time without number?

My dear brother, let us look into our own hearts and see there if we were and are not thus, before the law, under the law, at and after believing? And do we not find that our hellish nature is such that if we left for a moment, we would deny him to his face? How then dare we, in the face of heaven, write such dreadful lies against the conviction of our own consciences, and continued experiences? And has God been to teach us the truth, and told us to keep it, and shall we sell it to please the scholar in us, our carnal reason? Let us see that we are faithful to our light, lest God in anger should turn it into darkness.

Such words from a popish priest would not make me surprised. But from brother John and Charles Wesley it shocks me. Pray look again on your heart, and past steps, and then say if it was something in you that made you to differ from those that are in hell. See when did your faith, consenting, carefulness, etc., come to God’s sight to elect you? O my dear brother (whom I now love in Christ), correct so dreadful an error, writing all your experience. Your mentioning so often [that] Christ died for all seems to infer that you mean he died for all alike, and not intentionally for such as he shall give faith to believe, and to make the salvation of the rest probable only, so as it falls on their own unwillingness, obstinance, and wilful unbelief and choosing darkness rather than light. You say that I make him [God] a respecter of persons. But pray, what our Saviour says in John 17:9. “I pray for them. I pray not for the

world, but for those that thou has given me, for they are thine.” Here you see he excluded some men out of his prayer, for surely he does not mean the animal world. And does not he appear to be partial here? You will attempt to say that he prayed (and that he does not pray) but for believers. Nay, see the twentieth verse, and there you shall find that he prayed for those which were not believers at that time, but those that should believe to the end of the world. And likewise, the blood of Christ being now shed cannot but cry aloud for pardon and for all the benefits of the covenant to his seed, his chosen ones, those that are given him out of the world by the Father.

But what shall we contend for? Do not you own that none will be saved by him but believers? And why shall we encourage those that never yielded to his kingly office to lay hold of his priestly office? He must be received in all his offices, as a whole Christ or none. And is not this faith the work of the Spirit, and as much out of our power to work as was the work of the Father at first to create the world? And must not this be told [to] proud man, that would fain have all in his own power, and will not yield to despair in himself in order to bring him to another? For must not man be convinced of his inability to believe as well as to satisfy divine justice? It was the sorest and deepest conviction I ever had, was when I was convinced that a faith of my own making would not save me; but that Christ must be the author and finisher of it, that it must not be of ourselves but the gift of God, that to say Christ died for all and therefore he died for me was only what I formed in my own brain and would never unite me really and vitally to Christ, nor purify my heart, nor overcome the work, not work by love. In us is the strong man, keeping his house, till the stronger one (viz., the Son of God) comes and takes away his armour. And where he comes he destroys his works effectually, and makes the soul the temple of the Holy Spirit. And in all this the man is by him made willing, and so does not make himself willing, and could not by reason of the sweetness of the flesh inclining the will so strongly in its behalf.

I am more convinced that sinners, in order to make them see the depth of their misery, should be told that they are dead, under the power of sin and Satan, having no eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor will nor power to know or enjoy God, but are enemies to him, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, out of Christ, out of covenant, out of hope, till they shall feel his power to make them willing to leave father and mother, the right eye, right arm, all their idols, self-will, self-righteousness, honours, profits, pleasures, and their own life, and to give even the most beloved lust to Christ to be subdued; and to continue in seeking with all their hearts, with their faces (like the prodigal) still kept toward home, till they not only have their Father fall on their neck and give them a token of his favour, but also till they are actually clothed with the glorious robes of Christ’s righteousness and have the ring of assurance on their fingers, and have really eaten of the fatted calf. Is there any promise to any but believers? If any but believers shall be saved at the last, let others see whether they can find this supernatural work of faith wrought in them or not. If they can, they are safe. Their sins are forgiven. They are saved. If not, they are otherwise.

My dear brother, the devil is preaching this already in the heart of every sinner. And by this hellish principle, that they can turn when they will, that it is in their own will and not in the will of another, millions I fear will be found that [are] kept from the common attempts that nature can be stirred up to make, by stirring up the principle of fear, to read, hear, to turn from the way of temptation, to give the service of the lip and knee. This will not send anyone that is truly awakened to despair (as for the rest, woe be to us if we will feed their false hopes without a foundation) for he feels that he is drawn so to Christ by the sight he has of the want of him, that without him he shall be damned forever, that he is willing (which is the fruit of such a sight, if mixed with faith in the general declaration that whoever will come to him he will in nowise cast out; which you know no one proposes more than I do) always to receive him on gospel terms. And then he comes truly entitled to the promise in Rev. 3:20 and 22:17. And when you seek me with all you heart, you shall find me.⁹ Here is hope for all as the Scripture gives hope to. Be preaching Christ the Saviour of the believing part of the world. Afterwards tell the believer what made him to differ, what moved Christ to make him a vessel of honour, to give him ears to hear, a will to

⁹See Jer. 29:13.

submit, and a heart to obey when he saw¹⁰ no difference.

Then will preaching distinguishing love bring glory to God, and benefit and consolation to the soul, and can be no more a stumbling-block—it being so to none but to such as never (I fear) tasted any supernatural distinguishing work and can't feel that they were effectually called. To such as are called, it is food and will feed neither despair nor presumption, but humbly the soul before God, crying “Why me Lord?” And if the soul has not electing love preached, it is robbed of his food. For by this the Spirit enlightens the soul to know the Father and shows him how he has loved him before the foundation of the world, and choosing him for no other reason but because it so pleased him, at this sight he does not now cavil and dispute as he did before when he looked at it by the light of carnal reason, but is humbled to nothing in his own sight, being swallowed up and lost in admiring the freeness and sovereignty of this love; crying “if it were not so, I should never have been chosen, for God saw nothing in me but all rebellion, lust, pride, anger, unbelief, and enmity against him.” He stands amazed at the unchangeableness of purpose that should so order it that although he finds he changes every moment and forgets God, and is unfaithful, yet still he finds (to his astonishment) that this forgiving love follows him.

The soul having this light, oh how active is he for God, crying out, “What? Had the eternal Jehovah merciful thoughts for me, such a vile rebel? And am I to be with Abraham, Israel, Jacob for all eternity before the throne to admire the glorious perfections of the Three in One? What am I, a firebrand of hell, thus brought to this glorious hope? O what shall I render to the Lord? O that I had wings to fly, to sound the praise of my God! O sovereign grace! O electing love! O the freeness and richness of it! O that I had ten thousand lives all to be spent in admiring this amazing, infinite, incomprehensible love!” Now self is destroyed. The soul has indeed fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, and participates of the glory above. He has the divine nature conveyed through these sights to his soul and is transformed from glory to glory; hates the very garment spotted with flesh, dreads every the least sin, is humbled so as to be willing that all should despise him and trample upon him. He is in God and God in him, and rest[s] in God's faithfulness in Christ.

My dear brother, a soul that has tasted this cannot help being grieved when he heard this doctrine denied and spoke slightly of, or as having ill foundations, while he feels it thus making him more and more like God—it being the rock whereon he feels his building stands firm against all onsets from Satan, fear of death, etc.

I was told that you said if sin appeared in our thoughts, or if one sinful thought were in us, we were not born again or had the new heart. Many were wounded at this which should not [be], I believe. It surprised me, for I thought (and do now think) that none in this world are freed but from the power of sin, and not from the appearance of it (sin comes to the thought from the old man—though crucified, not quite dead, but dying), and as we stand by grace and by a power laid up in another and given us not according to our wills but as he pleases, so that because of the faithfulness and the nature of the covenant we cannot finally be lost, yet can after we have been one hundred years in Christ (which is not the case of either of us; we are but little children and consequently know but little in spiritual things) [have] so much sin in us, and not only so but to be so alive as that we may be in danger to fall and that not to common infirmity but the the most black, hideous devilish and dangerous of all sins. Spiritual pride, which is the most bitter root of any and darts most dishonour to God, and makes us most like the devil, and so much of this too may be in us that in order to keep it down the loving Father and tender Physician (that is all love and tenderness to his children) even after he has given the most firm tokens of assurance of his love, taking us up to the third heaven, setting the highest honour on us here, and giving the greatest success, etc., sees it fit in his infinite wisdom and goodness not only to warn against it but to show us the dreadful nature of this hellish root by suffering a messenger of Satan to buffet us. Which, be it what it will and how it will, that Satan came on Paul, it was what was intolerable to bear and yet he could not get rid of it. And to show how dependent we are still (least we grow proud) on the strength of another, and also how we must wait his

¹⁰Orig., “say.”

sovereign pleasure to have it, it is said that he could not draw down power to subdue it, but had an answer given to him which he must now thankfully acquiesce in till the complete victory should be given. Thus was the pride of Paul soon brought down!

If God sees no sin in his people, why does he chastise them? Though he does it not as a judge in justice, but as a father, he takes the rod—which shows that he sees some evil in them that would not be rooted out (so well) any other way. Paul declares to the Colossians (3:3) that they are dead (i.e., to sin and to the law) and that their life is hid with Christ in God. And in the fourth verse, “And when Christ our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.” And in the ninth verse says that they had put off the old with its works. Verse 10, and put on the new man—which are the most explicit terms of expressing our interest in Christ. Yet to those he says, verse 5, “mortify therefore” (i.e., because you are sure of your salvation; that is the reason why they should mortify them, out of love to him that had justified them, and not that when mortified they should be justified) “your members which are upon earth.” This plainly demonstrates that the regenerate have need to mortify their sins. And don’t we ourselves feel that we neither live in sin, or go after sin, or desire sin, but do hate it and so long after perfect holiness; that we insatiably long for that time when sin shall be no more? And yet there is in us a carnal part, unrenewed, not subject to the law of God, enmity against God, the “old man” which (though crucified and have had such a deadly wound that it can never recover, yet) may be indulged and fed, and so recover strength again so as to make grievous struggles, so that there is need to tell us not only to watch, but have your armour about you and mortify them still.

It would be no longer a church militant but triumphant—not triumphing in faith, hope, and expectation; i.e. seeing Christ a conqueror, and so assured that we shall be full conquerors at last, but actually as the church above. And if so, for such there would be no need of any grace (such as faith, hope, patience, etc.), there being the full fruition; much less of calling to the south wind and north wind to come and blow on the garden (Canticles 4:16) and act[ivate] the graces he has wrought in us.

My dear brother, was not Paul and Barnabas born when they so quarrelled or differed that they could not go together? And was there no sin in them then? Nay, did it not break out to actual sin? And were not Paul a little moved when he spoke to the high priest, “God shall smite thee, thou whited wall”?¹¹ All these are written for our instruction and must have their proper place with the rest of the whole word, to bring us to understand the whole mind of God, and are to be published as well as other places. For there is no scripture but is of use to us at some time, or in some condition or other. And we must declare the whole counsel of God and hide nothing, though the ungodly pervert everything to their own destruction. How shall we know what John means when he says he is “born of God, sinneth not, and cannot commit sin,” but by comparing it with these and other scriptures? For if we take it literally, you will not find one saint in the whole Word of God, for their sins after they were born again are recorded. Was not Peter born again when he was carried away in the dissimulation with Jews for which Paul withstood him to the face? And did he not sin then? Did not Christ declare (which is the assurance) that upon that rock, that sure faith which the Father had given him (which had made him to confess Christ with his mouth) he would build his church? And was not Peter one of the rest that he said to, that their names were written in the book of life? And had not Abraham faith when out of diffidence in God, slavish fear, and self-love, to save himself, he said that his wife was his sister? Here was faith and unbelief. He sinned, though not to death. Nor did he live in it. Lot had the name and marks of a just and righteous man in Sodom, and yet sin was alive in him as to overtake and overcome him shamefully. Though this is not wrote to encourage us to in (and who ever feels it has that effect upon him shows himself to be a reprobate, void of God), yet it is wrote to some end, and has¹² been of some use to some saints when they have fallen, to be kept from this from giving up their shield and fall to unbelief, concluding that they were not born again by the application of the literal meaning of that scripture. For

¹¹Acts 23:3.

¹²Orig., “have”

though they sin not as the ungodly sins, with premeditation, yet are overtaken; nor run after sin, but sins follow them; nor with full consent, but against the bent of their wills and honest intentions; nor live in it, but are risen again with unchangeable love and have their consciences washed; nor from the sight of forgiving love do they presume and sin on, but watch the more against it and have some good from it. They walk more humble. Admire God's grace more still recovers them. Live more self-emptied and look more to Christ. Have more pity to such as are fallen, and are less apt to censure. See more of the depth of the deceit of their hearts and unfathomable wickedness of their nature. Though the new creature sins not, and cannot sin; yet after the old man he sins, and God justly corrects him for it, though in love. If saints do not sin after they are born again (for they must be born again before they are little children), John's exhortation to the little children would be useless. "I write to you ... that you sin not." And if they would, to tell them of an advocate.

I know, my dear brother, that love to God, and a concern for the happiness of souls, and a hearty longing that all should be found at last sound makes you speak as you do sometimes. Because you see so many perverting the doctrine of election and perseverance to their utter ruin, and others likewise taking occasion from the falls of the saints to flatter themselves that they are *Christians* though they live in sin, when they only fell to sin. But my dear brother, we are to take the whole counsel of God for our wisdom in the war in defending our Master's cause, as well as be stirred up by his love, else we may do (through unthought) more mischief than we are aware of. Therefore, having the Word as our rule, let us speak and go in and out before the lambs of our dear Lord, that are the price of his blood, who are so dear to him as the candle of his eye; among who there are some weak and some strong, having various kinds of spiritual diseases and weaknesses. And the Word must be applied accordingly to them. Its precepts, examples, promises, reproofs, cautions, etc. O who is sufficient for these things?

You mentioned in your public discourse that a man [who] found himself in the state mentioned in Romans 7 was only an awakened man, not justified. And the reasons were because he said "I am carnal, sold under sin, I am led into captivity, etc." I offered to discourse with you in private, but you were in a hurry. I think it is very plain that no natural man can feel what is there said. There are two "I", there are two lives existent in him. A carnal "I" did allow a pain to him, and a spiritual "I," which he could feel and cherish, which is not in any natural man. He [natural man] has at most but light in his conscience to show him his sins and deserts for them, and so to make him fear and tremble, and then from fear of being punished to resolve against sin.

1. "He delights in the law of God after the inward man." Here was an inward man that delighted in the law of God; i.e., loved God and his law because it was holy. For we cannot delight in it but on account of its holiness. The carnal mind is enmity against God and hates the command, and is not subject to it. The natural man is all flesh and not spirit. The natural man (as we find in Ezekiel's time the people did) may delight or take pleasure for a time in the things of God, and the stony ground received it joyfully, but if it were put to the natural man's choice which he would choose, the law or sin, he would most gladly go on in sin. He never received the truth in the love of it, but for fear. The law of God is the image of God, and who can love and delight in his image but such as are made partakers of the divine nature?

2. He appeals to God, that to will is present with him. Here is the renewed will, which no natural man has. He has some will to go after God, but he halts. He has a will to have the praise of men, and so he falls short of the new birth.

3. He feels the body of indwelling sin. And there cannot be feeling without life, and Christ is the life and light that discovers our vileness by the spirituality of the law.

4. There is no complaining there of the fear of hell, and crying for pardon, which is the state of every awakened natural man. He thinks that if he should know that his sins are forgiven him he would do nothing. But when a man is justified, and knows that his sins are forgiven him, then the new life acts in him, and he cannot rest; yet is opposed by the body of sin, which he feels now as a burden to him. I know your end in this is to convince hypocrites that are taking comfort from hence. But if they examine themselves by this, they should find themselves too far backward to look for comfort. There is difference

between imagining and saying we have those in the heart, and it in us. Deliverance will come gradually to everyone that is really brought to that condition. Here is a principle of new life. I would do good, but the evil sin, the old man, is present.

You know that we talked of perfection, and you said that you held only perfection in parts, but not in degrees. But some of your expressions do not agree with that, else I should have been fully satisfied. And I was told (by brother [William] Seward) that brother John [Wesley] said that in one state (which I think was that of infancy) when sins appear in the thought, we fly to Christ and then it vanishes; but that there is a state that no sin, no darkness, not a moment of fear, nor any pain, nor any temptation from Satan does ever appear. This is a glorious state, if I should have foundation enough (i.e., promises of it, or examples in the Word of some that attained it) to set faith to wait for it. But unless Scripture saints will be produced to prove they had it, I think it is not unbelief (for if [I] knew it was I would humble my soul before God for entertaining it a moment, my dear Lord knows it) to say I cannot give assent to it as an article of faith because some few young ones say they have it.¹³ In the first year I set out, when I was in my first love, I felt such a state as I thought for sometime (when nothing was uppermost but love) that there was no sin in me. But I had not then seen so much of the unsearchableness of the evil now I find in my heart. That state contradicts Jeremiah, who had such evil in his heart that it was past finding out. This is a going beyond it, having had original pollution done away. There is no need further to pray “Forgive us our trespasses,”¹⁴ for here are not trespasses of the law. Nor so much as need to pray “Lead us not into temptation.”¹⁵ We may say “I have no trespasses to be forgiven. I am all spirit and no flesh. When Satan comes, he finds nothing in me. I cannot be tempted.” There is no saying now “within are fears.”¹⁶ Nor a cry, “If it be thy will, let this cup pass away; yet not mine, but your will be done.”¹⁷

Perfection to me seems to be a perfection in part. And I have an inward fear lest those persons who say they are so (for you and I are not so, and consequently cannot preach but what the Word warrants and we feel; and when we feel it we can be more plain in demonstrating it, and be more sure that we are right) are carried away in a delusion, or at least have never got spiritually enlightened to see in infinite purity and holiness of God, and how broad his law is, being as formerly I was, thinking that Satan can't tempt, and that the flesh is quite dead.

There is great talk about the word “perfection.” But I think no saint should be offended at the expression, for it is a common term of the blessed Spirit, often used in Scripture. But the dispute lays about the meaning of it. If we really mean no more than you told me, I think all saints in all ages agree. The child, when he is born, is perfect in part (i.e., he has as many limbs as he ever shall have, but they are weak) but [will] grow in degrees and strength till he is a young man, and grows in wisdom and understanding, etc. So I take it [it] is in the new creation.

There is first the seed of faith sown in the good heart. The word of faith calls. The sheep (the elect) have inward ears given them, which the world knows nothing of, and they hear it as the word of God, and see some infinite weight in it which is folly to the wise world. He is made willing in the day of God's power, opens the door and receives him joyfully, is now effectually called. A saving work is begun, though he may yet not perfectly know it and have¹⁸ the comfort of it. His face, like the prodigal's, turned toward home, but is full of anxious thoughts what reception he shall have with his father. [He] has a general trust in his father's mercy, hopes he may be his servant, though guilt on sight of himself makes

¹³CW echoed this point in his letter to JW, Feb. 28, 1741.

¹⁴Matt. 6:12.

¹⁵Matt. 6:13.

¹⁶2 Kings 6:16.

¹⁷Luke 22:42.

¹⁸Orig., “has.”

him fear. Seeing nothing else to do, and having some confidence in his father's pity, he goes toward home. There is yet no genuine evangelical repentance towards God, but he seeks God with all his heart, has left the swine, is under a promise to encourage him to come: "When you seek me with all your heart, you shall find me."¹⁹ "He that wills, let him come and drink of the water of life freely."²⁰ "Whoever will come to me, I will in nowise cast out."²¹ He is converted and like a babe. Begins to feel the bondage of the law of sin. He has a renewed will inclining him (if he was but free) to do good, meet his father. [He] has a token of love that somehow, he knows not well how, takes away much of his fear.

He is led in his hand home, is clothed, and grows up to be a little child. Has the ring of assurance given him. Till now he had a servile fear (which, when the witness is given is fully taken away, though the other bondage of the body of sin pressing him down to hinder his course, I think, is gradually taken away). He now begins to set forth rational acts of faith, cries perceptibly after his Father. He cheerfully attends upon God in the means of grace, and in the ministry of the word the Lord meets him and cherishes him with sweet galls of the Spirit and the smiles of his face. There he begins to speak to him, so that the soul thinks the minister speaks all to him. There he is sometimes cut sore, and humbled low, and the Father, as it were, frowns on him. He could not find one word brought home to him but the threatenings, has buffetings of Satan, desertions, hardness, and dryness in duties. And possibly by reasoning carnally [he] may come to doubt for sometime, being brought thereto by Satan's devices and the relict of the Old Covenant principle yet remaining in the heart, unbelief not being quite destroyed. And this comes to humble that pride which secretly crept in, great enlargements and demonstrations of love and favour, sealings and discoveries, etc. Then, when he is fitted for receiving more communion with his Father, he has promises set home on this heart, and sweet breathings on his soul again, and is risen from that darkness to see his Father's love. And thus he is cast down and lifted up, being under the teaching and government of the Holy Spirit. He comes now to be weaned gradually from being carried on the arms, and living on the breast (i.e., the life of feeling; having all his food coming through the Spirit, without acting faith in God's faithfulness to his promise) to take his own food, and to eat stronger meat, and to exercise his limbs. The senses grow more exercised. The ears know between the voice of a stranger and his Father's. The eyes to know, and the tongue to speak a little broken language. The limbs gather a little strength to carry, the arms to lay hold of his Father.

And so as all grow up gradually, and the image of the Father comes more and more to be seen in the natural child, so it is in the spiritual. The ears of the soul, that could not distinguish between the voice of God and Satan (which was the advantage Satan made use [of] to lead him to many snares) now begins to distinguish, and a voice of a stranger will he not follow. His eyes come to be more opened, to see within his own deformity by nature and glory by grace. This comparison between a natural child and a child in grace might be drawn out to a great length; but here, etc. And this convinces me that a man does not jump once unto perfection, but is sanctified gradually, and thereby be made ripe for glory; and when so, called home.

You mentioned of having the Spirit of sanctification to abide in us as an instantaneous gift. But this is the light which I have: That effectual calling, making willing, converting us to God is an instantaneous work, [is] beyond dispute. And at that time there is [a] spirit of sanctification in some measure. But I think that it grows up to perfection gradually. And some may think when the Spirit shines on his own work suddenly, after great darkness, letting the soul to see it, that they have some new gift. Though the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was abundantly poured down on the apostles and others, yet I think it was a fulfilling of that promise, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be,"²² for we find a weakness

¹⁹Cf. Jer. 29:13.

²⁰Cf. Rev. 22:17.

²¹John 6:37.

²²Deut. 33:25.

in the courageous Peter after that, when he was carried away in the dissimulation. A Spirit of power that came upon them to fit them for the great trials they were to meet with in their ministry, and likewise, to give evidence in that miraculous manner of the truth of it. Our dear Lord had breathed the Holy Ghost as a spirit of holiness and sanctification on them before that, and had pronounced them clean through the word which he had spoken unto them. And where our Saviour says to his disciples of the Spirit (John, ch. 17), “For he dwelleth with you and shall be in you,” it can be no otherwise understood (as I think) but that a power should be given them by the Holy Spirit to work miracles, to speak with tongues, and to prophesy. For surely at this time the disciples had faith, and if so the Spirit of God was in them (for faith, as other graces, is the fruit of the Spirit) in his sanctifying operations. And there is another scripture to the same purpose, Acts 19:2, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed?” Could they have believed without receiving the Holy [Ghost]? No, sure! What does the apostle mean then? The meaning of his question is whether or no they had received him in his miraculous gifts, so as to enable them to speak with tongues, etc., as it evidently appears in the course.

I was for sometime much perplexed about perfection and have, for want of better light (in order to stir all to press on) expressed myself perhaps unscriptural[ly] and unintelligibl[y]. I see God the Son commands us to be perfect (Matt. 5:48). The Holy Spirit too commands the same (2 Cor. 11:12). Graces have the name—a perfect love casteth out fear (1 John 4:17–18); let patience have its perfect work in you (James 1:14). God gave the title of perfect to many of the saints. Job [was] a perfect and upright man. So was Noah. And David was a man after God’s own heart. Paul took this title to himself and to many others (Phi. 3:15). And in that chapter I had the most satisfaction what the blessed Spirit means by “perfection.” In Christ, I saw, they were perfect in all respects; but in themselves, I saw, they were imperfect in degrees. For their imperfections are recorded (of Job and Noah, etc.). Here [in Phil. 3] Paul shows what should be the mind of all those that he calls “perfect,” the same that he mentions there was [in] himself (vv. 7–15). He declared that the perfection in degrees he had not attained to, but was pressing towards it, forgetting all behind, seeking for the power of Christ’s death and resurrection, what he in part was already made partaker of.

I think where anyone says he has any other perfection, it would be very proper to set these questions to such a one: If they have seen so much of the evil of sin as they don’t see need to see more? And if they know so much of the glorious perfections of God, and consequently if they love him so that they are not grieved and humbled that they can’t know and love more? Do they hate sin, and grieve for it, so that they have no cause to lament that they can’t grieve for and hate sin more? And do they so approach God with that awe and reverence, and with such a sense of his glory and majesty and of their own nothingness? Etc. If they can’t answer these and the like questions, let them not pretend to the name of perfection in such a sense as no saints in sacred writ, nor among the martyrs, ever pretended to. If they do not see imperfections, or that they fall short of God’s glory in every word they say, I fear they never had any true conviction to see the spirituality of the law of God.

Thus, my dear brother, I have in the simplicity of my heart sent you my thoughts, according to the light I have now from the word and experience. Let us, according to the grace given, be diligent and watch over each other, and be willing always to lay down or take up anything as we find the Word and experience condemn or justify it. Whatever is promised in the covenant, we should never rest till it is fulfilled to us. It is ours, since we received Christ. And that which we don’t know, the Lord will teach us. Let us be always learning, as brother [Benjamin] Ingham said.

I hope indeed I wrote in love, and that you will read it so. I hope the Lord will incline your heart to write to me, in order to make things clearer. Let us communicate our light in love to each other. And may the Lord knit our souls together in himself, and lead us to all truth, to be of his mind in all things. May love to all as love our dear Lord. Now I conclude

Yours in Christ

Howel[1] Harris

Source: Harris's copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #312.²³

²³Some extracts of this letter were published previously in *WHS* 17 (1929): 63–65.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

[On board the Minerva]

[February 1, 1741]

My Dear, Dear Brethren,

Why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination?¹ Why did you in particular, my dear brother Charles, affix your hymn, and join in putting out your late hymn-book?² How can you say you will not dispute with me about election and yet print such hymns, and your brother send his sermon over against election to Mr. Garden and others in America?³ Do not you think, my dear brethren, I must be as much concerned for truth, or what I think truth, as you? God is my judge, I always was, and hope I always shall be, desirous that you may be preferred before me. But I must preach the gospel of Christ, and that I cannot *now* do without speaking of election. My answer to the sermon is now printing at Charleston; another copy I have sent to Boston, and another I now bring with me, to print in London.⁴ If it occasion a strangeness between us, it shall not be my fault. There is nothing in my answer exciting to it, that I know of. O my dear brethren, my heart almost bleeds within me! Methinks I could be willing to tarry here on the waters for ever, rather than come to England to oppose you.

Yours, etc.,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters* (1976), 509.

¹JW, *Free Grace, Works*, 3:544–59.

²CW's hymn "Universal Redemption" was appended to JW's sermon (see *ibid.*, 3:559–63). It was then included in *HSP* (1740), 136–42—along with a few others of similar theme.

³Rev. Alexander Garden (c. 1685–1756), rector of St. Philip's Church in Charleston, South Carolina and currently the ranking clergyman in the south, as Commissary to the Bishop of London.

⁴Whitefield, *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley* (Dec. 24, 1740).

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
February 8 [1741]

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

My silence has not be want of love or forgetfulness.¹ In prayer I do not cease to mention thee. I can truly say we are present in Spirit. I never find power with God but I am comforted on your behalf. Ye shall be named the priest of the Lord. Men shall call you the minister of our God. Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

I am daily more and more confirmed God is with you and the wonderful counsellor will direct you (in) all things well. But the more I search the Scripture, the more I am in doubt whether your confining yourselves to one sort of diet is not a device of Satan to deprive you of strength to labour.² I wish you may be fully persuaded in your own mind. I know if God requires it he will bless it and your health shall increase thereby. But I do beseech you not to tempt the Lord in it. If you find it does not increase your strength, do not persist in it. It is easy to cut off every branch of luxury and kept to plain, simple diet without living altogether upon vegetables. And for the benefit of his people you ought to preserve your strength. Do you observe our Lord's command to the seventy: Eat such things as are set before you?³ It seems to me by the direction he gives he not only allows but approves of your receiving all food convenient for you. I find a fear this practice will rather be an occasion of stumbling than of strengthening the weak. Therefore it requires your due consideration, and I trust the Lord will reveal his will in this and in all things to you.

I find a great desire to see thee. I believe a visit to this city to be much blessed, for indeed the church is almost ready to think they are forgotten by thee.

I have been tempted to leave the house fain lately than ever since I have been there. I find such a decay of strength I am ready to think God does no longer require my stay there. For I cannot be an example fit for that house unless I have better health. I don't mean in anything of eating or drinking, but I am not active enough on spiritual or temporal things. I think the closeness of the house is partly the cause of my illness. Therefore I have been at Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor's this week, and she and her sister send their love and duty to you.

I beg the favour of a few lines as soon as possible from thee, and let us know when we may expect thee here.⁴ I wish thee couldst order to come in March and return the beginning of April, and take us with thee, for if I am able I believe nothing would do me more good than a journey on horse. With duty and affection I conclude,

Thy weak unworthy friend,

S. P.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin]] Feb." / (later in longhand) "S. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/25.

¹Perrin appears to be replying to an inquiry from CW, which is not known to survive.

²CW had adopted an all vegetable diet, as recommended by George Cheyne.

³See Luke 10:8.

⁴CW ended up being in Bristol from Apr. through Sept. 1741.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
February 18, 1740/1

This morning my soul has been sweetly refreshed. I have been made to drink of the water which flows from the fountain of pure delight. And in this frame of mind thou wast brought to my remembrance and the fervent prayer of my heart was that thy whole life might be to the glory of our dear Redeemer. Forgive me then, my brother, for using this freedom with thee, for it seems to me as if our Lord required more of thy time should be spent in silent waiting upon him. Great gifts has he bestowed on thee. He hath anointed thy head with oil and thy cup shall be full. It is my belief he will make thee a perfect minister in his church. But in the silence of all flesh he will be sought unto. Preachers as well as others must wait for bread from above, for all which gives good nourishment for the soul immediately flows from you through Christ.

I have considered of our last conversation and I have desired to partake of the same Christian courage which I rejoice to behold in you. O may I learn to speak the truth with boldness. Nay, I have thought I should be willing to have less of the divine sweetness if it would please my Master to give me in exchange the gift of edifying others. But alas I have but little given me to say. Purge me O Lord that I may bring forth fruit, for without thee I can do nothing.

Even the true ministers of Jesus I believe at times feel in themselves a barrenness. Say my friend, have you always food given to you to administer to the people? It seems to me at such times our Lord requires a silent waiting upon him, that the minister may renew his strength in him. At times I know the enemy gets advantage over us either by tempting us to work in our own wills or preventing our doing of our Master's. But my dear friend, let us endeavour more and more to be close followers of that inward light, which will bring us to the place of true rest. Perhaps thou mayst think there was no occasion for me to have wrote thus, for I have heard thee recommend inward silence very justly. But I cannot help thinking thy love and zeal for God and thy fellow creatures sometimes carries thee beyond what is required of thee and does prevent thy gathering inward strength as well as weakens thy body. Bear with me, for it is in pure love I write thus unto thee. I have received much benefit from thee. I have often felt a divine power to attend thee in thy ministry, and I cannot help earnestly desiring thou mayst be made perfect in every good word and work.

I feel my own unworthiness deeply, therefore can sympathize with thee. For when it pleases the Lord to hide his face from me I can see nothing but corruption in me, yet having a sure confidence that the purchase of our salvation is paid. O let us not be wavering but possess our souls in patience until he Son makes us free indeed. For I doubt not at all but we shall witness that glorious liberty our souls long after. For he is faithful who has promised. O my brother be not cast down, remember the counsel thou hast so powerfully given us: Believe and ye shall be saved.

Many are those who think too highly of themselves. But some there is whom the enemy is continually buffeting with their own failings. Such I think ought to endeavour to forget what they was and what they are and meditate upon who their Lord designs they shall be, for he that has begun a good work will perfect it in us.

I have heard our brother Humphreys several times,¹ much to my satisfaction, and I believe he has edified the church in general. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart. I hope he will be made more than conqueror.

¹Joseph Humphreys, see his letter to CW of Apr. 11, 1741 below.

Our sisters without Lawford's Gate are well.² They was to see us yesterday and I hope we shall be quickened by hearing their experience. Our friends at Stoke's Croft say they shall rejoice to see thee.³ I wish every one of your hearers had the same just affection for thee they have. But I fear there is too many such babes as the apostle describes who are yet carnal.⁴ O mayst thou deal gently with such and feed them with milk until they are able to bear stronger meat. May our dear Lord give unto thee daily suitable food to administer to thy flock. And may our faith increase that we may be made such as he would have us to be and join together as with one voice in thanksgiving and praise to him. Hoping we shall see thee soon. I am desiring to hear from thee. I conclude in the love of Jesus.

Thy unworthy sister,

S. Perrin

Address: "To the Revd / Charles Wesley / att ye Foundry / in upper Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "20/FE."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin Feb. 12. 1741 / encouraging."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/1.

²Rachel England (d. 1755) hosted at her home a small religious society to which both Wesley brothers had preached; see JW, *Diary*, Apr. 6, 1739 (*Works* 19:383–84) and CW, *MS Journal*, Sept. 7, 1739. Rachel herself shortly after became one of the initial women members of a Methodist band in Bristol; cf. JW to James Hutton, Apr. 16, 1739, *Works*, 25:631.

³Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

⁴See 1 Cor. 3:1.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
February 28, 1740/1

My Brother,

How shall I express the satisfaction I felt at the reading of thine?¹ My soul was filled with thanksgiving and praise, for a faith sprung up in me that our Lord would thoroughly purge his people. The ax is laid to the root of the tree, and it is given me to believe all those who are seeking perfect salvation with full purpose of heart through faith in the blood of the Lamb will be closely united together. By what name they are called it matters not, if we humbly wait upon God we shall certainly receive a greater manifestation of light to discover unto us what it is he requires of us. And if we are faithful, he will lead us in the way of holiness and the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water.

If thou finds freedom I should be pleased to hear whither the stillness thou mentions has joined thee to the still Brethren in London. God is certainly carrying on a great work on the earth and he will carry it on in his own way. We have often been told in our [Quaker] meeting that unless we returned to our first love God would raise up another people upon the same principles to glorify him. Whatever errors in opinion we have, or you may have, that which I think the most essential we agree in—which is full redemption. And if we sincerely seek to the Lord, he will surely discover unto us our wrong opinions, that we may be made perfect in one. He will certainly gather a people from amongst all professions, who shall worship him in the beauty of holiness and join together to promote the glory of his kingdom. O that we may become members of this undefiled church, and be as a city set upon a hill whose light cannot be hid, for if we was Christians indeed the distinction of sects would soon be swallowed up in love and purity.

I would be glad to know whither thou hast thoughts of coming to Bristol soon, for I believe I shall go from hence in two or three weeks in order to come to London, and I would not willingly miss meeting with thee.

I beg whatever thou observes is wrong in me, do not spare telling me. For although I wholly depend upon God to teach me, yet I know he often does teach us by his ministers and I believe he will not long shut up the mouth of his prophet. Thy brother had an opportunity lately to ask me some questions. I believe if we had had more time he would have talked closely to me. He thinks the fear of man is a hindrance to me and I can't but agree with him. I hope I shall be more and more edified by you. I will endeavour to follow you as far as I think you follow Christ. But I dare not perform any outward ceremony unless it was clearly made manifest unto me my Lord required it of me.² If thou art joined to the still Brethren when I come to London, I will endeavour to be present with you. And if thou canst write, pray let me hear soon from thee. Our Friends at Stokes Croft kindly salute thee, desiring the welfare of thy soul. As for my own, in the love of our dear Lord, I remain

Thy friend,

S. P.

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

¹CW's letter is not known to survive, but clearly informed Perrin he had recovered commitment to emphasis on Christian perfection; Cf. JW's comment on Feb. 12, 1741 in his *Journal, Works*, 19:181.

²Perrin is starting to consider water baptism and entrance into the Church of England.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
March 9, 1741

Indeed my friend, whenever my soul receives power to pray with fervency thou art brought to my remembrance. O cast not away thy confidence, for yet a little while and he that shall come will come and will not tarry. Fear not my brother, for the Lord is with thee. Be not dismayed, for thy God will strengthen thee. Yea he will uphold thee with the right hand of his righteousness. I cannot but believe thy soul will soon be set at liberty.¹ But oh let us strictly examine ourselves. Have we kept anything alive which our Lord has commanded to be slain? Have we spared the king, or of that which is good in our own eye, to offer to the Lord? This have I often earnestly desired to know for myself. This do I desire may be made known unto thee. For to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

I have a fear which proceeds from pure love, lest thy spending thyself for others should hinder thee from seeking proper nourishment thyself. Certainly so much hurry which thou meets with cannot be for the benefit of thy own soul, whilst she's struggling with these mighty conflicts. O submit wholly to the will of God. Consent to part with the best things, even thy ministering in the Church, if the Lord requests it of thee for a time. For it will only be to endow thee with greater power from [on] high to declare the mystery of the everlasting gospel.

Turn the eye of thy mind inward. Indeed thou will find comfort in silent waiting, for it is in profound stillness we are able to distinguish the voice of God from the voice of the stranger. And beware least thou take that for a temptation which is the will of God concerning thee in Christ revealing his will to thy soul. O may the Lord shine in upon thee, that thou mayst know his counsels perfectly.

The foregoing was wrote before I received thy last.² Do not think I am for your joining with other people. No I believe there is many souls of the Church of England who do not bow their knee to Baal, and I pray God they may increase daily. May she become the beauty of nations and the praise of the whole earth. The sincere amongst my own people are near to my soul. Nevertheless if I believed it my master's will, I should join to any other sect whatever. I would cheerfully obey, for I am well assured no happiness nor no holiness can I attain to until my eye is single to his glory. But I must act according to the manifestation of light given me, or my mind would be brought into confusion. I hope I shall go on unto perfection. I think I am fully resolved to give up my whole heart. I always find my Saviour near me. But oh how I long for him to come and take up his abode in my soul forever. For I know in possessing him I should have all things, and it would be nothing to me if the whole world was against me.

I hope when we meet thou will farther explain thy meaning, though I do believe your attachment to the Church of England is because you think her Articles are the most consistent with the Word of God, and I can't think how this can be called bigotry—adhering to what you believe is the truth. O may our Lord never require you to leave her, but send forth more faithful labourers, that thousands and ten thousands may be raised up amongst you to minister unto him.

As to our friends in Stokes Croft, when we meet I hope I shall have an opportunity to tell thee my sentiments concerning them. I believe I must go to Mrs. Hooper's to have a little discourse with thee.³ We

¹While CW had reclaimed the commitment to preaching Christian perfection, he was clear that he had not yet experienced the total deliverance from sin that he believed (at the time) this entailed.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Elizabeth (Brown) Hooper and her husband John (a maltster) lived in Old Market Street, Bristol, and were drawn into the Methodist society in 1739. CW stayed with them, including a period in Aug. 1740 when Elizabeth helped nurse CW back to health. When Elizabeth died in May 1741, CW led in singing a hymn he had written for the occasion; see *MS Journal*, May 8, 1741.

join in love to thee. O may the Comforter teach thee all things and abide with thee forever. I am sure your being of a different denomination cannot lessen my love. Whilst I believe you to be zealous promoters of our Lord's glory my heart will be knit unto you. I am

Thy friend,

S. Perrin

Labour to possess thy soul in patience. For the Lord will work and who shall let it.⁴

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / att ye Foundry / in Upper Moorfields / London."

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

Endorsement: by CW, "S Perrin – encouraging / 9 Mar. 1741."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/3.

⁴I.e., who shall stop it.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon¹

[Enfield Chase²]
[c. March 15, 1741³]

[[When one member suffers all the members suffer. Hence from the share I bear with, you may derive a d[rop of] that comfort, hoping I shall be p[ossibly?] with them of that k[ingdom?] which shall be r[esto]red in him.

[[My h[ear]t sank with gratitude at your r[emembrance] of me by the dying minister.⁴ Your compassion breaks me to pieces continually, so that my whole soul is nothing but confusion. I scarce dare lift my eyes to heaven. My heart is in thanks for the b[lessing] of your ministry.

[[This b[lessing] we⁵ ask con[stantly] for you and [that God] would show forth his strength in you while the enemy oppressed you; and also that he has been with you in writing every word of your sermon.⁶

[[I am frightened lest it should be Mr. Hodges that has forsaken you.⁷ My joy is, your strength is not in man; and all this you lose would have added nothing unto you. I can resign always with pleasure, knowing more surely than that I am alive that all things work together for good to you and your brother. You are only thus h[inder]ed lest you should be too highly ex[ulted] by the work God does by your hand. Though I am convinced of this, yet I feel impatiently in your b[ehalf], and wish earnestly my w[illingness?] might share it with you for your relief; but my vile h[ear]t would sink under it.

[[I rejoice with you over your sister [Kezia]. I love her as the Lord's now, and I did love her before because she had then two brothers.

[[I commend you, with your brother, to the Lord, hoping this will have a share in my departing breath should you be b[elow?] or ab[ove?] when this ransomed soul leaves the house of clay.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 11d.⁸

¹CW met Lady Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon (1707–91) in early 1741. She would play a major role in the growing revival. Her relationship to CW was initially close but went through significant transitions. This is the first letter of LH to CW for which there is surviving evidence; as with many of her early letters, it survives only in a summary that CW made in a shorthand notebook.

²Enfield Chase, Middlesex, location of the London area residence of Lord and Lady Huntingdon.

³Dated from reference to Kezia Wesley's death.

⁴Kezia Wesley died Mar. 9, 1741 in London. CW was by her side, as evident in his letter of Mar. 10 to JW. LH is apparently referring to her informally as a "minister" of God's grace here.

⁵The shorthand has "he"; likely a mistake, as "we" closely resembles.

⁶Likely the sermon on "the believer's privilege; i.e., power over sin" that CW preached on Mar. 17 (see CW letter to JW, Mar. 16–17, 1741).

⁷CW had apparently told LH of Joseph Humphreys's break with the Wesley brothers (see his Apr. 11, 1741 letter). She worried that it was her associate Rev. John Hodges.

⁸An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 129.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]

[[April]] 1741¹ [c. April 10]

[[Sir,

[[You must think me a m[onster of] in[gratitud]e. — This will assure you how much you are in my thoughts and always in my prayers. I plead for you as for myself, and at the bottom of my last letter I had wrote I was very gratified you had received much comfort. It rejoiced me exceedingly to find by that cordial you had sent me and which I received yesterday,² that the treasure was found which had only left you for a time in order to increase your future gifts. The reason you could not bear my letters to you was, I find, owing to the impossibility I find of saying things bad enough of myself or by any words of giving you a clear conception of the ideas my soul has of the divine love. Suffice that I tell you the more I have of the one, the stronger I feel the other. For shame, anger, despair, etc., all are united at times, but there is a fire which will break forth under them, and will destroy them all. These lie at the top and smother the fire for a while, and their removal only causes the increase of heat. Christ is the burning sacrifice upon the little altar of my heart, and there he breathes his precious words crying “Abba Father.” He wants to break through these bonds of clay; they are too small for him, so that the flame seems ready to break forth every moment. Strange madness this to the carnal man, but more certain to the faithful than anything he sees.

[[I will call the last Easter day³ one [of] the most happy days of my life. Your prayers I daily feel, and your brother’s. Oh the prayer of faith is mighty indeed! A million of thanks for your hymns; I love them extremely.

[[You have been a great earthly blessing to me. May the Lord of all power and majesty assist you with his mighty arm, and make you an instrument of bringing many sons into glory, which I am almost certain you are yet intended for.

[[I am your most sincere and affectionate friend in the Lord.

[[You are much beloved here.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 1a.⁴

¹In this and other instances, dates which CW placed at the end of the extract are moved to the top.

²This letter of CW to LH is not known to survive.

³March 29, 1741. CW was in London preaching, but no journal or journal letter survives to record the text. In a letter of Apr. 2, 1741 to JW, LH commented: “I cannot forget while I live the comfort he [CW] was the minister of to my soul on Easter day.” See *Wesley Banner* 1 (1849): 45–46.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 107–08.

From Joseph Humphreys¹

London
April 11, 1741

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I am convinced that nothing can be done by might or by power, but only by the Spirit of the Lord. You left me to God, and I trust I am fallen into his gracious hands. I earnestly besought him to lead me into all truth, and not to suffer me to be *deluded*. I believe he has in some measure answered my prayers already, and I now wait for the farther teachings of his Spirit.

I am taught to bow down to *sovereign grace*. I find it is not in my power to do either one thing or *another* towards my own salvation. I can no more keep myself in the love of God by any *inherent power in me* than I can *merit* it by any good deservings of my own. I clearly see God will have the whole of our salvation to himself. He is jealous of his own honour. I am afraid hitherto I have kept back part of the glory due unto his name, *The good Lord pardon me, and receive me graciously and love me freely*. I believe whoever is finally saved was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. I had a precious taste of electing, everlasting love about a week ago. And if God has shown me this *once and again*, why should I hide this truth any longer. I am persuaded that nothing can separate those whom God hath justified from his everlasting love. They cannot come into condemnation, for they are passed from death to life. I have long had a temptation to disbelieve the eternity of hell torments. I believe it arose from my stifling the light which I had once received concerning election.

Methodists, dear sir, I now hear you saying that I hold the *horrible decree*. I entreat you *as a father* not to speak against those things which are above human comprehension, lest you should be found even to fight against God. Perhaps that text “God hath *mercy* on whom he *will* have mercy; and whom he *will* he *hardeneth*”² will at the great day put thousands to an awful silence who caviled against things that they knew not here up on earth.

I am, dear sir,

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

Joseph Humphreys

Source: published transcription; *Weekly History*, no. 12, pp. 1–2.

¹Joseph Humphreys (c. 1720–85), son of a zealous dissenting minister, was converted by Whitefield in 1738 and assisted JW and CW in 1740 for a short time in London and Bristol. In light of the growing tension between Whitefield and the Wesley brothers over predestination, Humphreys was now breaking with them and siding with Whitefield.

²Rom. 9:18.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase¹]
[[April]] 1741 [c. April 17]

[[Dear Friend,

[[I cannot tell you how much I feel my heart drawn towards you. The Lord has made you a most wonderful instrument of comfort to my soul. You are ever in my prayers and almost always in my thoughts offered up to God from my inmost soul. I am sure the Lord will give you power to overcome. I am sure my tears and prayers for you will be heard in his own good time. They are offered up at the throne of grace with strong faith and love. My whole heart and soul I feel only to be the Lord's, black and miserable as I am. But he has, I know he has, covered all my unrighteousness, and I rejoice every hour.

[[I am sure you cannot guess the comfort your journals and letters give me. My heart could scarce bear it in your letter where you mentioned my hopes of glory. My soul was quite struck down with love of God and overproud.

[[All here go on well, praise the Lord. One of my maids whom you awakened has continued in so deep a mourning state ever since and I know not well what to do with her.

[[Your dear brother John was with me a little.² I feel my heart more open to you, but I cannot tell why. But I love him with great warmth.

[[I am soon to have two of our brethren to test me, to ask me some questions of the hope that is in me. I find the d[ear] M[adam] is much reproached for leaning too much to you and your friends. Oh how do I rejoice in the scoffs and reproaches of all London. All my great and w[orldly] acquaintances have cut me off, but the Lord I know cared for me. This thought is more than I can bear. I am sunk in shame that he should love such a creature as me. Oh that I could now hide my head in the dust. I pray for you as I do for my own soul. Strengthen, strengthen him thou mighty Lord, and may he shine forth as an angel of light now and for evermore.

[[My Lord³ is much yours in heart.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 8b.⁴

¹An area of the town of Enfield, Middlesex, on the northern outskirts of London where Lord and Lady Huntingdon maintained a country residence while Parliament was in session.

²JW visited LH at Enfield Chase on Apr. 15, 1741; see JW, *Diary*, *Works*, 19:458.

³I.e., her husband, Theophilus Hastings (1696–1746), 9th Earl of Huntingdon.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox "Treasure-Trove," 123–24.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
April 21, 1741

It is not possible for me to set out yet. I must go round and glean after George Whitefield.² I will take care of the books you mention. My journal is not written yet. The bands and society are my first care. The bands are purged, the society is purging, and we continually feel whose hand is in the work.

Send the new-printed *Hymns* immediately.³ We presented a thousand of Barclay to George Whitefield's congregation on Sunday.⁴ On Sunday next I propose to distribute a thousand more at the Foundery.

I am settling a regular method of visiting the sick h(ere.) Eight or ten have offered themselves for the work, who are like to have full employment. For more and more are taken ill every day. Our Lord will thoroughly purge his floor.

I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let *our* love be without dissimulation! But I can't yet agree with you in all points. Who is your informer concerning N. Bath?⁵ I doubt the facts. Have you had them face to face? Brother Nowers is [[not in love with her]].⁶ Ask him about them. Let the premises be but proved, and I greatly commend the conclusion.

I am not clear that brother [Thomas] Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound Lane. Nor can I as yet do without him. Our clergymen have miscarried full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen I know not.⁷

As yet I dare in no wise join with the Moravians: 1) because their whole scheme is mystical, not scriptural, refined in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the gospel; 2) because there is darkness and closeness in all their behaviour, and guile in almost all their words; 3) because they not only do not practise, but utterly despise and decry, self-denial and the daily cross; 4) because they upon principle conform to the world in wearing gold and gay or costly apparel; 5) because they extend Christian liberty, in this and many other respects, beyond what is warranted by Holy

¹JW is replying to a letter from CW of c. Apr. 18, 1741; this letter is not known to survive, beyond what can be reconstructed from JW's reply. The reply reflects JW's worry that CW has not yet completely purged himself of his leaning toward the quietism of Molther and other Moravians.

²Whitefield was currently in London, contesting JW's attacks upon predestination.

³*Hymns on God's Everlasting Love. To which is added. The Cry of a Reprobate* (Bristol: Farley, 1741).

⁴I.e., *Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination* (Bristol: Farley, 1741), abridged by JW from Robert Barclay's *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*.

⁵The 'N' may stand for 'Nurse'; see John Ellison to JW, June 9, 1730. JW refers repeatedly to a "sister Bath" in Bristol in his diary for 1740 (cf. *Works*, 19:418, 421, 431). On one occasion (Apr. 16, 1740; *Works*, 19:416) JW refers to Betty Bath. It is unclear whether these are references to the same woman, or perhaps to a mother and daughter.

⁶Edward Nowers was a single Moravian man from Herrnhag who came to England, but sided with JW and CW in the controversy over quietism in early 1740. That year he accompanied JW on a preaching trip that included Bristol. In 1741 Nowers would marry Margaret Gascarth, and they became part of the Foundery society in London, appearing in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

⁷Frank Baker notes that the extant letter ends here; for the remainder his authority was a scribal transcription endorsed by JW (location unknown), the first paragraph collated with a slightly abridged version in JW, *Journal*, Apr. 21, 1741.

Writ; and 6) because they are by no means zealous of good works, or at least only to their own people; and lastly because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons (chiefly) I will rather, God being my helper, stand quite alone than join with them—I mean, till I have full assurance that they will spread none of these errors among the little flock committed to my charge.⁸

O my brother, my soul is grieved for you. The poison is in you. Fair words have stole away your heart. I fear you can't now find any at Bristol in so great liberty as Marshall!⁹ No English man or woman is like the Moravians!¹⁰ So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together a few months since. But two are gone to the right hand (poor [Joseph] Humphreys and Cennick¹¹), and two more to the left (Mr. [Westley] Hall and you). Lord, if it be thy gospel which I preach, arise and maintain thine own cause.

Postmark: “21/AP.”

Endorsement: of holograph, by CW, “B[rother] April 21, 1741 / When I inclined to ye Germans.”

Endorsement: of scribal copy, by JW, “Lr to C[harles] of Morvs. / April 21. 1741.”

Source: MARC, DDWes 3/4 (imperfect, lacking address and second half of letter).¹²

⁸The *Journal* excerpt ends here.

⁹Likely referring to Adolph von Marshall of Jena, who had recently arrived in London and was helping revive the Fetter Lane Society after the split with the Wesley brothers in 1740; see *WHS* 15 (1926): 189.

¹⁰JW may be quoting here a phrase in CW's letter.

¹¹John Cennick (1718–55) sought out the Methodists in Oxford in late 1738. In 1739 JW employed him to teach at the Kingswood school, but he also preached occasionally and helped administer the society there. Within two years, however, he broke with the Wesley brothers, joining first with Whitefield, and then with the Moravians.

¹²Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:55–57.

The Rev. George Whitefield to a Friend in London
about Charles Wesley¹

Bristol
April 25, 1740[1]

Dear Friend and Brother,

God was with me at Newbury. He is also with me at Bristol. The people receive me with much love, and we have seen his power in great congregations. Dear brother Charles [Wesley] is more and more rash. He has lately printed some very bad hymns. Today I talked with brother N—. ² He tells me that for these three months last past he has neither sinned in thought, word, or deed. He says he is not only free from the *power*, but the very *in-being* of sin. He now says it is *impossible* for *him* to sin. I asked him, suppose he should? He said, if such a thing was possible, by that he should forfeit all that he had received. So that it is plain he depends upon acquired grace within, and not upon the righteousness of Christ without. I take particular notice of what he said because brother Wesley told me *he* was really a new creature. I find he has but a very mean opinion of David. And he told me that St. Paul was not a new creature when he wrote his epistle to the Philippians. I asked him if ever he was? He said yes, when he wrote those words, “I have fought the good fight.”³

I talked with three women. One said she had been perfect these twelve months; but alas, showed many marks of very great imperfection whilst I was with her. I asked her if she had any pride? She said no. I asked if ever she asked pardon at night for her sins or infirmities? She said no, for she did not commit any sin. I spoke to another woman, who said she had not sinned in thought, word, or deed this twelve-month. I asked her, and every one of the rest, whether they ever used the Lord’s prayer? They were unwilling to answer, but afterwards said Yes. I asked them whether they used it for themselves, and could say, “Forgive us our trespasses?” They said no, they used it for it others only. Another said Jesus Christ could not sin, and therefore she could not—for everyone that is perfect (said she) must be as his master. Thus, my dear brother, they go on to pervert Scripture. I find them very *ignorant*, but poor souls! *Well-meaning*. However such errors are very dangerous. Yet brother Wesley propagates them with all his might. I know you will pray for him.

Brother [Joseph] Humphreys is convinced more and more every day.⁴ He begins to see clearly, and enjoys much freedom in his soul. God is pleased much to sweeten and comfort my heart. If you please you may publish the contents of this, and forget not to pray for

Yours most affectionately in Jesus Christ,

George Whitefield

Source: published transcription; *Weekly History*, num. 4 (May 2, 1741), 1–2.

¹While not a letter to CW, this is included because it casts light on his broader correspondence at the time. The “friend in London” was Whitefield’s printer, John Lewis.

²Almost certainly Edward Nowers, back in Bristol at CW’s request.

³2 Tim. 4:7.

⁴I.e., of the superiority of the Calvinist stance.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[London]
April 28, 1741²

Dear Son,

Your brother [JW] hath more than once desired me to write to you, but as I knew there was a constant correspondence between ye, I thought he would inform of anything relating to me which was necessary for you to know.

I rejoice in your being so much employed in the service of our Lord and that he is pleased to set his seal to your ministry. May you ever retain the same humble thoughts of yourself and continue to ascribe all the glory of your usefulness to him to whom it properly belongs.

I don't well understand what you mean by the baptism which remains for us to be baptized with, but suppose by what follows you think we are not yet fully convinced of sin.³ I hope we are in good measure convinced already that we do feelingly know we are poor sinners. But to be fully apprized of the evil of sin in its nature and consequences it is, I humbly conceive, necessary that we have a more full and perfect knowledge of God. The sight of our sins may humble us indeed, but when by the eye of a strong faith we behold him that is invisible to the eye of sense; when we clearly apprehend that he is almighty power, justice, and purity, and yet almighty love (demonstrated by sending his only Son to die for us), then we may say as Job, "We have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now our eye seeth thee, wherefore we abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes."⁴ Then we feelingly believe the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Then true contrition springs up in the soul and the utmost self-abhorrence. We stand amazed and confounded at the view of our own vileness and base ingratitude against God! That God which gave us being, that hath upheld us and fed and clothed us, and by his blessed providence hath preserved us from innumerable evils all our life long, notwithstanding we have in nowise answered the end of our creation.

But if reflection on our ingratitude for these temporal blessings (though exceeding valuable) renders us vile in our own eyes, how much viler do we appear when we consider we have all this while been sinning against redeeming love. If anyone would be deeply convinced of the evil of sin, if we would be more strongly affected with a sense of our own guilt, let us behold ourselves in the sufferings of the Son of God for the sins of mankind, more particularly for our own. Let us, my son, attend our Lord from the Passover to the garden in which his soul was made an offering for sin. That as in a garden the first Adam by his disobedience lost himself and all his posterity (which were then virtually included in him), so a principal part of the sufferings of the second Adam for sin were undergone in a garden. It seems as if there was a gradual withdrawing of the light of God's countenance from the time of eating the Passover: he "began to be sorrowful and very heavy," saith St. Matthew;⁵ "sore amazed and very heavy," saith St. Mark.⁶ Again that strange request to his three disciples, "Tarry ye here and watch with me,"⁷ argued an astonishing weight of horror and grief in his soul! But how can we behold him in the garden, prostrate on the earth agonizing to that strange height as far surpassed the power of human nature to sustain, insomuch

¹The first six paragraphs of this letter appear to have been written on Sept. 7, 1739, but not sent at that time. Susanna then added the remainder and sent the whole in Apr. 1741.

²This date runs top to bottom in the left-hand margin of the letter's third page.

³Susanna appears to be quoting a letter from CW; it is not known to survive.

⁴Cf. Job 42:5–6.

⁵Matt. 26:37.

⁶Mark 14:33

⁷Matt. 26:36.

that an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen him, after which we find that he prayed more earnestly till his sweat was in great drops of blood falling to the ground! I do humbly conceive that our dear Lord at that time did sustain the whole weight of the grief, anguish, and sorrow which is due to divine justice for the sins of all mankind. And then was his spotless soul made an offering for sin indeed! He knew God, the infinite purity of the divine nature! He perfectly knew the nature and felt the full weight and guilt of sin, as far as was possibly consistent with his unity with the Godhead!

It is certain our blessed Lord had a perfect foreknowledge of every article of his suffering long before, and at that time had them all in view. But what does the apostle mean by these words: “In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death; and *was* heard in that he feared.”⁸ If this is a right translation, what was it our Lord feared? It was not contempt and shame, or pain or death. All this he patiently suffered, and therefore if it had been these things he deprecated, how was he heard? I humbly conceive then that what our Saviour deprecated was the terrible insupportable hiding of the Father’s face—at the zenith of his passion, having probably some diffidence of his own human ability to finish the great work of man’s redemption if the Godhead remained quiescent. Set me right in this.

To your prayer that we may never rest till we rest in God, I say a hearty Amen.
Sept[ember] 7. [17]39

The present state of the Christian church affords but a melancholy prospect. Great numbers of the clergy as well as laity have either never known the gospel of Jesus Christ or else hath forgot it. There hath of late been such a strange awakening throughout the kingdom as has not been in my time before, as if our Saviour now made his last effort to bring people out of their carnal security before he comes to judgment; for in my apprehension that awful time draws very near. Satan has taken the alarm too, and perceiving that many are become obedient to the faith by which means he feels his kingdom strongly shaken, he hath exerted all his power in making opposition to the success of the gospel.

He soon found the wicked too weak to serve his interest and therefore hath transformed himself into an angel of light (under which disguise he is ever most formidable) and has prevailed with many that had been led into the way of truth to turn out of it. And now again our dearest Lord is wounded in the house of his friends. First the little Moravian foxes attempted to spoil our vines and destroy the tender grapes. These endeavoured to lead people into practical atheism by teaching them (out of a pretence of greater purity) that when they were regenerated and born again, they were at liberty to lay the ordinances aside as useless—not considering that thereby they denied their Lord in setting aside his authority which appointed (them and refusing⁹) to do him that public honour which he requires and has told us beforehand that such as will not confess him before men, the same will he deny before his Father at the last judgment. Further, they have taught that we are not to obey God’s commands because he hath commanded us so to do, but because the doing, or forbearing such or such a thing, is agreeable and pleasing to spiritual self (a shameful contempt of divine authority again); whereas in truth, if when after we have been enlightened, have tasted the heavenly gift and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, we decline from a pure intention of glorifying God by an entire sacrifice of self, and make either peace of conscience or the pleasure we find in any religious actions the principal end of those actions, we exalt self into the place of God and are guilty of idolatry (more refined and spiritual indeed, but) as flat idolatry as if we fell down and worshipped a graven image. This practical atheism their principles naturally lead men into.

Thus these little foxes have endeavoured to destroy our Lord’s vineyard and throw it open to common. But now, “the wild boar out of the wood” is labouring “to root it up: and the wild beasts of the

⁸Heb. 5:7.

⁹These words are partially obscured at the bottom edge of the manuscript.

field to devour it.”¹⁰ It is an old maxim of Satan’s, “Divide that you may destroy.” In order to practice his own rule, he hath thrown a bone of contention among the brethren about a point which hath been formerly much controverted in the Christian world, but of late years hath been very wisely laid aside. The bait has taken among the weaker sort of people and numbers are greatly shaken, and no doubt but the Grand Adversary triumphs in his success and exults to see that he hath prevailed so far over our men as to engage them in a pernicious controversy which will effectually divert them from working out their own salvation with fear and trembling. I am fully persuaded that if [George] Whitefield could live more years than he will live, he will never do so much good as he has done harm since his return to England. God forgive him. Your brother hath made a noble defence against the enemies; has given them no quarter indeed! But continues daily to serve the predestinarians as Samuel did Agag—he hews them in pieces before the Lord.¹¹ I admire his zeal and so much more as it is tempered with great meekness and patience and longsuffering—and though he strenuously opposes their doctrine, he does it always in the true spirit of Christian charity! Before they beset and assaulted him so furiously on every side, he was very weak and, having no assistant, was often ready to faint under his labours. But our dear Lord hath had compassion on him and hath renewed his strength to such a degree as is truly astonishing! Asher’s blessing is fallen on him: as is his day, so is his strength.¹² Glory be to God!

I have had many thoughts about you, because I knew the weakness of your body, I was under some apprehension of its being cast down by incessant labours. But now I see the power of our Lord so plainly manifested in your brother and consider that his God and Saviour is yours also. My fears are at an end, and I need not desire you to join hand and heart with your brother in vindicating the glory and honour of our ever blessed Redeemer! Proclaim his universal love and free grace to all men. And that ye may go on in the power of the Lord and in the strength of his might, and be preserved from yielding place to those bold blasphemers so much as for an hour, is the hearty prayer of

Your loving mother.

I send thee my love and blessing.

Address: in JW’s hand, “To / The Revd. Mr. Wesley / in / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “April 1741 / My Mother on / Xt Crucified / the [indecipherable word or words].”

Source: holograph; Toronto, Canada, United Church of Canada Archives, 97.002C, 3-1.¹³

¹⁰Psalm 80:13.

¹¹See 1 Sam. 15.

¹²See Deut. 33:25.

¹³Published in *Methodist History* 28.3 (1990): 202–09; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 187–90.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. May 1741]

[[When I tell you the sight of you would yield true spiritual consolation to my soul, you will know I want it much. Satan does not try me by his still devices. He has quite done with those. They are too professed to hurt, for they overturn no less than the whole word of God. Short experience of that doctrine will make us believe as the still ones do that there is no Christian holiness, for we shall be able to find none in ourselves. A time is coming that the old serpent must have the form of an angel of light¹ or he will be soon cast forth. He will be a disciple of our Lord in everything but those which are the true glory of our Lord. He will let us fear God, but not perfect holiness in that filial fear. He will let our con[cern] be of h[igh] h[eavenly] things but not in h[oliness]. I have reason to be sure of some deep [omen?] working in that q[uar]ter].

[[Let us stand fast in the profession of a true faith without wavering.² I hope the Lord will direct you both not to join with any, should never so many be converted, to declare these truths it seems to me as if you and your brother only are intended for. All have so remarkably fallen that have had any share with you, but I think you will remain his faithful witnesses.

[[I am cast down, perplexed, and disquieted. I think my course is at a stand. I have a million of fears that I go backward, or not so forward in the knowledge of heavenly things as that great and loving saviour would give me. Oh it is, I am sure, some unfaithfulness in me. I am torn to pieces with these distracting thoughts. At times my mind wanders from him which so long has dealt with [my³] sleeping and waking. The awfulness would make me doubt my forgiveness at times, which at other times I would die at a stake to evidence my belief of.

[[My moments are so few with your brother that I cannot open my soul. But the very sight of him dispels my clouds. How glad shall I be to see you! Your brother has not made a positive[?] promise, but not left me quite destitute of hope that one will come. Oh may the Lord send you amongst us. I have a most true love for you both. And I charge you as you regard your profession of Christian love to me that in every dif[ficult] baulk where there remains the least shadow of probability of my assisting you, that you call upon me and make it known to me. I am sure could you know how happy such a confidence would make me, you would prove at all times you thought me worthy of it; though I am worthy of nothing but perdition, had not the mighty price been paid for me.

[[Let me hear from you when your time permits. It is comfort and peace and comes to remind me of those hours of refreshment I have had; and they will return when the mighty Lord shall appear.

[[Pray for me. I wish I could offer up prayers for myself as full of faith and love as I do for you and your brother, but I will h[umbly] wait and hope and continue my supplications for you.

[[My Lord [Huntingdon] expresses much love and kindness to you.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 3.⁴

¹See 2 Cor. 11:14.

²See Heb. 10:23.

³The shorthand appears to read “with him”; presumably a slip.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 112–13.

From Rebecca Wrench

[Bristol]
May 8, 1741

Reverend Sir,

I desire to return thanks for great blessings received at the sacrament last Sunday. Going to the College,¹ and a friend with me, with a design to go to the Lord's table, I found myself so very empty and void of all good, even of God himself and all things in him belonging, that I was at a stand whether I did dare to receive or not. But believing it to be an illusion of the devil, of which I have had many for some time past, God gave me at last a firm resolution to do it in despite of the devil, for as much as I knew in my own soul that I went with a desire to meet Jesus and in obedience to him. With a trembling awe considering my own great unworthiness, and begging that Christ's merit might enrich my poverty, I approached the altar with much reverence and humility, begging and beseeching of Jesus Christ that he would then and there meet with me and show me whether I was an accepted guest at his table or not.

But oh when I received the bread into my mouth how was I overflowed with his heavenly presence: my head, my heart, my soul, my every vein—my eyes overflowing with tears of love and joy unspeakable which cannot be uttered (as it is now at the writing of it). When the wine came, as soon as ever it entered into my mouth, I was again filled full, full with the same blessed Spirit and my mouth with a new song, even a song of thanksgiving to our God. When I arose from the altar and, going into the choir and not having the convenience to kneel, I stood on my feet, my soul overflowing with joy and praise. I begged that Jesus would wash me clean in his blood, when immediately I had a whole flood provided to me; as I had several times more, both of the Spirit and the blood, before I came out of the church.

And that portion of Scripture applied: "Shall he not with him freely give thee all things."² I have often drank deep of the cup of salvation, but never so deep as at this time. In the evening I went to Baptist Mills, and from thence returned to the Room,³ and still found that God was there. I continued in this great joy, with thanks and praises, till Monday evening, and was in much hope that I was delivered from my enemy. But coming to the Room I found him still with me, on and in me. Now he would check me for telling of him. He was so much disturbed at the reading the book of *Serious Considerations*⁴ that he threw me into doubt of the truth of the blessings I had received and to question if I did not deceive myself, and almost to question if I was justified at all. So that has hitherto hindered me to return thanks for all the great benefits that I have received—he still buffeting and tormenting me. My request is that you will pray for me that my faith fail not, and that God will in his good time defeat the devil in me and deliver me out of the paw of the lion that hunteth after my soul to devour it. So with true respects I rest,

The unworthiest of all your sisters in Christ, Rebecah Wrench

Endorsements: by CW, "Reb Wrench [[found Christ in sacrament]] / May 1741" (later expanded:)

"Found Xt at Sac[ramen]t."⁵

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/140.⁶

¹That is, Bristol Cathedral, on College-Green.

²Rom. 8:32.

³The preaching house on Horse Fair.

⁴Likely one of two tracts, extracted from other authors, that JW had published recently: *Serious Considerations Concerning the Doctrines of Election and Reprobation* (from Isaac Watts, pub in 1740); or *Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination* (from Robert Barclay, pub. in 1741).

⁵CW also wrote separately in shorthand on the verso the first two lines of what became stanza 7 in Hymn 9, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1742), 25.

⁶For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk>.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[[June]] 4, [17]41

[[My Dear Friend,

[[I have been much rejoiced by the sight of your dear brother John, who told us you was well. I could not write to you sooner. He goes on Monday, I hope, to fix a school at Markfield and to open their eyes there.¹ You and the Lord may vouchsafe to make use of me as he once did the women in the gospel, as a labourer with you.² God has accepted many prayers of mine for you, that you may declare his truth unto all people, even [fools and scoffers?]³. Tell it unto the heathen and such as do not call upon his name. This is the truth that maketh men of one mind; this bringeth the prisoner out of captivity. All will be bowed down by love when they hear this truth, this everlasting truth, that we are all recon[cil]ed to God through the death of his son. I have declared that, though I may not live to see it, that this one truth will unite all nations and op[inions]. For our differences in these days of darkness have only been about the several methods of reconciling ourselves to God. But I believe and therefore will I speak, and hitherto all men have had their eyes and their hearts veiled, and they did not see these welts of [stripe upon stripe?], this God suffering, dying, for all. When this is known, how soon will anti[pathy] come to an end and all knees [shall bow] and tongues confess s[alvation] of our God.⁴ I am in high openness of heart. May the great [redeeming saviour of the whole world⁵] bless and st[rengthen] and endue you with power to declare what he hath done for souls. All will fall before you. Go on. It is a glorious work, and the God of all comfort rest eternally with [you]. Prayed by

[[Your faithful sister in the Lord.

[[Do let me hear from you soon.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 6b.⁶

¹JW, currently in London, was in Markfield on June 10, 1741.

²See Phil. 4:3.

³The shorthand indicates a phrase with one word beginning “v/f” and the other “s.”

⁴See Phil. 2:10–11, Rom. 14:11. Cf. Isa. 52:10.

⁵The shorthand is just “rsww.”

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 119–20.

From Sarah Perrin

Southwark
July 2, 1741

My Friend,

This morning I have taken up the cross in writing the truth to one whom I know has the wrath of God abiding on her. I have waited several days for my heart to be free to do it, but I found a greater reluctance than when I first believed it to be my duty. Thy brother's doctrine on this head I find greatly concerns me. I am too apt to wait till my heart is free to do good, and so not do it at all. But I now am convinced it is wrong and long to be freed from it. O Lord, do thou purge me that I may bring forth fruit to thy glory.

I see a Christian life is an active life. I am one of those who are too much at ease in Sion. I want to do good, but that which I would do I often neglect to do. Therefore it is plain I am not in the liberty of the children of God. I long for full redemption. I fervently desire to have eternal life abiding in me. But I feel a great work must be wrought in my soul before I attain unto it. I often feel a foretaste of this blessed state. My will seems to be lost as I feel the love of God to flow like a river into my soul, and I am ready to say the kingdom of heaven is at hand. But alas, alas my friend, the root of evil is still remaining in me; and that which has sat will set until it be taken out of the way.

I begin to find much openness in declaring my state to others when I think it may be of any service. For call it confessing, or what you please, I verily believe sincere religious people in all ages and under all denominations whilst they have been seeking the kingdom of heaven together have found great freedom to communicate their trials and experiences one to another. And it has sometimes pleased God to benefit their souls by it; but not always, least we should place some dependence upon the instrument and not wholly look to him who given power unto all. For I am satisfied one time or other our expecting something from the creature without having our eye fixed upon the Creator has been a stumbling block to almost all who ever sought true happiness.

Thy brother's visits from Oxford I believe has rejoiced the hearts of many.¹ For great power has attended him, and whatever trials he may meet with there I am sure the God whom he serves will never forsake him. I think if those who raise evil reports, and those who delight to spread them, did but hear him declare what salvation is, they must confess him to be a man greatly enlightened and that he has an uncommon power given him to turn people from darkness to light. And how would this consist with those false calumnies they so easily swallow and are so willing to believe? I cannot find any desire in my mind for any temporal enjoyment more than I possess, and I feel a willingness to part with those blessings I enjoy, if required of me. Sometimes I long to suffer for the sake of Jesus. At other times I think I shall suffer, but my Lord knows I am not yet prepared to be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with. O may his will be perfected in me. May I receive more light to know what he requires of me.

My good friend, pray for me. Thy hymns was acceptable to me.² When it suits I should be glad of one wholly on the subject of perfection.

Endorsement: by CW, "July 2. 1741 / Sarah Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/6.

¹JW was back and forth between Oxford and London from mid-June through mid-July in 1741

²CW had likely sent her a copy of *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741).

From Sarah Perrin

Southwark
July 15, 1741

My Good Friend,

Thy lines was acceptable to me, for I always find a quickening power to attend what I receive from thee.¹ Therefore when thou canst, I beg thou wilt write to me.

Although I dare not wholly join with you, I verily believe there is not any that hears you has greater love or stronger desires for your welfare and the prosperity of the society. For I am well assured God is with you and his Spirit waits to be gracious unto you. And if I did think it was my master's will, I should forsake my own people and cleave to yours. I would, but indeed it appears to me otherwise; and in this matter I desire nothing but that his will may be done in me. I am free to acknowledge to you, and likewise to our own Friends, that I never receive so much benefit from any instruments as I have from thy brother and thee. Yet I cannot in all things think as you do.

It seems to me as if our Lord greatly increased your strength in him and daily manifests his light more fully to you. O may you be filled with the fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of our God. May the redeemer of Israel raise up an undefiled people to walk with him in the beauty of his own holiness. Indeed the harvest is great, the true labourers are but few. It is often impressed upon my soul to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more faithful labourers, for unless the anointing is upon the minister his labour profiteth nothing. Except the Holy Spirit qualifies the preacher, preaching is in vain.

And as thou has desired me to give my opinion of Maxfield's preaching,² I can't help being free with thee. And if I should pass a wrong judgment upon him, may my Lord convince me of my error. For as yet I cannot believe he is inwardly moved by the holy Ghost to administer in the church. It seems to me a reflection of some good things you have spoken, though not the best thereof. He goes no farther, according to my apprehension, than the predestinarians go. He seems to have no clear perception of any state farther than justification, and I fear he thinks there is no falling from it. I believe his preaching gives no nourishment to those souls who are seeking after full redemption. I am sure he has no bread for me. I should if I could be easy, be willing to go as often as I have an opportunity for example if I did not receive so much instruction as from you. But it brings a heaviness upon my soul, and I am ready to say what do I have. His prayer I can hardly join in spirit with, because it seems to me as if he must spin it out to such a length, whether he receives power or no. And I am sure, except our prayers are offered in and through the Spirit of the Son, they are not acceptable to the Father; and we ought to be careful not to offend him with vain words.

Thou sees I have given my sentiments freely. And if it was asked me of any of our own, I should speak with the same sincerity. For alas, I am very sensible many stand up amongst us who have no call to minister in the church. And I fear some whom the Lord has anointed for want of discovering the wiles of Satan, not finding their heart free, rob the church of that portion of bread God designed them. O may our dear Lord enlarge the hearts of all and shed his love abroad, pour down his Spirit upon his prophets, and unstop our ears that we may receive his truth and glorify his holy name.

It has often affected my soul to think how many have turned their back upon the truth and forsook you. And it appears strange to me how those who have ministered in the church, and have felt the power so visible amongst you, should so easily change their opinion. But indeed there can be no other reason

¹CW's letter is not known to survive.

²CW or a latter hand has tried to obscure the name. In 1741, while JW was away from the Foundery, Thomas Maxfield began preaching in services, even though he was a layman. On his return to London JW sought to end this, until his mother Susanna (Annesley) Wesley warned him "Thomas Maxfield is as much called to preach the gospel as ever you were!" See Clarke, *Memoirs* (1823), 354, (1836), 2:123.

than an unwillingness to part with their idols. And unless we watch and pray continually, the enemy may get the same advantage over us also. I am sure I can feelingly say without Christ I can do nothing, for I have no strength in me.

O may the holy One of Israel send some faithful helpers, some true labourers to assist you. For I have often thought if the generality of ministers were like you, divisions would decrease and true Christians increase daily. It rejoices my spirit to hear thou art enabled to declare so constantly and powerfully the gospel glad tidings. And although the faithful spies are but few, yet the Lord by giving a double portion of his Spirit to those will certainly endue them with power from on high, to go up with his people to possess the promised land. And I have a hope that we shall live to see in this nation a people whose lights cannot be hid, a city set upon a hill, a visible church whom the Lord will delight in; and that you, my dear friends, may see this day and greatly rejoice in your labour is the sincere desire of

Thy real friend,

S. P.

Do if thou canst favour me with a letter at this time when I can hear neither of you.³ Please to remember me to brother Richards⁴ and our brother Hooper.⁵

Address: "For / Charles Wesley / in / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / July 1741."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/7.

³Both JW and CW were currently out of London.

⁴Thomas Richards (1717–84), son and namesake of the vicar of Ferwig and Cardigan, Wales, matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1734, but did not graduate. JW listed Richards as the second of his lay traveling preachers. He accompanied CW during much of 1740–41.

⁵William Hooper (b. 1725) was the son of John and Elizabeth (Brown) Hooper, and took over his father's shop as a maltster. He had travelled with CW to Wales in July 1741, and remained an active member of the society in Bristol through at least 1770.

From Sarah Perrin

Southwark
July 22, 1741

My Friend,

When I feel the spring of divine love rise in my soul, I think of thee and see it my duty to write. Because I know I am communicating my thoughts to one who is travelling to the same holy habitation, and by whom my Lord has encouraged me to go on my way. I find no reserve to thee, for I forget thou art a learned clergyman and I am a Quaker. I now witness whosoever doth the will of my Father is my brother my mother and my sister.

O what pity is it that all those who are seeking salvation by Jesus Christ are not closely united in spirit together. If we cannot think alike in all things, I am sure it ought not to hinder us from receiving the love of God into our hearts one for another. It is one of the subtlest devices of Satan to raise jealousies and evil surmises in the hearts of those who are pulling down his kingdom. And I have thought sometimes he raises a false zeal in us about things not essential, on purpose to shift that divine charity which leaveth all things. And I am sure those who have overcome this straitness, and feel the same flow of love to all who are seeking to put on the Lord Jesus—let their opinions be what they may—they find abundance of divine consolation in this heavenly gift. O may we, my friend, know an increase thereof. And perhaps our Lord in his time will bring his children nearer in judgment, that with one mind and with one mouth we may glorify him.

I am sure it is the fervent breathing of my soul to know his will more perfectly. I long to have my eye single, that my body may be full of light. O this uninterrupted communion with Christ, how doth my soul pant after it. I feel the overcomings of his love one minute; the next, my soul longs as much for the renewing thereof. How is it possible for one who is seeking the kingdom to comfort themselves with past experiences? Will the grace which I received yesterday satisfy my soul today? No Lord, thou knowest thy children must receive their daily bread and therefore hath commanded thus to pray for it.

I am quite weary of my own unprofitable thoughts. And I earnestly desire my words may be few and savoury. O that I could but attain to administer grace unto the heaven. The Holy Ghost can bear me witness that these desires flow not from any other view than to glorify my God. Often have I earnestly desired that I might suffer the contempt of all mankind if that would be a means of making me a living member in the church of Christ, a branch in the vine that might bring forth fruit to his glory. But I know that I am an unprofitable servant. I have not improved that talent given me as I ought to have done. If I had, before this time I should have received more. Yet my Lord bears with me and suffers me not to feel his displeasure. His banner over me is love. O that I may become a faithful soldier and fight under it until I obtain the victory.

I more than ever see the dreadful consequence which attends the going to hear these sin-pleading ministers. It is quite shocking to hear their hearers talk. The only woman that is in the house with me is one of their electing. She told me lately: God created sin, it is impossible for us to resist his will, he forces us to sin, and no one can be saved whilst they think they are to be redeemed from iniquity in this life, and much more to this purpose. I answered from Scripture. She told me he could not answer those that had so much head knowledge and could talk from Genesis to Revelation. Her knowledge comes with power, she had these things immediately revealed to her. Her discourse affected my spirit much, but I felt no motion but love to her. I have been in a strait since, whether I had best begin with her or stay until she begins with me, for her spirit is bitter. O may our Lord convince her that she cannot sit with him in his throne unless she overcomes this wicked nature. She seems very desirous of heaven, and as desirous to retain sin as long as she lives here. She goes to hear one Bentley preach, and I find he labours hard to convince them they must always remain in sin. And I am sure the devil and our n^(?1) are of his side. No one can

¹A small portion is covered by the wax seal.

find that ever Christ or his apostles pleaded for sin. Their labour was that we should be made free from sin and become servants of God, to have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. But these preach another gospel. O may the light of Christ manifest to them their error.

Nothing can bring greater comfort to a sincere soul than an assurance that Christ died to redeem us from all iniquity and that he will purify us from all sin and make us holy as he is holy. For how is it possible for us to think the blessed comforter will take up his abode in us unless we are sanctified and our bodies temples made fit for him to dwell in. O may no voluntary humility beguile us of our reward. We believe, let us not rest till we obtain the blessing. I know that I am slow of heart. I feel my imperfections deeply. Yet I have no doubt but that my Lord will perfect the work he has begun in me. His promises are certain and I patiently wait and quietly hope for the fulfilling of them.

In that love which changeth not I conclude

Thy friend,

S. P.

O Lord, grant that we may quickly know that thou art in us and we in thee, that thou mayst glorify thyself in us continually.

Since I wrote the above I began with the young woman and talk my mind over fully to her. She heard me patiently and I believe might receive good impressions if her teacher did not labour to impress bad ones.

Address: "To the Revd Mr / Charles Wesley / in / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "July 22. 1741 / S. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/8.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[August 1741]

[[My Dear Friend,

[[Though I love you so well, I cannot say but the distress of mind you mention does not so much surprise me.¹ You have as much comfort as the present exigence requires; an unbelieving world must have more yet to convince them. Go on. God has much in store for you here, and a never-fading crown of glory hereafter. I have felt in my prayers of faith for you that your time is not yet. I have much, over much consolation in the Lord, not only a peace but great joy in believing. My will is only God's. I have not one pleasure of whatever sort or kind soever which I would not as joyfully resign by and by to him as ever I received it. I hunger and thirst after his will only.

[[Have you not talked with God as a man talked with his friend!² Oh how sweet is that communion! I am [ashake?] when I go about to tell you what the Lord does for my soul daily. Tears of joy and love are my portion almost continually. His presence is so great I dare not lift up my head. As these are God's gifts, I will declare them, but not to any except you or your brother. These the Lord of[fers?] me that I may not sit still. I know he is not now an[gry] with me; but he will make me love him so that I must show forth his praise and tell of all his wondrous works.³

[[I was extremely surprised at a visit yesterday of Mr. Simpson,⁴ [Charles] Kinchin, [Thomas] Broughton, and Langley⁵—all still. I find their business was to vindicate Mr. Simpson's proceedings.⁶ I told them I was very sincere and should tell them plainly that their neglect of all or[dinances] was what I disapproved of; though they denied this in words. That the [English] Moravians had a closeness I thought kin to the G[ermans]. That all th[ings] should be d[–]d in the H[oly] S[criptures?]. Mr. Simpson plainly told me he had one ob[jection?] of the Church of England. I answered I hope he allowed s[anctity?] in it. And as little r[egard] as he paid to a visible church, yet the Moravian church had her order as well as we. He then said ours was a fallen church and there was no life in it. I replied I knew God could raise the dead, as was evident in the Moravians, so lately raised out of their sleep of death; and that in weakness God's strength was made perfect.⁷ I instanced in myself, of whom the world and clergy had reported that I had left the church. I knew it would be their joy and delight were it so, but I will stand by God's power in it, and let them see Christianity was in it to their reproach. He then asked in his case what I would have him do. I told him as you and your brother did, and not forsake our mother [church] because she was

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

²See Exod. 33:11.

³See Ps. 105:2 (BCP).

⁴John Simpson (b. c. 1710) studied at Lincoln College, Oxford, with JW as tutor. After graduation in 1731 Simpson was ordained and served as curate in Grayington, Lincolnshire for a while. By 1739 Simpson was in London, and became one of the leaders in the Fetter Lane society advocating "stillness."

⁵The first vowel mark is absent, so this could be "Longley." The identity of this person is uncertain. One possibility is Adam Langley (c. 1703–89), a graduate of Trinity College, Oxford, and rector of West Horsley, Surrey from 1727–58. Langley was also made rector of St. Matthew, Friday Street, London in 1742 and was sympathetic to the evangelical revival.

⁶Having aligned with the Moravians, in Nov. 1740 Simpson moved to Ockbrook, Derbyshire and began preaching in a community there founded by Benjamin Ingham that had been turned over to the Moravians. LH raised objections about his teachings to the leaders in Fetter Lane, and he returned to London to address her concerns in Aug. 1741.

⁷See 2 Cor. 12:9.

weak. But I found his whole intention is to overturn all order, and have told his followers and himself that I will never countenance any ways for setting up a r[ival?] counter-church.

[[I then addressed myself to Mr. Kinchin and hoped he did not mean to follow Mr. Stonehouse's⁸ example. He assured me he had no such design at present. But from his knowledge I found a little more of the Moravian counsel would make him forget his obedience to his mother [church]. I said the enemy of our souls had gained much by separating us. It is easy to discover their design is to become popes to the w[hole] w[orld]; and they will not receive any[thing] which is not their own. It is not an open enemy that has done us this wrong. It is a pit[?] strange to them, and their unchristian coolness to us, and their having scattered God's people.

[[I do not find they are at all stolid about justification and sanctification. They told me they were poor sinners. I asked if they thought there was no other state for God's people but that; that the parable of the p[rodigal] made it appear quite otherwise to me; and that sanctification implied much more. I own it seems to me a contradiction in terms, for I cannot conceive that anyone can will a sin after that grace, if they continue depending upon Christ; and a poor sinner properly b[rought] to a state in confession. I should sooner choose to say the love of God shed abroad in my heart had made me a worm and nothing.

[[My heart is much lifted up for you both. I must say no more than that you will not forget one who is as low as the dust from the Lord God in her soul. May you rest in the Lord now and ever more.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 4.⁹

⁸George Stonehouse (1713–93) matriculated at Pembroke College, Oxford in 1729, receiving his BA (1733) and MA (1736). Ordained deacon in June, and elder in Sept. 1737, Stonehouse was appointed vicar of St. Mary's, Islington in 1738. He was part of the Oxford Methodists during his student years, and opened his pulpit and churchyard to the Wesley brothers and Whitefield at the outset of the revival, until his churchwardens ended this practice. In 1739 Stonehouse married Mary Crispe (b. 1722), a wealthy heiress, to the chagrin of her family (because of Stonehouse's 'Methodist' connections). Mary met James Hutton and later Count Zinzendorf through her husband's circle of friends and was soon a devoted Moravian (even adopted by Zinzendorf as his daughter). While George Stonehouse's sympathies toward the Moravians were less fervent, in 1740 he sold his Islington living and retired to the Dornford estate of his wife, near Wootton, Oxfordshire.

⁹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 113–16.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[[August]] 4, [17]41

[[This morning your dear brother [JW] has been with me. He adds great joy and p[atience] to me whenever I see him. He is rich but not proud of his riches, therefore they will continue with him. He tells me he thinks you will be soon in town. I hope God will protect you against the still ones. They will be a trial for you. Pope [John] Cennick will be here. But I shall soon find you out. For till they have sealed up your mouth, which is their design, I shall have patience and let them go on. But these will be taking all into their own hands. And what they will attempt ere long I am sure. But God is able to keep us from falling and will you. I shall see you as soon as you come to town.¹

[[There seems at present an universal work of Satan prevailing for a time. May the Lord build us up, and keep Satan under our feet till we trample on all p[owers of] h[ell].]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 5a.²

¹CW was in Bristol through Sept. 22 (*MS Journal*), but in London challenging the “still ones” by Oct. 24 (see LH to JW, Oct. 24, 1741).

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 116.

From Sarah Perrin

Southwark
August 13, 1741

My Good Friend,

My hands have been fully employed since I received thine,¹ but my heart has been often lifted up in prayer for thee. It is impossible for me to express how much my soul is united to those who are seeking after full redemption, for few they are who are striving to enter the kingdom. To please the world and to please God is the aim of almost all professors. But alas I see more and more that if we will be perfect we must sell all and follow Jesus. O may we be made faithful in little things, however small they may appear to us. If they keep out the Holy One and prevent the Comforter taking up his abode in us, they deprive us of happiness and that matter of the greatest concern of our souls.

I am fully satisfied thee and thy brother are now greatly beloved. Fear not, peace be unto thee. Be strong. Yea, be strong. The Lord has seen thy way and he will heal thee. He will lead thee and restore comforts unto thee.

My soul is comforted when I consider the blessing of your ministry. It evidently shows that the Lord yet waits to be gracious to this nation and therefore sends his messengers to preach glad tidings of full salvation. O Lord open our hearts to receive this everlasting truth.

O mayst thou go on feeding of his lambs, whilst our Lord administers bread to thee. Thou mayst be certain it is his will thou shouldst feed his sheep to manifest thy love to him. And in his time he will cause thy soul to rejoice in thy labour. Surely it must be some consolation to thee to know thy labour administers grace to others. O may this truth be confirmed to thee. May many be added to the church daily of such as shall be saved is the sincere breathing of my soul. Indeed my brother I earnestly desire we may be delivered from all evil. I feel no prayer for my own soul but what I feel with the same fervency for thine, and for everyone that is striving to enter the kingdom. The longing desire I find in my heart is not for myself only. It is that the Lord will redeem a people from all iniquity and make us jealous of good works; that Ephraim may no longer be joined to idols, but that a visible church may appear on the earth without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; that the heathen may no longer triumph over us, but choosing the glory of grace may believe and be converted.

The day which I received thine I felt much love in my heart for [Thomas] Maxfield,² and I was moved to pray for him. I sincerely wish I may be mistaken in him. All my fear of him is his joining with the predestinarians. But I fully intend, if providence permits, to go and hear him while thy brother is away. I have not had opportunity yet. I feel no prejudice in my mind to no one in the world but them that I think is not clear in the point of doctrine of universal redemption. I don't know how to hear [them] since I have observed the dreadful consequence which attends final perseverance and election.

I rejoice to hear our Friend Denham's face is turned Sion's-ward.³ I will endeavor as soon as I can have time to encourage him to walk in the undefiled way. For I think although I know myself weak indeed yet it is our duty to help one another as far as we are able.

I think of leaving the society with reluctance in about three weeks. I believe I shall be at Bradford. But let me be where I will, I trust we shall be present in spirit. And I hope my Lord will make way for me to hear you again. And his presence I believe will attend me wherever he calls me to go, and the gift of faith he has communicated to me through your ministry he will not take from me. But I shall

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

²Once again, CW or a later hand has tried to obscure the name.

³This is most likely Robert Denham (1706–64) a Quaker in Bristol, who married Elizabeth Ball (1714–62) about 1730. Their son William Denham (1732–1809) would later write in opposition to JW's *Calm Address* to the Americans.

earnestly desire the prayers of my friends for that I may not grow cool when I am deprived of the benefit of hearing you. For I know I am quickened by hearing the gospel. I am often tempted to put salvation afar off, to think I shall not be perfectly free until the conclusion of time. But alas I know it is unbelief alone which hinders my being free. Our Lord is willing to give me faith, but I do not strive enough to obtain it. The kingdom suffers violence and it is the violent take it by force. O may I never yield to the temptation of taking up a false rest. Lord do thou increase our faith, save us from all our sin,s and make thy abode with us.

My love to all our friends. I remain thy unworthy sister.

Farewell,

S. P.

Let me hear as soon as it suits thee. Writ[ten] in haste.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley at / William Hoopers / in ye back lane near / ye Old Market / Bristol."

Postmark: "13/AV."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / Aug. 1741."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/9.

From Sarah Perrin

Leominster
[September¹] 1, 1741

My Good Friend,

I received thine last third-day [Tuesday].² I read thy kind caution to my sister and she gives her love to thee and I hope will lay it to heart.³

Here seems to be some good stirring. Many of the Church of England meet often together to talk of the things of God. They invited me to come amongst them. I have been with them several times. They seem to be united in Spirit to me. I earnestly desire I may lay no stumbling block in their way but that the Master whom I desire to serve may give me words for their edification. I have no party to promote but love unfeigned, no doctrine to set up but faith in our Lord Jesus, and no religion to press them to but holiness of heart. One evening I gave them the sermon on *Salvation by Faith*.⁴ They much approved of it. I read the hymn to them “Let the mind be in you which was also in Christ.”⁵ They said it comforted them and some of Sukey Designe’s letters to me I believe have⁶ been of service.⁷ They seem much to desire a powerful minister. I pray such may come who are rightly commissioned and know how to divide the Word aright. I fear if the predestinarians come it will turn some out of the way. But at present I do not find any of them of that opinion, though they seem not to know how to distinguish the difference of doctrine and I believe if they have false teachers it will cause them to err. I know whom I could wish was to come amongst them, but Lord thou knowest where to send thy prophets best.

Why dost thou tell me thee looks for thy mouth to be stopped. I have great confidence in God concerning thee. I verily believe it is his will thou should show his people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. O my friend, cry aloud and spare not. The Lord I know will satisfy thy love in drought and make fat thy bones. Thou shalt be like a watered garden and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. For our Lord will fulfill the desires of them that fear him. He will hear their cry and will save them. I can have no doubt concerning thee. Feel after him in all thy performances and thou shalt find him. He is with thee and the light of his countenance shall shine upon thee. He tries thee to make thee valiant; and although the archers shoot at thee, thy bow will abide in strength.

I more and more desire I may be enabled to do good to others by showing forth holiness in all manner of conversation. “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given and whomsoever hath not, from him shall be taken that which he seemeth to have.”⁸ These words are strongly impressed upon my mind. O may they stir me up to my duty. I long for the time to come when every word and action of my life may be a testimony of the faith I make profession of, for I am sure at present I greatly fall short of it.

Indeed it is my duty to stay longer in this place. Therefore my good friend, do not tempt me.

¹In her letter of Aug. 13, 1741 Sarah mentioned she would be leaving Southwark soon, likely to her aunt’s home in Bradford-on-Avon. Instead, she ended up in Leominster. The present letter was likely written in September; October is less likely, as CW was planning to leave Bristol for London in late Sept.

²This letter does not survive.

³Mary Perrin (b. 1704) had either recently married or was soon to be married to Samuel Southall, a mercer in Leominster.

⁴JW, *Salvation by Faith, Works*, 1:117–30.

⁵Phil. 2:5. CW had apparently sent Perrin a manuscript copy of his hymn on this text that would be published in *HSP* (1742): 221–23.

⁶Orig., “has.”

⁷Susannah Designe (1712–79); see her letters of Mar. 19 & Apr. 8, 1742.

⁸Matt. 13:12.

Whenever I feel deadness I long to be with you. But my Lord does not leave me long. He comforts me. He causes my soul to rejoice, and I can say from a living sense Jesus loves me. I visit from house to house and do my endeavour to press my friends to go on unto perfection. We have several young plants of our own people who want to know the mysteries of the gospel more fully explained to them. I believe I will bring both sorts to meet together without judging one another in respect of externals. Let everyone do as they are persuaded in their own minds if they earnestly press after holiness. If thou hast freedom to write a letter for our encouragement do.

O may all who seek salvation love one another as Christ loveth us. May the Holy One of Israel be thy joy and consolation. Desire not to be as one forgotten, but rather that thy light may rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noon day.

Farewell,

S. P.

Remember me to William Hooper.

Address: "To Charles Wesley / att / William Hoopers / near ye Olde Market / Bristol / via Gloucester."

Endorsement: by CW, "S Perrin / 1741."⁹

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/5.

⁹The endorsement is written initially in shorthand; expanded at a later date.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. September 15, 1741¹]

[[How can my good friend suspect me that I should have forgotten anyone I believe God loves so well. Never believe it, should the whole world declare it unto you. No, be assured neither life nor death nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate my heart from the lovers of my dear Redeemer.²

[[Your letter, burned now,³ makes me sure of a thing which I have long suspected, that your heart is not open to me as mine is to you. Something lies at the bottom and torments you. For I am sure were you quite open, the snare would be broken and you delivered, and you could bear anything. You will not let me offer my prayers aright for you. I am sure God does not willingly afflict the children of men.⁴ You will be st[rengthened] at l[ast].

[[I guess your brother has sent you the con[ference] between him and the Count.⁵ It is a strange r[elation?], but God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.⁶ There is a deep mystery yet undiscovered in this man, but it will be found out.

[[How few are single of eye and heart! Oh tear me hence or make my whole body full of light. My soul rests now in him. I have not one wish or desire but to be more and more his. And though I am not in my first love, I have a sure hope and confidence as an anchor of the soul that never fails me. Neither hell nor devil do I fear.

[[When I read, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,”⁷ I cannot bear up under the elevated praise of my soul. My heart asks me, “Do not you desire to be d[issolve]d and to be with Christ?” “Oh yes,” I say with every fibre of my soul and being. There are many things remain in me which I cannot reconcile with this. Nor is this my portion always. But God who knows all things knows I love him. I beg you in the most earnest manner not to fail me in all spiritual consolation. Your prayers I know I feel I have. But fail not to acquaint me of every instant of which my soul may give glory to God. When I remove hence I shall almost perish for hunger.

[[Farewell. May the Almighty pour down upon you all those blessings my own soul most longs for.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 9a.⁸

¹Dated by the reference to JW’s meeting with Count Zinzendorff.

²See Rom. 8:38.

³Note: this explains why this and most of CW’s letters to LH during this time do not survive.

⁴See Lam. 3:33.

⁵See JW’s conversation with Count Zinzendorff in his *Journal*, Sept. 3, 1741, *Works*, 19:211–15.

⁶See 1 Cor. 4:5.

⁷Matt. 5:8.

⁸An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 124–25.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. September 25, 1741]

The uncertainty of your having left Bristol made me write there by tonight's post.¹ Sure[ly] you think I pursue and haunt you with my letters. They are, next to my prayers, the most useless things I can offer. God can give comfort by the meanest and basest of things. I wish you so much of that from him that all my expectations are continually full of it. And I am only preparing channels by which it may be conveyed.

My own state is now waiting upon the Lord till he renew my strength. I have seen him at some distance for this late(ly?),² full of love and mercy. This has made me restless. My tears are continually my portion. But he has given me my heart's desire and has not denied me the request of my lips. He has not yet taken me in hand, but he will. I am sure his love is able to make me a vessel to honour. All power seems taken from me for any good. I am without capacity of any endeavours. If I write, I am without thoughts. If I read, I am not the better. If I pray without ceasing, I am the same. If I entreat the Lord with tears, no power is given. He seems neither angry nor pleased with me. This troubled me above all things. In this painful situation, like heaven, entered these words into my soul: "Wait thou upon the Lord and he shall renew thy strength." I could forever pray to him. I feel his presence, but not with like equal light and joy but sometimes great faith. Don't say a word of this. I never say much of myself to you. I don't want you to think highly of me, though I wish you always to think kindly of me. I know your charity will always be my security. And when I cease to love the Lord above all things, do you try to forget the most unfaithful of his creatures.

Lest any should open it by mistake at the Foundery, I have sent it thus.³

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/86. See also CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy, MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 20d.⁴

¹CW was still in Bristol on Sept. 22; he arrived in London on Sept. 28.

²The word is hard to read; CW's shorthand copy renders it "week."

³Apparently the letter was hand-delivered.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand copy was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 148.

From William Barber¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
[c. October²] 1741

Reverend Sir,

According to your request I shall give you as plain and as simple accounts as I can of my state, how I set out to seek Christ.

The first instrument under God of bringing my soul out darkness into the marvellous light, was our brother Cooper,³ for he happily coming to work where I was and having opportunity had begun to tell me what the Lord had done for his soul. I readily received his saying and told him I did intend through Christ to pursue the same way. Accordingly he engaged me to go along with him to Fetter Lane society where you was expounding the Scriptures; but upon what point I cannot so well remember for this is about three years ago.⁴ But I seemed to like it well, to God be all the glory. He likewise asked me to go with him on the Sunday morning following to St. Lawrence church, which accordingly I did. He asked me to stay to the sacrament. I told him no, not then, for I thought, having never been, there must be something of a preparation before I should go. I told him, please God, on the Sunday following I would go and my wife.⁵ Having never been, we did intend to go together, and accordingly we began on the Monday to prepare our souls by reading over a form which we had in the house. And so we went on all the week till Sunday morning. And though the enemy of our souls began to set himself in array against us by endeavouring to keep us from going (for something being amiss with my stockings I was to put on, words arose between us), the enemy did not get his way of us, for we disappointed him of his hope. For in the name of the Lord we went, God being our helper. I believed it to be the enemy because the Lord gave me eyes then clearly to see it was one of his doings to keep us from going, because he knows it is the overthrow of his kingdom. And I trust in the Lord I shall always keep in his own appointed way. But to return, I did not find much satisfaction in going. But I thought it was my duty to go and to let no opportunity slip of both hearing the word preached and receiving the sacrament as soon as convenience offered.

I heard that our brother, John Wesley, was to preach that same day at St. Giles-in-the-Fields and accordingly I went to hear him and he preached from those words, “Ho every one that thirsteth, come you to the waters and he that hath no money, come you, buy and drink. Come and buy wine and milk without money and without price.”⁶ [I] found something of a strong alteration in my soul under the word such as I

¹William Barber (b. c. 1700) married Joanna Hullman in 1722 in London. He and his wife were active in the Fetter Lane society, and joined those who left to align with the Wesley brothers at the Foundery. Both appear as married in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). Barber would write CW again in Feb. 1752, reporting his wife’s death; and Dec. 27, 1762, reporting on the blessing controversy in the London society.

²CW returned to London in Oct. 1741, making this the earliest opportunity for an account “about three years” after Barber first heard him.

³Thomas Cooper, see the next account.

⁴CW’s first recorded instance of expounding at Fetter Lane in *MS Journal* is on Mar. 20, 1739; this was likely earlier.

⁵Joanna (Hullman) Barber (d. 1752).

⁶Isa. 55:1. JW records preaching at St. Giles in the Fields on Sunday, Feb. 4, 1739 on John 7:38, which echos Isa. 55:1. Barber may well mean this sermon. JW also records preaching in London on Isa. 55:1 as early as June 17, 1739, but he was at Moorfields.

never found before, for I could not refrain from tears most of the time of his preaching. The word came with power and I began to see the necessity of a Saviour.

I went on mourning for some time. But I found great comfort often under your word at Islington church, but I had not found that pearl of great price.⁷ Not long after going to Islington to church and after sacrament, some of us went down to the house for to spend some time together in prayer and singing. And while one of our brethren was at prayer, then it was that the Lord revealed himself unto me. I found redemption in the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins. I flowed in tears and at the same time was transported into joy. I went on rejoicing for some time till the enemy came and tempted [me] to think I did deceive myself. But after I had acknowledged what the Lord had done for me I durst not doubt it. For whenever the temptation came, I always found something greater than my own evil heart. There was a secret hope and a sure trust and confidence in God that for Christ's sake my sins were forgiven.

But how soon did I forget the loving-kindness of the Lord by proving unfaithful to grace given. For I went into the country to see some friends, not to do the Lord's will but my own. For I did not confess the Lord before them, nor did I declare what the Lord had done for my soul, and hereby grieved the Holy Spirit and caused the Lord to withdraw himself from me, and the Lord grant it may be laid to my charge. I went on in darkness and heaviness for some time, till by repentance the Lord was pleased to return to me again.

About this time I was put upon the trial band; and, in the time appointed, I was admitted into the bands. I was put into our brother Edmund's band.⁸ We went on very well for some time together but it was not long before Mr. Molther came over,⁹ and he used to attend our band almost every time we met. I remember for the first time he came amongst us there was nothing done but he telling us his own experience. Another time we met, because Mr. Molther did not come, we could do nothing among ourselves, as to what we came upon but fell into lightness and vain talking, and so we parted. I thought these things should not be so. But I found it very agreeable to nature to come away as we went, for the enemy laboured hard to keep me away from my band and so often I yielded to the temptation.

My wife was then in band, and coming home from Fetter Lane on Sunday night she told me that Mr. Molther or some of them had given out that the sacrament was only for such as was in such a state as she described to me. I was surprised at this, for I knew myself not to be in that state; which gave me great uneasiness, for I never had heard him express himself in such a manner. But I did intend, please God I did live till Monday night when our band did meet, to ask him the question whether or not such a one as me should go to the sacrament. He told me it was only for them that had attained to the liberty of the gospel. I remember very well there was two or three in band that readily received his saying and said they could as well stay away as go, it was equally the same to them. These sayings gave me great uneasiness in soul, for I fell into great doubts and reasoning concerning it, for I looked unto man more than unto God. I was halting between two opinions, for sometimes I found a desire to go to the sacrament, but oftener I staid away. I found no peace in going, nor none in staying away, but I was like the troubled sea. At last I did not go at all, and the reason I gave was, when anyone asked me, that I could not go without trusting in the means.

⁷CW preached regularly at St. Mary's church in Islington, where Rev. George Stonehouse was vicar, from the fall of 1738 up to the end of April 1739. After that he was denied the pulpit there.

⁸The trial band and regular band would have been as part of the Fetter Lane society, where John Edmonds was a founding member and remained after the Wesley brothers departed.

⁹Rev. Philip Henry Molther (c. 1714–80) was ordained by Count Zinzendorf in 1739 and appointed to missionary work in Pennsylvania. He arrived in London in late 1739, while in transit. James Hutton introduced him to the Fetter Lane society, where he was distressed with the popular charismatic phenomena. In reaction he encouraged a type of quietism that entailed near complete separation from church-related activities. This would lead to the fissure of the society on July 20, 1740.

Now the devil had got his desire of me. Now I did fall into sin. My Saviour was hid from me, I was as a sheep having no shepherd. I had no peace to my soul by reason of my sins, for I had lost all the ordinances of God. This was a snare the enemy had laid for me, for I never approved of their ways but I was staggering between [the] two. And so I went on for some time, till the Lord was pleased to bring me back again in a manner he knows best for me, for I believe all things did work together for my good. For now the Lord began to show me the corruptions and evil abominations that was in my heart. Now I had such a sight of my heart that the spirit which he had made was ready to fail before him, for I could not go along the street but my desires would be almost to everything I saw. Evil thoughts would arise, unclean desires would proceed. I could not pray nor my desires was but cold by reason of unbelief. Now the devil tempted me [to] reason with self from whence the deity first proceeded, which was the greatest trial I ever met with.

But he who has promised that we shall not be tempted above what we are able to bear, he did support me under this trial. And to this day when I meditate upon the goodness of the Lord, and what he has done for me, then the enemy assaults me with this temptation. But [God] be praised, he cannot approach to hurt me, for he only drives me the nearer to my Saviour. I told my mind to my old friend, our brother Cooper, and he advised me to keep close to the ordinances, which by the grace of God I did thoroughly. I found my Lord again, for I know he is to be found in the ordinances. For I have had many sweet and precious promises brought to me in the sacrament. But I find such a depth of unbelief in my heart that I cannot lay hold of them. But this I can lay hold of, and am sure that he that has begun a good work in my soul, he will also carry it on unto the end. But I have been unfaithful to the grace given, I have grieved the Holy Spirit of my Lord by a thousand falls and have caused the Lord to withdraw his Spirit from me, and so I have fallen into darkness. But by repentance and seeking him in his own appointed ways, the Lord is restored to me again. I find the Spirit of the Lord present with me at all times. For there is nothing I say or do that is not to his glory but immediately I am convinced of it. Oh that I might never sin against him more, but that I may continually wait upon the Lord till he has fulfilled all his promises in my soul. And this is my hope, that if [I] confess my sins, he his faithful and just to forgive me my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.

Now the Lord bless, preserve, and keep you and Mr. John [Wesley], and grant that you may be fathers of many generations. And that it may be your crown of rejoicing that when you give up your account you may give them up with joy and not with sorrow.

Wm. Barber

Endorsement: by CW, “W. Barber’s Exp[erience] / 1741.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/20.¹⁰

¹⁰For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Thomas Cooper¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
[October 1741]

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire and by God's help I will let you know how the Lord hath wrought his work in my soul.

The first of his drawings was when I was about 12 years of age, when I first went to [ap]prentice. My Master and Mrs. kept me to church and reading the Holy Scriptures on the Sabbath days. And I heard sermons that used to take great effect on me, and went to prayers often alone and wept much; especially when I read of the sufferings of our Saviour and thought the people were very hard-hearted. I did not think I had done the deed, and then I felt the love of God in my heart but could not tell what it was.

I went on in this way till within two of the last years I had to serve of my [ap]prenticeship. The boys and young people of that place used to make game on me because I would not game and keep company and do as they did. Now the tempter came to me, but I knew him not, and told me if I would do as other people did, they would like me very well and not to make myself so particular from the rest of the world. I took the devil's advice and went into company and did as they did, and then my company was accepted. And in three years after I came to London I [had] a good deal of acquaintances and spent a deal of time in whoring, drinking and dancing, plays, and such vice as youth is prone to. But often when I have been gratifying my fleshly desires, my conscience used to accuse me. Then I would make resolutions never to do so no more. But when I came into company again my good resolution were all broken. Then I would be ready to tear myself to pieces.

Then to avoid my companions, I went to Staffordshire to settle there and it was all the same there. Then I came to town [i.e., London] again, but resolved not to keep much company but live a sober life. I came, but I fell into sin worse than before. One night I was sitting in a public house with one of my acquaintance, he began to tell me how his conscience troubled him and this way of life would not do, for he intended to leave his companions that drove him into wickedness and go to church all opportunities. I agreed to this and so we went on for some time. Then we heard there was a sermon at St. Lawrence's church every Sunday morning at six o'clock.² We went there. And when I used to go I was so ashamed of myself, to think how I had spent my time in sitting up all Saturday nights and laying in bed all Sunday morning, which forced me to weep often.

Now by the providence of the Almighty my friend heard of a religious society in Aldersgate Street, I think in the month of August 1738.³ We went there and one night the Lord brought you and Mr. James Hutton. You began to speak on justification by faith alone and told them, they must feel their sins forgiven in this life or they never would in the life to come. I remember they used you ill and some were for putting you out of the room, but at last they suffered you to read a Homily upon "Faith."⁴ I thought it

¹Thomas Cooper (b. 1710) was part of the Fetter Lane society, then joined the Wesley brothers at the Foundery, where he appears as a married man in the Foundery Band lists (1742–46) through July 1744. By 1745 he had broken with the Wesley brothers (see *MS Journal*, Nov. 27, 1745); and CW visited in a mad-house in 1755; see CW to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley, Sept. 22, 1755. Cooper's spelling is largely phonetic, and his account lacks punctuation and paragraph breaks.

²I.e., St. Lawrence Jewry church.

³I.e., the Fetter Lane society.

⁴This is likely the instance that CW records on Aug. 16, 1738 in *MS Journal*; he and JW were both currently drawn to the Church of England Homilies to defend their emphasis on justification by faith, which resulted in JW's extract in the tract, *The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works*

comfortable doctrine but strange doctrine to me, for I never heard such before. The Lord did not suffer me to speak against it, but he led me to see they were not right by their behaviour towards you. So I went home to prayer and prayed to God, [asking] if it must be so that our sins must be forgiven in this life, I prayed I might experience and feel mine forgiven. But I was almost afraid to ask him, for I thought I should speak blasphemy if I should say my sins were forgiven me. I went to search the Scriptures. I saw the words you spoke were in the book of God. And something told me I must believe the Scriptures, for they were the words of Jesus (and he was God and could not lie) and of his apostles, and if I would be saved I must believe them. But something whispered as it were in me and told me the Scriptures were not true. This frightened me and I began to reason with myself whether they were or not. So I prayed to God to direct me and give me faith to believe them if it was his word. Something again told me it was his word and I must believe it. For some time I was struggling between these two spirits, not knowing it was the Spirit of God and the devil striving in me. But at last the Lord gave me to believe it was his word and I saw by it I had not that faith which would save me. And what to do for it, I knew not, but I kept to church and went on in using prayer [at] all opportunities.

Then I heard of the Savoy society, there I heard Mr. John Wesley.⁵ Such a minister I never heard before, for by the grace of God he spoke to me as never man spake. I found myself condemned under his word. I found by sins I had committed I deserved to be damned. I thought I was the person he made his discourse upon for he told me all that every I did. I had a desire to speak to him but was so ashamed of myself I did not, and then I went mourning all the day long, and could find no rest in my soul by reason of sin.

Now the Lord put in my mind to go to the Lord's Table, but I was afraid I was not fit. And how to prepare myself, I knew not. But I got a book on the weekly preparation for that purpose and used that and searched the Scriptures and saw there if we forgive our enemies, God for Christ's sake would forgive us. I prayed that he would give me a hearty and sincere repentance and bring all my sins to me more and more. I found he did in a little time, for when I have been at prayers my sins came fresh in my mind that I had committed some years before and never thought them sinful, but now by the commandment I saw sin to be exceedingly sinful. I desired him to give a heart to forgive all my enemies. I found he did in a little time, so I went to the blessed sacrament and pleaded his own promise, but I took the bread and wine with a trembling hand and found myself much afraid. And now I believe I was called to that holy ordinance by God himself, for I have seen it in others. I do not press upon any to go till they have a desire and are convinced in their own hearts they should use that ordinance.

The day after I had been there I found stronger convictions than before. Then the devil came and suggested mixed and blasphemous thoughts in me as I sat at my work, which made me often burst into tears; it was to curse God and our Lord Jesus. But I could not tell for what and the more I strove against those thoughts, the stronger they were pressed on me to do it. I wept and prayed and cried to the Lord that he would take them from me for if I should do this I thought I should be damned to be sure.

Then I found I could answer with St. Paul, for I found a warning in my soul against the mind that I had in me, for with my mind I would serve the Lord. But I found when I would do good, evil was present with me. The devil at last so suggested in me to curse God that he made me believe I had in my heart done it. This indeed drove me to Christ as a sinner, for now I had nothing to plead before God. I went to our Saviour and told him what I had done and if he could have mercy on such a sinner as I was, I desired he would. It came often to me like a small still voice, "Christ died for sinners" (this used to give me some hopes still), and called them that were heavy laden with their sins and these precious promises gave me great comfort sometimes.

(1738), *Works*, 12:31–43.

⁵A religious society meeting in the Chapel Royal, Savoy. JW had returned in mid-Sept. 1738 from his trip Germany and was preaching around London, including at the Savoy society on Sept. 21; see *Journal, Works*, 19:13.

Now the devil tempted me to go and hang myself, for I was such a sinner I could not be saved. But the grace of God was with me and the Lord did not suffer me but took the temptation from me. But I went on in deep mourning, praying and crying to the Lord. I used to go often by myself into the field and get under hedges or anywhere to be in private that no one would see me, for now nothing would satisfy me but this faith that I had not, or remission of my sins.

And now I felt another temptation which beset me. The devil told me I did not call upon the right God, I was in a delusion. And as I was walking one day in the fields alone I prayed [that] if I called upon the God that made heaven and earth, the beast of the fields and all things that I then saw with my bodily eyes, he would show me by some token. For I desired to serve the living and true God. It came to me I was right. So I resisted the devil and he fled from me. So in that hour I was delivered from that temptation and found great joy such as I never felt before, and often felt it under the word when I was at the society. I asked of God what this meant. It came to me it was the drawing of the Father. Now I began to tell my brothers and sisters and my old acquaintance what comfort I felt now [compared] to what I felt when I lived in the pleasures of the world. Some told me I should drive myself mad and go to bed, some others told me I need not take so much pains for I was good enough. But I had often these words: “come to me,” “you cannot serve God and mammon” and “if you love this world, you are an enemy to God.” This came to me with great power, to press me forwards and not to give heed to my acquaintance. For if I thought of turning back I saw nothing but hell and destruction for me.

So I took up my cross and followed my Master. But still I wanted to know my sins forgiven. And now I was determined not to let Jesus go till he had spoken peace to my soul. For I believe he had power on earth to forgive sins, and he never turned any away in the days of his flesh, and I had a hope he would not turn me away for I was a sinner.

One Saturday night I went into my room and began to examine myself by the commandments and found there I had broken them all in the spiritual sense and felt I deserved to be damned. Now I had nothing to trust to but the blood of Jesus and asked God to forgive me for his sake alone and give me his grace [so] I would never offend him more. And meditating in my heart on my duty towards God, and whilst I was thinking on those words, I had something come to my heart like a dart, in one moment, and I was melted into tears, and tears of love indeed. For I found that I loved God more than those words could express. And faith was given in that moment that I should receive remission of my sins at the blessed sacrament on the morrow. I prayed and read the Holy Scriptures till one o’ clock and still I believed I should receive pardon for my sins.

I prayed to God to wake me in the morning. I was waked about three o’ clock, I believe by the Spirit of God. And so soon as I waked I believed still I should receive forgiveness of sins at the sacrament. I got up and went to prayers till 5:00. Then I called my old friend up that used to go to church with me. We used a short prayer together and so went to St. Lawrence [Jewry] church. And whilst I was there I hungered for the blessed sacrament, for I believed from my heart I should be forgiven still. And when I received the cup from Mr. Sparkes,⁶ I received it as from my Saviour, and saw by faith my sins blotted out and it was unto me according to my faith. I rose from the table and found all guilt of sin taken away from me. I found peace with God and some joy. *And this was the first of October 1738, in the beginning of the 28 year of my age.*⁷

But on Monday and Tuesday after I found a hungering in my soul for something else, but I could not tell what. On Tuesday night I went to a society in Bair Yard near Claremarket. Mr. John Wesley was there and expounded, and after he had done we went to prayers, and whilst I was at prayers I thought I should desolve away in tears. I thought I felt my heart open within me and like a fountain of water run from it. And in that moment I felt such love, peace, and joy past all expression. We sang a hymn. I

⁶Rev. John Sparkes (c. 1713–47), of Peterborough, was educated at Cambridge, and ordained deacon on Feb. 16 and priest on Apr. 16, 1738. He was currently in London, assisting Thomas Broughton.

⁷Cooper follows this with several dashes, apparently for emphasis on his conversion date.

thought I was out of the body with the angels in heaven, for I was so full of joy I could not express myself. I went down stairs. Brother Jones, my old friend and companion stayed for me. He asked me how I was. I told him and all that were about me how I knew my sins were forgiven me, for I had received the witness of it from God.

He went homewards with me, but the joy came more and more upon me, so we went back and took a walk round Lincoln's Inn Square. I felt the joys came more and more upon me, so that I could not contain myself without leaning on him, and wanted words to praise God for what he had done for my soul. These words came to me, "Oh praise the Lord O my soul and all that is within me, praise his holy name!"⁸ And whilst I was praising God, I found he was [near] to my soul, for I was like a vessel filled with new wine. And then it came to me, "The wind bloweth where it listeth but you cannot tell from whence it came, nor where it goeth."⁹ So I could witness for I saw nothing but I felt the power of the Holy Ghost in my soul.

Then I returned home and told Sister Potes(?) what the Lord had done for my soul, and desired her to seek the Lord and not to be so careful after the things of this world. She then thought I was mad indeed, for I broke out into praising of God before her and could not contain myself. Brother Jones and I went to prayers and to give God thanks for what he had done for my soul, and so parted. I went to bed that night and dreamed I was with the angels in heaven. And so these joys lasted with me for three weeks and in these three weeks by times I could say with St. Paul, "whether in the body or out I could not tell."¹⁰ And when I have been waking in the morning I have heard such words of prayer and praise come out of my mouth before I was awakened to remember what they were. But when I came to be wide awake, they were as far taken from me as if I never had heard them. And I believe to this day they were words not for mortal man to express. And these joys came on me by times that, if I was in company with anybody, I could not help breaking out into praises, for I found it gave me ease.

And now I found love to all the world and could not help declaring to all I met with what the Lord had done for my soul, that they might feel the same. Some told me I was mad. Others told me the devil was in me. But I did not mind that for I spoke so much the more. Now I thought these joys would last always, and thought of nothing but dying and going to him whom my soul loved. I left all my wordly business for six weeks, and was afraid of going into the world for it grieved my soul to hear the name of God blasphemed.

But in about three weeks these joys and this burning love which I had was taken from me and all comfort. Now the enemy was permitted to tempt me so I went mourning and was afraid I had offended God, or he would not [have] taken my Comforter from me. Now the devil told me I had offended God for telling what the Lord had done for my soul. I should [have] kept it to myself and told nobody. So one day I went to Mr. John Wesley and told him I was afraid I had offended the Lord. He told me it was a temptation of the devil. I might keep the secrets of an earthly king, but not of the heavenly, for I did right to declare it on the house top. So the Lord let me see I had not offended him. Mr. Wesley bid me look to Christ when I was tempted. So when the tempter came again I looked up to Christ, and I found while I looked up I was always delivered, for before I could tell God what I wanted I was answered, and whilst I kept in that childlike simplicity I walked with God.

I conversed with my Lord as free as one friend would with another and asked him to direct me in all things, and went on declaring what he had done for my soul, the Lord being my strength. And I found the Lord put words in my mouth to speak and none could resist that power which I felt. Sometimes I have been in company with many of the polite people of this world and they have begun to rail against you and your doctrine. I would let them go on a while and that time I would spend in prayer to God to help me and

⁸Ps. 103:1.

⁹John 3:8.

¹⁰2 Cor. 12:2–3.

stand as a fool before them. Then the Lord put words in my mouth to speak to them that in a few minutes they have been so confounded they could not mock me nor answer. And this power I had from above and to God be all the glory, for I never had much learning and that you may see by my scrawl here to you now.

The Lord never left me long without the light of his countenance. But when he was withdrawn from me I used to mourn and weep and be very uneasy. He was so loving to me he would return again. And anytime when the tempter came and told me I was deceiving myself or that I was in a delusion, I used to look back to the time I received the witness of the Spirit. It would take off all doubts and so I believe I can say I trusted to my gifts for a year and a quarter.

But in this time I was pressed in spirit to go into Staffordshire to see my friends and declare to them what the Lord had done for my soul. There I found the words of our Lord fulfilled for I found my greatest foes were those of my own relations. But the Lord blessed the word to some that I kept a correspondence with. Now I stayed there about three months.

I came to town [i.e., London] again and this while the German brethren came over.¹¹ And the first private band night that we met came Mr. [James] Hutton and another. They told me I had not faith, but I withstood them and told them I had and the witness of the Spirit. They asked me if I could not go to bed without prayer and leave off prayer for a fortnight. This struck me in a surprise. They told me if I could not, I trusted in my own works. We parted that night but brother Price¹² stayed with me and there the Lord showed me their advice was of the devil, for I found it was pleasing to flesh and blood for I had found often it was contrary to my nature to pray at all. So at that time I was delivered. But I found many of my acquaintances turned out of the way that I [had] left in a good way when I went out of town. They were told they had not faith, they must not go to the sacrament. So they left off prayer and going to the sacrament till they fell into sin, and were almost as bad as if they were never awakened.

Several came to me and asked me what they must do. Now there was so much talk that none should go to the Lord's table but those that had faith had put me into reasoning about it and I could not tell them what to do. But I dared not say they should not, for it often came to me: did not I receive faith at the sacrament. And it happened at that time that you and Mr. John were out of town and I had nobody to declare my mind to.¹³ But one day I set a point for fasting and prayer and prayed to the Lord to show me his will in these things. And the Lord showed me that I must keep in all his ordinances and exhort all to go there. And blessed be the Lord, he sent Mr. John [Wesley] to town and he confirmed all that the Lord had showed me.¹⁴ So from that time the Lord hath kept me in his ordinances and I hope will do to the end. And this was about a year and three quarters ago.¹⁵

But the Lord convinced me by hearing Mr. [Philip] Molther one Sunday morning.¹⁶ His discourse was upon third [chapter] of the Philippians, "to forget those things that were behind and press forward."¹⁷ For till now I built on my gifts and graces and till now [I] thought I was a new creature. I thought I had a new heart. But now the Lord would [have] taken the nail from my heart, but I would not suffer him and I

¹¹This would be the arrival of Philip Molther and others about Nov. 1739

¹²JW records in his *Journal* that "brother Price" died on May 5, 1741; apparently the John Price buried the following day in Shoreditch.

¹³In 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.

¹⁴JW returned to London Dec. 19, 1739.

¹⁵Placing the writing of this document in Oct. 1741, when CW was in London soliciting accounts.

¹⁶After the closing flourish to the last paragraph, Cooper is picking up his account again in Nov.–Dec. 1739.

¹⁷Phil. 3:13.

had told many I had a new heart. But when I brought my experience to the word of God it would not stand the trial. Therefore, I found myself come short of it, I found pride and worldly-mindedness, lust, and many other evils in my heart. But still my pride was so great, I would not confess to God nor man, but went to reasoning within myself how it was with me. I found I had faith and felt the abiding witness of God's Holy Spirit with mine and found by the word of God it would stand.

But about this time, I heard one of my brethren had been overtaken by the lust of the flesh. I was surprised to hear this of one that had faith, for the Lord had kept me from it ever since I believed. But now I believe I was puffed up and thought myself beaten. But within a fortnight after, I fell into the same sin, and the Lord let me see I was no better than him. Now I fell into reasoning with myself and into darkness, such darkness as may be felt, for I felt a veil over my heart for near a fortnight and was in such a way I never was before. I was almost ready to give up all that ever I have received, and ready to give up all hopes of myself. But in this time I could not commit sin for the Lord kept me.

Then the Lord took away the veil from my heart and showed me inward corruptions. And now he humbled me and brought me to confess my sins before him as at the beginning. And [I] told my friends I was deceived when I told them I was a new creature. And now blessed be God for sending his ministers to comfort his people and opening the Scriptures to them to see further than at the beginning. For now came Mr. John [Wesley] from Bristol and he showed me my state better than I could express it myself. And from that time the Lord showed me deeper and deeper into my heart. And after the Lord hath shown me my heart, then he let me feel his love and so I go on from one step to another, for sometimes I feel myself such a sinful creature. I wonder I am not in hell, for I feel (as I think) ten thousand hells my desert. Nay, I cannot help telling God so. And if he will thrust me there, I can look up to heaven with my eyes, my heart, and hands, and tell him his will be done.

After I have had such a sight of myself, I feel such a depth of the love of God it makes me cry out, "Oh the depth of the love of God. It is past finding out."¹⁸ For sometimes I think I can feel no more, for I think I am ready to be consumed in his love and must leave this flesh behind me and go to the region above. But still the Lord enlarges my heart. Sometimes I begin to think I have a new heart, but the Lord is pleased to show me to the contrary that I have not yet. But I have a hope in me that he will perfect his work in my soul before he takes me hence and give me a clean heart. Sometimes I think I will wrestle with God and will not let him go till I enjoy that rest that is for the people of God, then comes unbelief and reasonings so I stare at the promises and draw back and cannot enter in because of unbelief.

I have found of late lust and uncleanness come upon me as a flood, and such filthy dreams as I am ashamed to mention. I thought about a month ago I had that unclean spirit which our Lord spoke of. And I believe I had, for I felt nothing but uncleanness. But one night, after we had been in band, I found faith to behold. I went to prayer and was determined not to rise from my knees till he forgave me my sin and gave me power over the unclean spirit. And glory be to his name, for he heard my prayers, and ever since I have found a sweet calm in my soul. And at this time I find myself very happy in hopes of our Lord to come and make his abode in my soul and that he will strengthen, establish and settle me in him, the sure rock of ages. And this I have [written] to show you the particulars and what I know to be true.
From

Your unworthy son and servant,

Thomas Cooper

Dear sir, I take you and your brother, Mr. John Wesley, to be my only ministers and shepherds over my soul under Christ. And if you see anything that I do or say which is not agreeable to the gospel of Christ I desire you will let me know by letter or by your own mouth—that I may not bring any scandal on the gospel, which God grant I never may, but be faithful unto death; and that I may be the crown of your rejoicing in the last day when you faithful shepherds shall give up your accounts. And that is my prayer

¹⁸Rom. 11:33.

for the churches you are shepherds over, and that it may be with joy and not with grief. Dear sir, pray for me that my faith fail not.

Endorsement: by CW, “Cowper 1741” and “T. Cowper’s Exp[erience] / 1741.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/16.¹⁹

¹⁹For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Nathaniel Hurst¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
[October²] 1741

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire I shall give an [account] how the Lord has dealt with my soul. But since you asked us, I have been at a stand about writing to you and have been troubled a little, for sometimes it comes to me I have nothing to say. But what I have is as followeth:

When first the Lord sent Mr. [George] Whitefield out into the fields I went to hear him in Moorfields.³ I liked what he said very well. I said I would go again. Accordingly, I went on the next Sunday and ever since I have followed the Lord in his appointed ways. I had a form of godliness for some time, but knew but little of the power. I was⁴ not willing for to part with my sins. But when the Lord began to show me the evil of them, I could not live thus then. The Lord showed me the want of a Saviour, then he gave me to hunger and thirst more and more after him. I had a desire to receive the Lord's Supper, but did not dare to come to it without preparing myself. Then accordingly I went one Sunday morning to St. Lawrence's church⁵ and the Lord blessed me therein. And from that time I have had power over outward sins.

Then the Lord was pleased to let me hear Mr. John Wesley one night at Fetter Lane. He expounded on the eleventh chapter of John on "Lazarus come forth."⁶ I found myself that Lazarus whom he spoke of. I was all of atremble, for my bones shook as if they would part from my flesh. But before Mr. Wesley had done his discourse the Lord spoke peace to my soul. He let me know my sins were blotted out by his blood. This was in the Christmas week, this Christmas two years.⁷

After this I went on very smooth for a while. Then the devil set his adversaries to work, for the master that I lived with was a carnal worldly man. He was of great hindrance in my progress. But I know the Lord always sees what is best for his children. He suffered it for a trial of my faith. Then the devil took place, for my master one night forced me to stay at home, which caused us to have words. Then anger broke out of me. Then the enemy buffeted me and says to me, "How can you call yourself a child of God?" But it was not long before the Lord appeared in my behalf and showed me that I was again reconciled unto God. Then I could again rejoice in God my Saviour. But the devil would say to me sometimes, "Do not you deceive yourself." And sometimes I used to give away to him a little. But there was a hope left in me that I could not give up my confidence quite, but Jesus did keep me by his power.

Then the Lord began to show me my heart and that there was a hell within me. For sometimes as I was standing I used to think that the ground whereon I stood was hot under me, which made me almost to tremble and to think if the ground should open and swallow me up I should perish for ever. But the Lord

¹Little is known of Nathaniel Hurst (1718–97) beyond this account but that he ultimately sided with the Moravians and was buried by the Fetter Lane congregation. Hurst's penmanship and spelling in this letter are good, but (like others) he uses little punctuation and no paragraph breaks.

²The date assumes this account was solicited about the same time as those of William Barber and Thomas Cooper.

³The first time Whitefield preached in Moorfields was Sun. April 29, 1739.

⁴Orig., "were."

⁵St. Lawrence Jewry church.

⁶John 11:43.

⁷JW records in his *Journal* spending part of Dec. 24, 1739 at Fetter Lane, but does not say what he discoursed about.

hath spared me yet longer, that I might live unto him to praise him. Oh may I give unto him all the glory for his loving-kindness unto me, in calling me out of darkness into his marvellous light. And this I can say, that Jesus has been gracious and loving unto me. He has dealt tenderly with me. For he has fed me with love continuously, which makes me to cry out, “Oh the goodness of God to such a poor worm as I am.”

More than a year ago, on a Sunday morning as I was a hearing of Mr. John Wesley,⁸ the enemy says to me, “Do not you deceive yourself?” Which put me to a stand. But I presently knew from whence it came, and from that time I have not had one doubt since of my being a child of God.

Then the devil departed for a season from me. My soul was full of peace and love. The Lord gave me many promises in Scripture and I used to feed on them much. Thus I continued for many months. I thought I never should see war anymore. Then the enemy came in as a roaring lion ready to devour me up, then the Lord began to show me what was in my heart and I began to find anger and pride and self-will—and above all lust, which wounded my soul sorely. But I did not find any desire to gratify it no manner of way.

After this I walked in darkness for a little while and so long as I was thus I went mourning, longing to be set at liberty. My soul was humble before the Lord, groaning under my burden. Then at length the light of God shone on me once more and my soul was filled with love. Then I could lift up my heart again to the Lord. And one day, as I was at my work, my soul was [so] overpowered with the love of God that I knew not whether I was in the body or out of the body. I took an opportunity of going to prayer. My heart was much enlarged and thus I continued all that day, and sometime after my soul was calm and full of peace. Nothing seem to disturb me or to draw my mind from the Lord. I thought, “I desire to know nothing but Jesus and him crucified,” thus I continued for some time.

Then the Lord gave me these words, “The darkness is no darkness with thee but the night is as clear as the day. The darkness and light to thee are both alike.”⁹ This made me humble before the Lord. I thought the Lord had fulfilled his promise in my soul and had brought me into that rest that remained for the people of God. I did not dare to say that I was entered into that rest till I had found the fruits of grace in me. I was so for about six weeks, then after this I found my old nature began to stir again and I knew then that the root of bitterness was¹⁰ not destroyed. After this I found pride and anger and lust more than before. After this, I saw myself more clearly than ever I did before, which made me some times to cry out, “Oh the goodness of God to such a poor creature as I am,” which made me ashamed before the great majesty of God.

Then after this I came into darkness by reason of my perverse will, which lasted with me for about a week. I could not see the light of God or one Scripture promise for me. Then the Lord withdrew those dark clouds and I could see him as before, which made me to cry, “My Lord and my God.”¹¹ And since that I have not been in much darkness. But still I find the Lord carries his work on in my soul, for this I can say: I find a hunger and thirsting after the Lord and am groaning under my corruptions, longing to be delivered; though not so much at sometimes as I ought to be, for I think at some times I grow cold and careless, which often makes me to wonder how God bears with me so long as he doth. It comes to me sometimes, “Oh that my eyes were fountains of tears that I could weep day and night for offending such a Saviour as Jesus is. Oh may I never rest as I am, but grant that I may still cry unto God and never rest till I rest in the wounds of Jesus Christ.”¹²

And so to conclude, from

⁸JW was in London from July through mid-October 1740.

⁹Ps. 139:12.

¹⁰Orig., “were.”

¹¹John 20:28.

¹²Cf. Jer. 9:1.

Your unworthy brother and servant in the Lord Jesus,

Nathaniel Hurst

Endorsement: by CW, “Nath. Hurst 1741 / Experience.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/15.¹³

¹³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. October 1, 1741]

[[I beg of God to restore you your h[umble?] f[aithfulness?] here, joined to eternal life.

[[I trembling read the letter enclosed from Bristol,¹ not only from the base ingratitude I saw in it, but [I] felt what I should become. I saw the copy of that er[-] I am sure I shall one day be. Look for it. I must be servile[?] which my soul so abhors. I believe it is good for you, and therefore on your behalf I rejoice. You will have me say what you must do, and it is nothing more than preparing heirs[?] of myself.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 11c.²

¹This was possibly the letter that CW received from an unidentified writer concerning George Whitefield preaching predestination in Bristol—which he sent an extract from in his letter to JW on Sept. 28, 1741.

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 128.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. October 20, 1741]

[[God has been very merciful to you, and not to you only, but to one whom you know of all the unbelievers upon earth the worst. I could not be easy without I heard today and beg you will let the bearer know exactly how you do. For I must insist upon your having some skilful surgeon, unless you are much better.¹ You are sure of the humblest and most faithful prayers my wretched heart can offer up for you. The Cowpers are in the highest measure of love I have ever seen.² They are willing to die to testify Christ's love to them. They say "I know, I am sure I know him, and that he loves me." The joy I have felt on their account is more than tongue can tell.

[[Adieu.

[[To the Rev. Mr. —
The name at length³]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 7a.⁴

¹Replying to CW's letter of c. Oct. 18, 1741; where he mentions the injury to his arm when a coach overturned, which was treated by "his surgeon"—i.e., his mother.

²Anne Cowper (1713–43) and her sister Frances ("Fanny," 1716–42) were daughters of William Cowper, Esq. (1695–1756), Knight Harbinger to George II (their mother Anne was deceased by 1741). The sisters lived in East Barnet, Hertfordshire (about 3 miles southwest of LH's home in Enfield Chase). Shortly after he returned to London from Bristol in September 1741, CW was instrumental in their evangelical conversion. The Cowpers were friends of Lord and Lady Huntingdon, so CW entrusted the sisters to her as their spiritual guide. In Jan. 1742 LH would take the Cowper sisters with her to Bath, a place she visited for the waters when in poor health. Part of the reason for this trip was that Fanny was ailing from "consumption." The sisters continued on with LH to her estate in Leicestershire early in Feb., and Fanny would die there on May 27, 1742.

³CW may have recorded this information to show LH had been careful to make sure that the letter, sent to the Foundery, got to him rather than JW.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 120–21.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. October 27, 1741¹]

[[I truly compassion you. I know what that l[oss?] must be to you.² But God is our strength, therefore fear nothing. He will leave you a way to escape. He will give you power, if you ask it, to act for his glory alone. His only w[isdom] can direct you; but his servant must be tried to the uttermost, because his Lord loves him. I rejoice you felt so much calm and peace [about our?] openness of heart. I am sure we ought often to search our hearts and examine them and watch unto prayer now, lest the enemy get an advantage over us. Oh could you see how poor a worm I am, you would agree my name should be cast out from amongst the church of God. Oh happy exchange would it be to my soul to be as one of the least of these little, little ones that attend upon your societies. Had you seen my impatience in my not coming on Sunday,³ I do not believe you would have spoke to me after. Yet the whole time I could not help thinking that God was wise in it and that that trial was best for me.

[[I believe your time of full trial is at hand. My heart is all day long inclined to offer you up in prayer to God, that you may fight the good fight of faith. My spirits were much sunk in parting with you. I blamed myself overmuch. Sure it was the danger you met with since you left me by the accident that evening caused my fear for you.

[[The Lord, even the mighty God, has given your brother much w[isdom] in a letter to me.⁴ He has humbled me even to the dust. He tells me stillness is creeping in upon me, and seduces me; [to] beware of proudness for it will conquer the work of God in my soul. Mine is not proudness, but shame of myself, which would make me conceal God' gifts. The knowledge of his love almost distresses me. Who can believe this and look on me? The clock now strikes seven, and now here you have us!⁵ I am going to offer you up.

[[I have prayed in faith for you. I hope your soul has been comforted. Enclosed I send you your first fruits of East Barnet.⁶ Had you seen them hang about my neck with tears of love on Sunday, it would have melted you down. Mother [fairest?]⁷! All was too little to testify their affection for me.

[[You cannot possibly believe how earnest my prayers are for you. God has given into your hands my immortal soul. Watch over it as you are to give an account. Upon considering this I [happened upon] Romans]] 10:15 [[“And how shall they preach except they be sent! How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.”⁸ May the almighty and all-wise God preserve and protect you, and renew you in w[isdom?], etc., and we with the whole church of Christ may rejoice till eternity. Send me a very particular account of your bodily health.

¹The date is based on CW's return to London (replacing JW) in late September 1741, and the reference to JW's letter.

²Apparently the incident that Frances Cowper mentions in the enclosed letter of CW's work being “overturned by malice of wicked men.”

³Oct. 25, 1741 was a Sunday.

⁴The letter (not known to survive) to which LH replied on Oct. 24, 1741.

⁵I.e., LH and the Cowper sisters are joining CW in their appointed time of prayer.

⁶A letter from Fanny Cowper (and possibly one from her sister Anne that does not survive), whose home was in East Barnet.

⁷The shorthand indicates a word beginning with “f” or “v”; likely an honorific title the Cowpers bestowed upon LH.

⁸Combining Rom. 10:15 and Isa. 52:7.

[[I believe you will think the petitions of prayer the most [extraordinary?] you ever met with:

[[The following petitions were made in prayer and obtain.

[[After first begging to be assured of faith, she was directed to Acts, “Be not afraid but speak and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee.”⁹

[[The person then offered up in prayer that they might have power over the present evil hour. She was then directed to Luke]] 4:34,¹⁰ [[“And Jesus rebuked him saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him; and when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him and hurt him not.”

[[The next was one about two disciples to be admitted into the ministry. The answer to this was John]] 1:37, [[“And the two disciples heard him speak and followed him.”

[[The third and last was that she might be enabled by God to cherish the poor of his church. She was then led to the latter part of the]] 29th [[verse of John]] 13, [[“That Jesus had said to them, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast, or that the poor should have something given them.”]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 7b–8a.¹¹

⁹Acts 18:9.

¹⁰Actually, Luke 4:35.

¹¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 121–23.

From Frances (“Fanny”) Cowper¹

[East Barnet]
[c. October 27,] 1741

Dear Sir,

I heartily thank you for your pious prayers which you have offered up to Almighty God for me, a poor, distressed, miserable sinner. They have reached the ears of mercy. I have now tasted and seen how sweet the Lord is. I see in Christ all my sins forgiven, that his most precious blood [was] shed for my sins, that tender body scourged, wounded and crucified. O holy Jesus, I see thy meritorious suffering plead for me. O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. Thou hast shown me thy goodness in the land of the living. O thou that boughtest heaven for me, guide me thither. O my Redeemer, may thou never leave me, but be present always, and help to overcome all temptations. Enlighten thou my soul. Direct it, crown it. O wonderful, how is it that thy mercy should thus follow me, the chief sinner? Jesus answers “for such I die.” From henceforth I will rejoice that I, the chief of sinners, am, but Jesus died for me.

My heart was set upon and I rejoiced in thoughts that [I] should glorify God with you at the Foundery.² But God would not permit it; but directed us to East Barnet and there to render him our sincere praise and thanksgiving. And after, my dear Lady Huntingdon carried us home with her where we again did, with her, rejoice and glorify God.

I am much obliged to you for sending me the Prayer Book. May I too ask, that I may receive all I pray for.

I am very sorry to hear that you have been overturned by malice of wicked men. May you speedily recover. May your patience and long suffering turn their hard hearts and be turned to love; that they may see your good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. I have nothing more to add but that I am, dear spiritual guide,

Your most affectionate sister in Christ,

F. Cowper

I know you will pray for me which made me not ask it.

Endorsement: by CW, “1741 / Fanny Cowper / Confessing Faith.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/42.³

¹See the note on LW to CW, c. Oct. 20, 1741 for identification. Frances would be buried on May 30 in Ashby-de-la-Zouch. *WHS* 7 (1909): 39.

²On Sunday, Oct. 25; see LH’s letter above.

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Joseph Carter¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[London]
November 1741

Dear Brother in the Lord Jesus,

According to your desire, and by the assistance of him who made me and likewise of his own free grace and mercy hath redeemed me from the guilt and I trust will deliver me from the power of all sin, I shall give you some account of what God hath done and is doing in my soul.

About four years ago I was induced very much to pray to God for his grace and Holy Spirit. My wife told me that her mother taught her so to pray. I had reasonings about it, that I did not know what it was, and how could I pray heartily for it. However I went to prayer and it was to that effect, and I found a deal of satisfaction in it. So that I was moved to pray again and again, and many times repeated. And I could not tell how to be said nay, although I knew not what I prayed for at the time—no more than a stock or a stone. But I had continuously comfort in that prayer and great drawing to it.

One Saturday night being in a barber's shop, the barber said he had been to hear a sermon preached before all the religious societies in London. He surprised me. I asked him if there was ever a one there. I told him, by the behaviour of the people there was little sign of it. He mentioned several. He belonged to one that [met] in Miles Lane. I was glad to hear it and desired to be introduced into it, and seeing their orders, accordingly by him I was.

I found some comfort the first two or three times of meeting. But at length I began to see things in them which I did not like, [such] as particular persons speaking at pleasure and dictating in their way as they thought fit and could not bear contradiction. They were the old ones and great ones of the world. At that time I went to hear Dr. Heylin,² and I was powerfully convinced through him that religion was not anything outward but that it was a thorough change of the the heart. This I strongly insisted on amongst the society and they would not hear, but answered that we were to do as we were commanded and that was enough. I told them that I could keep none of them, but that I was inclined to all evil and could do no otherwise for my life; however, we were to do what we could and God would do the rest. However, I did not much like them and soon after left them. Mr. Seward and his brother were then belonging to them.

I still went to hear Dr. Heylin and I was still more and more convinced of the spirituality of religion but could not find it in myself. At last, being at work wainscoating of a house in Little Britain, it being now the White Horse Alehouse, there comes in a boy to beg some shavings, which I gave him leave to take. I took particular notice of him, that he took nothing else, which was uncommon—for those that come for them take as many chips as they can with them, which made me ask him who he belonged to. He told me [of] Mr. [John] Bray, a brasier hard by. I told him further that I had heard he was a very good man, and he was welcome to some [chips] at any time. He asked me if I knew him. I told him no, I never saw him in my life to know him; but I knew two young men that used a society at his house on Tuesday night. He farther asked me if I had any notion of this new religion?

“What new religion,” replied I.

“Why salvation through faith only.”

“No,” I told him, “I had heard nothing of it.”

“What, did you never hear Mr. Wesleys?” said he.

“No, I never heard them.”

¹Little is known of Joseph Carter beyond this account and that he appears as a leader of a band for married men in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²Rev. Dr. John Heylyn (c. 1685–1759) was rector of St. Mary-le-Strand in Westminster (1724–59) and a prebendary of Westminster Cathedral. He was called the “Mystic Doctor” because of his stress on the interior life.

“Mr. Charles is in town, and he will preach Sunday at this church.”

“Well I think to go to hear him.”

“Mr. John is coming from abroad, and he is a very fine man, likewise,” said he.

“But I will tell you my belief,” said I—pharisee-like, with my arms folded together, swaggering as it were—“I believe in all the Articles of the Religion” (and I believe at that time I never had read them all over, nor hardly knew what was in them). “Likewise I believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in all the Creeds, etc.”

He asked me if my belief influenced all my life and actions?

I told him no, I did not find that it did.

He told me then that my faith was that of the head and not of the heart.

I answered I thought so too.

Then he began to prove it by Scripture. He said, “If Christ hath made you free then are you free indeed.”³ And “We have not received the Spirit of bondage unto fear, but we have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”⁴

He struck me all of a heap. I could not tell what to say. He advised me to buy a little book called *A Choice Drop Of Honey From The Rock Christ*⁵ and bid me consider it, and bid me goodbye.

As soon as he was gone I began to consider of the texts of Scripture and concluded in myself if I misbelieved these, I must misbelieve all the rest. And so I assented to them, well-knowing that I was not in that state of freedom there spoken of. Then immediately came into my mind all my notorious sins that I had committed, and especially my reigning sin of adultery, which I had so often made promises and vows that I should never more commit. Nay, the last time that I had made a vow against it was on this condition, that I did not desire to enter into the kingdom of heaven if I broke it. This made so deep an impression upon my soul that I thought all hope past, reasoning thus: “What signifies your talking of religions and the kingdom of heaven. You have forfeited it by your own conditions and have fell from them. How can you expect anything but hell?” These terrors followed me hard and close, even almost to desperation. But I strove to get rid of them by amusing myself at my work, and working harder and harder, and striving to get them out of my head as I had done for three years before, the last time I fell into that sin. But all would not do. I must be damned at last. I had a little allay by considering that I prayed heartily for the grace of God that I might not fall, and reasoning that if he did not give me his grace how could I keep it. But it was a question to me whether I had his grace or not.

Then was I at as great a lose about that, that I could find no comfort for about an hour or an hour and half. At last there came into my inmost soul a voice that through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, my sins were forgiven me. I burst out crying, and laughing, and dancing, and jumping about the room; [so] that anyone, if they had seen me, would have thought me crazy. I then knew that God was my Father and I could cry, “Dear Father, my Father, Abba Father!” I then saw that he had mercy upon me purely and only for the sake of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Then did I plainly see my own vileness, my own nothingness, and I saw nothing upon the face of the earth so vile as myself. And in particular I saw myself worse than the dirt I trod on—and for this reason Jesus Christ died.

Then I cried out, “O my dear Saviour, have I all my lifetime been running over so many books to find salvation and at last have found it in this blessed Jesus. Glory be to thy holy name for it.” Then did I see the insignificance of all things else but Jesus Christ only. In him I had all things and it came strongly into my mind that I need not read any more books, nor go to church any more, for I had Jesus Christ and I had all in him. I doubted in relation to going to church and a voice said, “frequent divine ordinances” twice or three times, and from thence I concluded to do as I was commanded.

³Cf. John 8:36.

⁴Cf. Rom. 8:15.

⁵By Thomas Wilcox, pub. 1690 and many subsequent edns.

By and by came in William, Mr. Bray's apprentice. I immediately told him that I had no occasion for the book he recommended, for I had Jesus Christ and in him I had all things. He was very earnest and particular in enquiring of me the account I had to give of it, which I did in broken language through the ecstasy of love and joy. He mourned much because he had not received it, but together we had a glorious intercourse—I rejoicing in the mercy and love of God with a full belief that he also would visit him with his salvation. Then he parted with me for that time, but at all opportunities he visited me and was very much drawn out in love towards me continually.

The first person I saw that I thought had any notion of religion I communicated to them my experience, which was my master. And he rejected it all as folly and predestination and hated me for it, and at a convenient opportunity turned me from my business. But the Lord immediately took me up and brought me unto one where I had the full liberty to speak all my mind and they could rejoice with me.

In this full assurance of faith and love of God I went on for about six months, in which time I never had any occasion to pray for anything, but only rejoicing in him and continually giving him thanks for his great love and mercy. I laid down in full assurance of faith and rose the same, and whatsoever I thought said or did was to the glorification of his name. I could not bare to hear of any care or forecast for the morrow; it was so contrary to the entire dependence upon God. I had at this time a call into the country to my sick mother and I communicated unto her and to all wherever I came the glad tidings of salvation unto every one of them by the blood of Christ by my own experience⁶ and that it was out of mere mercy and love. For I myself had done nothing for it and was nothing, but only believing in the Lord Jesus, which pressingly I exhorted them all to do.

At last my mother died. I was not there with her, but the person that was afterwards told me (through ill will) that I had, through what I had said to her, given her great uneasiness all her sickness. She [was] continually crying out to God that she might know that her sins were forgiven her and that her pardon was sealed in heaven through the blood of Christ. He told me she could not die in peace [because of] me. He said he read by her and endeavoured all he could to comfort her by her good life, but that would not do any good. He then told me he read to her in Dr. Hammond's *Practical Catechism* and the Lord gave her to lay hold of these words, "Know you not that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates?"⁷ She cried out that she was not reprobate, that she was in Jesus Christ, and soon died. This was the reproach he cast upon me for troubling my mother on her death bed. Glorious reproach! Would our Lord make me such an instrument to call all dead souls out of their dreadful darkness, to cry out continuously unto him that they may have life.

My mother dying, she left me a small matter of money that after I had it I was strongly impressed to pay it to some of my wife's dealers [for debts] which she had contracted some years before and contrary to my knowledge. I then began to reason: First, I never had any dealings with them and likewise that they never had asked me for money. But that would not do, for every time I went to prayer this was uppermost, "Owe no man anything."⁸ Then I would get up with resolution to pay it away to them and by that means I should give great glory to God; and I was to tell them that that was the effect of the doctrine of the enthusiast.

Then I consulted flesh and blood. I told my wife of my design, not acting simply in obedience to the command which saith "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, to do it quickly with all thy might."⁹ Consulting her, she opposed it with all her might and began to scold and rave in a most terrible manner. I still insisted upon it and the good Spirit within continually prompted me to it. I was forever resolving and never performing, fearing her continual noise.

⁶CW underlined "by my own experience," and wrote "Mark!" in the left column.

⁷Henry Hammond, *A Practical Catechism* (London: Richard Royston, 1645), 58.

⁸Rom. 13:8.

⁹Eccles. 9:10.

And the flesh tempted me another way: by my wife's being near her time, and that I should by so doing leave her destitute of the comforts and necessaries which are called for at the time. However, all this did not satisfy me. I still was persuaded that I was to owe no man anything and I continually endeavoured to persuade my wife to consent, but all in vain. The nearer I was to the doing of it, the farther she was from it. In this trial I was for about three or four months, but continually the love of God [was] with me and still rejoicing in the doing of this, being glad to do anything to his glory. At length, my wife's time drawing very near, I thought I should stay till that was over and then do it. But when the time was accomplished, she was as far off consenting as before and as many calls for the money. But I still resolved to pay then what I had and continually told her so.

At last she broke open my chest and took a good part out. In a little time God visited one of my children with the small pox, and not long after with death. I then went in great hurry to perform my resolution with what there was left, without saying anything to anybody, and in doing of it I had as much satisfaction and comfort as though I had paid the whole. Blessed be the Lord for his goodness towards me, though undeserving.

From this time the storms began to arise from within and without. My wife's crying out against me to everyone of my starving and perishing my family by giving that away which was sent by God for the nourishment and support of them. In relation to my child's death, [she?] told me that I was the instrument of it by not being diligent enough in the use of the means. All the trials brought me into a great darkness, such as might be felt, which I continued in for about a week, when I went mourning all the day. I could not taste the word. I then had no love. Nay I was, as it were, stripped of all for the time. But at last the Lord appeared to me again as before, by the means of reading of the trial and temptation of the children of God. When I saw that those that would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and that those whom God loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and that those afflictions and troubles that I had lately gone through was for my disobedience to him in not directly following the dictates of his Holy Spirit when he enjoined me. Lord, grant that I may in all things simply obey thy will when thou commandest, not consulting flesh and blood, come life come death. This is what I continually pressed in my band, being a standing monument of his mercy though continually disobedient to him. In all these trials I had no affection for sin, but hated and abhorred it in all its shapes. That which was the most reigning one as above, I was entirely dead to. So that not having conversation at home as usual, it raised jealousies, hatred, and heart burnings towards me from my wife. But that never hurt me but caused me to keep still closer to my Saviour.

When I was in my first love, I then could say, and did, that in Christ I was a new creature; that in me all old things were passed away and that all things were become new; and that I was one of the saints on earth, and that I had communion with the Father and the Son continually; and that I had fellowship with the saints that were in light. Oh that I could as incessantly say so now as then! O Lord come into my soul and take up thy abode there forever. It is thy will, O Lord. Oh make it mine for thine own mercies sake and remove all the hindrances thereto.

The present state I am in is this, that I have no doubt or fear of my salvation, nor have not had from the beginning (blessed be the Lord for it), because he very often giveth me fresh assurance of his continual love towards me and of my acceptance in the blood of the Lamb. But I have not that constant love, that continual love, that everflowing faith as usual, but only enough as it were to keep me from sinking. Not but that now I could sometimes lay down my life for the brethren. Even now I feel I could do it by his assistance. I plainly see that all the work that hath been done already hath been done for me, but now I am fully persuaded that it must be wrought in me by the same almighty power, even he that hath begun the good work will also finish it. I find that in me there is placed a monitor strictly to watch over and examine all my thoughts, words, and actions, that nothing should come from either of them but what is to the glory of God. And I do find that Satan would [mislead me] if my Lord permitted him, which he cannot for he will not forsake those that trust in him. I say the devil hath set himself against all my endeavours, which are according to his will and would spoil them all. If I spoke to his praise and glory, if out of pure love, he tempts me to be proud of it; if ardently and sincerely, he tempts me to be angry. He

would willingly have all my thoughts—which he cannot. Then he would vitiate or poison them by causing me to judge my neighbour, or to think of myself more highly than I ought. But this is very rare. My Lord does keep me very low. He [Satan] oftener gets power to make me believe that I have not received what I have. Nay, in short, there is not one good property in me (although given me by the Spirit of God) but this devil of devils would, if he had power, poison and make it turn to his own advantage. Oh Lord, enable me to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and mind to follow thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Oh my dear brother, do you pray unto the Lord that I may hold out unto the end; that I may not be weary nor faint in my mind but that I may press forward for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; that I may go on from strength to strength; that I may be made holy as he who hath called me is holy in all manner of conversation and godliness; that I may never rest until I rest wholly in the arms of Jesus, until I am made one with him and he in me, and we are all perfected in one! Oh Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast died for us. Oh do thou make all our bodies, souls, and spirits fit habitations for thy Holy Spirit to reside in forever! Oh do thou come and take possession of our souls and rule and reign there, who only hath the right unto them, and put all thine enemies under thy feet. Unto thee, Oh Lord, be all the praise and glory for what thou hast done and still art doing in us and for us now, henceforth and forever more. Amen!

From your ever loving brother in the Lord Jesus

Joseph Carter¹⁰

[in another hand] I doubt not, but you allow the writer admission into the close band.¹¹
[in CW's hand] I have no doubt.

Endorsement: by CW, “Jos Carter’s [[experience]] experience / Nov. 1741.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/17.¹²

¹⁰The original signature is struck through; but then written below in shorthand.

¹¹I.e., move from the initial “trial band” into a regular band at the Foundery.

¹²For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From James Flewitt¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
November 1741

Honoured Sir,

In compliance with your request I have sent you the following account [of] how the Lord in his mercy has dealt with my soul.

It is now about fourteen years ago when God in a most wonderful manner revealed himself unto me. Yea, even when I was in my sins and in my blood he said unto me “Live.” I was near one and twenty years old before I had any solid thought of God or religion. I was disobedient to all the commands of God, and what commands I obeyed of man was more in fear than for duty. I have violated every command of God in the gross sense, excepting murder, and that in the spiritual sense a thousand times. Sure I am that there is not a greater sinner out of hell than I am. And if anyone cries out distinguishing grace, I more; yet I believe God is loving to every man and his mercy is over all his works.

The manner God worked with me was as follows; a little before I was flung into convictions I had a very solid frame of temper come upon me, and often thought if I should die in the state I was in, I should go to hell, which gave me some uneasiness. Much about the same time I took to reading a little book upon the new birth, written by a Dissenter. His text was, “expect a man be born again”² This seemed very strange to me, and Nicodemus-like [I] thought, How can this thing be?³ But the Lord who blessed the reading of that book to my soul soon showed me. I was ready to cry out, “What must I do to be saved.”⁴ But God soon showed me it was to have something done in me and for me, which could not be done by me. This led me upon strict search to know what means to use to have this done for me. Oh thought I, if I could but pray to God I am sure he would hear me. This indeed seemed a strange work, for I do not know now that ever I prayed before. But blessed be God I did then, or more properly his Spirit within me. My prayer I know was heard, for from that time I found no rest to my soul by reason of my sin.

Much about that time I dreamed I led my own apparition which the devil and carnal people told me was a sure sign of my death; and in one sense so it was, for that dream being sanctified to me was once more of my dying to sin. But this was but the beginning of sorrows. Soon after this, just after I got into bed one night, I was all of a sudden struck to all appearance with sudden death. Oh who can tell but them that have felt the same horror and confusion that I was in. Death, I thought, set hovering upon my cold sins, and hell opened ready to receive me. The terrors of the Lord was set in array against me, and in this agony I lay for some time in a manner speechless. At last the Lord gave the utterance and I said the Lord’s Prayer. I prayed earnestly for Christ’s sake that I might not die. Then I promised obedience to all his commands; how I would keep his Sabbaths and walk in his ordinances. I thought I never would offend him in thought, word, or deed any more. All this I promised in my own strength, so ignorant was I of the ways of God. This fit a little abated and I lay till morning. But the fear of death [is] a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, for I immediately went to work to save my soul as it were by the deeds of the law. I thought I would redeem all lost time by being more diligent for the future. Accordingly, I went to church three and sometimes four times a day. I attended the church prayers the week days very frequent. I went to the sacrament very constant. And if I neglected any duty, I immediately thought I was damned. Indeed most of my outward sins were broken off, as swearing and lying in a great measure was done away. I

¹James Flewitt (b. c. 1705) appears as a married man through the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²John 3:3.

³See John 3:9.

⁴Acts 16:30.

don't know that ever I swore three oaths for this fourteen years, though before I don't know that I spent one day without blasphemy, cursing, and swearing.

I went on in a constant round of duties, and all this while under deep convictions. To use your own words, it is a good but painful fight. Many times was I ready to wish that I had never set myself about the duties of religion, not considering that it was God that had set me about it. Often times did I wish that I had never been born, or had been as a brute beast that has no understanding. I often times could have been willing to die but the thoughts of judgment startled me. With sorrow do I speak it; I being of the Church of England, I was at a great loss to find a spiritual friend that could give me any spiritual comfort. What ministers I liked in the church, I found their lives was so contrary to their doctrine that Satan would have often tempted me to believe that all religion was priestcraft. Often times he tempted me to deny the being of a God and at other times he would tell me if there was a God he would not concern himself with me. With many more atheistical and blasphemous notions did he torment me. He drove me at last almost to despair. I thought God had forsaken me. Where to fly for comfort, I knew not. All my relations was strangers to the work of God. All my acquaintance[s] were surprised to see this alteration but had never known anything of the work of God themselves. The Book of Psalms was my greatest comfort. There I see the man after God's own heart. In my state, I often could cry out, "My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?"⁵ But very seldom, "Praise the Lord, oh my soul,"⁶ I abhorred all company and loved to be in lonesome places by myself. My tears have been my meat, day and night. For near two years was I tried, as it were, with fire; and had there been nothing but my own strength, I must have sunk under the burden of guilt. Often did I wish to see the days I now see—that is, for men to live as they preach, as I believe you and your dear brother do. What little spark of faith I had was almost extinguished with doubts. That kept me from applying the promise of God to my soul. It would be too tedious, sir, to tell if I could collect all the various ways the Lord has dealt with me, whilst I was under this conflict.

After two year's deep convictions, God rebuked the stormy wind and tempest and there was a great calm, and fear was in a great measure done away, and I had sure trust and confidence that God for Christ's sake had forgiven me. Indeed I had joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. I tasted that peace of God which passeth all the understanding of the natural man.

I remained in this sweet state some time. But the Christian warfare admits of no standing still, and they that do not go forward must needs go backward. So I found, to my sorrow, that Satan got an advantage over me. He persuaded me that I was too religious and that I saw hardly anybody so strict as I was, and that two sermons a day was better than three or four. With many such like suggestions, which I soon adhered to. Indeed I fell into a lukewarm state presently. And if I did anything contrary to the command of God, Satan told me I could not fall away finally, or to the same sense, though I knew nothing of predestination doctrine.

The next thing [was] I began to grow spiritually proud. I despised others that had never gone through what I had, and began to reason whether they would be saved or not; and I know by experience that spiritual pride is the foundation of predestination.

But God, who had begun a good work, would carry it on. O how did I rejoice when Mr. [George] Whitefield came about to preach. Oh how was that spark blown up that was just dying away.

But after all this I never saw the hundredth part of my own wicked deceitful heart, till you and your dear brother, as instruments in the hands of God, have in great measure shown it [to] me. I had stopped a great way this side of Jordan. But now I see clearly the necessity of being a new creature. Many things are done away since I sat under your doctrine, which once I never expected I would. Glory be to God.

The same pride and anger is at present the sin that most easily beset me. Dear sir, pray for me that

⁵Ps. 22:1.

⁶Ps. 103:2–5.

I never rest till I fully rest in Christ. The length of time and the treachery of my memory make it impossible to set down every particular. So I remain

Your dutiful servant and brother in Christ,

James Flewitt

Endorsement: by CW, “Jam. Flewit / Nov. 1741” and “Jam. Flewit’s Nov. 1741 / Experience / Departed in the Lord.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/14.⁷

⁷For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Thomas Hogg¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
November 1741

Reverend Sir,

In obedience to your request, I give you the following account of my experience from time to time, and the true state of my soul at present.

Some time before you began to explain the gospel in the Minories,² I was drawn to hear the word under the Rev. Mr. W.³ I found sweetness in frequenting the house of prayer, although ignorant at that time of the love of God to poor sinners. After this I was taken to hear the Rev. Mr. L. and was more and more delighted in the ways of the Lord. His doctrine was good morality, and plain to be understood, and I took a great liking to him. The next I heard was the Rev. Dr. [John] H[eylyn], but he was quite out of my reach. I could not understand him. His discourses were spiritual, but I was carnal, seeking to be saved by the work of the law, going about to establish my own righteousness.

After a few times hearing him, I was brought to hear you. You was explaining the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans,⁴ which was to me like a man speaking in an unknown tongue. You was endeavouring to convince us of sin, and showing the difference betwixt the law and gospel. You told us what we were by nature, described the motions of sin stirring in us, and the blessings we received by Jesus Christ.

It was all a mystery to me. I could not understand but now and then a word. I heard you to the end of your discourse. You gave notice when you was to be there again, and the Lord inclined my heart to attend, for which I shall always praise his holy name.

I seldom missed an opportunity of hearing you, or your brother, or Mr. J. in your absence; and by my constant attendance, and the blessing of God's Spirit upon your labours, I began to see those beastly and devilish tempers in me which you so often pressed very close upon you hearers.

When the Rev. Mr. [George] Whitefield came to town I often attended him, and I bought Burkitt's Exposition of the New Testament.⁵ I wanted what I had not, a true knowledge of Jesus Christ. And this I would have gained by books, for I also bought me a dictionary, that I might know the true meaning of words. But very little use did I make of it, for I soon perceived Christ was not to be found there.

Once, under a discourse at Mr. [John] Bray's, I felt the words come with power to my soul. I had a strong hope of the blessed promises. My heart was filled with joy and my eyes overflowed with tears. I could have cried out with Peter, "It is good for me to be here."⁶ The next day I read Burkitt's explanation of the chapter and the Spirit came with the letter. My heart was again filled with joy and my eyes with

¹Thomas Hogg (c. 1705–50), a young London merchant, was married to Mary Hastin in 1732. In 1738 he came under the preaching of George Whitefield and CW in the Minories district. Hogg became a close friend of CW. CW was present at Hogg's death on June 29, 1750 and performed his funeral on July 2. Shortly thereafter CW polished and published Hogg's conversion narrative.

²The Minories is a street which runs north from the Tower to Aldgate in London

³This and the next two clergy mentioned were apparently Church of England ministers.

⁴CW records preaching on Romans 5 in the Minories on Oct. 29, 1738 (*MS Journal*). He was working his way through the book, so Hogg likely heard him first in mid-November 1738.

⁵William Burkitt, *Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (London: Parkhurst, Robinson, & Wyat, 1700).

⁶Matt. 17:4.

tears. I fell down before the Lord in extempore prayer, as I never did before or for many months after. “This was the Lord’s doing, and it was marvellous in my eyes. Therefore praise ye the Lord, bless the Lord, and magnify his name forever.”⁷

I often looked back at the sweetness I then received, but could not taste the like comfort, or not in so full a manner. I had not then felt the weight of my sins, neither could I say the burden of them was intolerable. But I was in a measure dead to many of my outward sins, particularly that which did so easily beset me.

Some time after this I came down out of my shop to dinner and was deeply meditating in my heart on the deplorable condition which my friends and relations were in, when in a moment I was struck all on a heap. The torments of hell compassed me round about, and I thought I saw the flames of it before me. Then indeed I could say the remembrance of my sins was grievous unto me. It was for one particular sin I was most wounded. The burden of that was really intolerable. I had no reason to look any longer at my friends, but at myself. My dinner stood before me, but I could not touch it. I continued in this state for a small season only. I do not remember that I had then any thought of prayer, but I was in a very great fright. The Lord saw my deplorable condition and sent me help from his holy hill. He was pleased to apply to my heart, “Why should I be afraid, when Christ has died for me?” At this I received present ease, but did not find any great joy—only *a thorough deliverance from that heavy burden*, too heavy for me to bear.

I took a little food, but was still deep in thought of what had happened to me. The accuser of the brethren set my sin before me, and would fain have brought me into condemnation again. But the Lord appeared on my side with, “Fear not, Christ hath died.” I held fast this shield and, blessed be God, have proved more than conqueror, through Christ strengthening me.⁸ I did not then distinctly know that I had received the forgiveness of my sins. Sometimes I thought I had, and at other times was in doubt of it.

I was a constant hearer of the word, but had very little conversation with any who had experience of the work of God upon their souls, excepting a few who were seeking after him. I often was in great joy, and found sweet peace to my soul; sometimes in heaviness, and many doubts lest I should fall away, for I thought I could not continue to the end because I was young and had many years to live. Then I was desirous to die. These thoughts often troubled me. I did not then know that it was a temptation, being ignorant of Satan’s devices.

I began to exhort and reprove when I thought I could be free, and was desirous to bring souls to Jesus. Yet there was the fear of man in me, as there is to this day. At that time I belonged to a drinking club, but was very desirous to leave it, for I went to it with great reluctance and was fully convinced of the error of it. Yet I did not give it up, because it was at a friend’s house.

When the Bishop of London’s *Letter* came out at the time of Mr. Whitefield’s leaving England,⁹ Satan strove hard for me and set his instruments at work, and who should they be but the very persons who had first brought me to hear the gospel. Having drawn back themselves, they were continually buffeting me, telling me of my error, and endeavouring to draw me back after them. This they laboured to do whensoever we met. I was often in great disturbance of spirit about it. But blessed be God, the seed which was sown had taken root. You had not laboured in vain, neither run in vain. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise, for thy loving kindness and for thy truth’s sake.”¹⁰

⁷Cf. Ps. 118:23.

⁸See Rom. 8:37.

⁹Edmund Gibson, *The Bishop of London’s pastoral letter to the people of his dioceses ..., By way of caution against lukewarmness on one hand, and enthusiasm on the other* (London: S. Buckley, 1739).

¹⁰Ps. 115:1.

After this I found my heart very hard and cold. I could not repent as I desired, was tossed about in prayer, first to one book then to another, but could not find so much taste in any as I did in two or three collects of our own Church. But with them I could not be satisfied, thinking they were not prayers long enough—yet I was often repeating them.

About this time I was taken into the society, where I lay like a dead dog. Your prayers seldom made any impression on me. My old sin strongly beset me and was very grievous to bear. I was even urged to commit it, that then I might truly repent and come to a saving knowledge of the blood of Jesus Christ. For as yet I was in doubt. I was often near the fire, but the Lord preserved me in a wonderful manner and would not suffer me to be burnt.

After this I was advised to meet in band, one of the first that met at the Foundery.¹¹ I thought it was for my good and came, though with great uneasiness, not knowing what to say. I seldom missed meeting, but was still beset with that slavish passion. I told my brethren how I was troubled. They explained to me the difference betwixt sin and temptation, which till then I did not know, for I thought I committed sin by having those evil thoughts. Then I began to learn a little experience. But still I had not received a clear sense of my forgiveness. Yet I held fast my hope, and about last August was a twelvemonth,¹² I was coming from the sacrament with our brother H., and asking him the state of his soul. He told me he knew himself in a state of grace, because he had peace within and did not commit any known sin, neither had sin any dominion over him. Farther, he told me there was now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, etc.¹³ I received his words with great earnestness and found my experience to answer his. I knew that I did not commit any known sin. The promises he named were set home to my heart. I received the word with gladness and had a clear sense of the forgiveness of my sins, the Spirit of God bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God.¹⁴

The enemy laboured much to take away my shield, but now all his attempts were vain. The more he tempted, the stronger was my faith, and the promises of God were more deeply stamped upon my heart. When he set my sin before me, through grace I flew to the promise: “He that believeth on him is not condemned.” And “God so love the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”¹⁵

I will not say that I have been faithful to the grace given and never found any guilt upon my soul since this. But when I have offended, the Lord was loving and showed me my error, and I confessed my fault and came unto him as a poor condemned sinner and said, “Father, if I have sinned, with thee an Advocate I have.”¹⁶ And the Lord was gracious and showed forth his love to me again.

I do not know that I have for any length of time laboured under the guilt of any sin. But for a few hours I have been in doubt whether I had committed sin or no, by speaking words unadvisedly. I have laboured much under an evil heart. But I have almost continually the witness of God’s Spirit with my spirit that I am a child of his. Yet there remains within an evil root. The seed of the serpent is not done away, and it often presents itself in the risings of anger, pride, peevishness of spirit, evil surmising, and desires, covetousness and such like unholy tempers. But when the enemy besets me with any of these, I cry unto the Lord for help. For without him I can do nothing, but through Christ strengthening me I can

¹¹This would have been in early 1740; by 1742 Hogg was the leader of a band for married men.

¹²I.e., about Aug. 1740.

¹³See Rom. 8:1.

¹⁴Se Rom. 8:16.

¹⁵John 3:18 & 16.

¹⁶Cf. 1 John 2:1.

do all things.¹⁷

I believe also that there remaineth a rest for the people of God.¹⁸ But I have been in doubt whether or not it was to be obtained till a very short time before the hour of death, and therefore I was not in such earnest pursuit of it as I ought to have been. But since your coming to town, and Mr. Maxfield,¹⁹ in hearing you both frequent upon it, and your strong reasonings and many proofs which you brought from the Scriptures, I have been thoroughly convinced of my error.

I think it was last Tuesday was three weeks [since] I heard Mr. Maxfield. His discourse was from Romans 6[:2], “How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?” He reasonings, I think, were so strong that no man could gainsay them. The texts of Scripture which he brought in confirmation were many. I received his saving and was quickened by the Spirit of God unto a lively hope, believing I should, in his time, enter into that blessed state and so be happy for evermore.

I remained thus many days, earnestly contending for the hope of the gospel. But being much in the hurry of business at this time, and nature crying “Spare thyself,” there is something of a slackness has taken hold of me. Wherefore I humbly beg your prayers, that the Lord would not suffer me to grow cold or lukewarm, but so inspire my thought that I may earnestly press forward to the mark of the prize of our high calling, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;²⁰ that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear I may also appear with him, and meet you, reverend sir, in glory, to sing praises to God and to the Lamb who sitteth upon the throne forever and ever.

From your unworthy son, servant, and brother in Christ,

Thomas Hogg

Source: CW, *A Short Account of God’s Dealings with Mr. Thomas Hogg. Written by himself, in a Letter to his Minister* (London: [Strahan,] 1750).

¹⁷See Phil 4:13.

¹⁸See Heb. 4:9.

¹⁹Thomas Maxfield accompanied CW to London in April 1740.

²⁰See Phil. 3:14.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park¹]
[[November]] [17]41

[[Patience must have its perfect work.²

[[I have that perfect confidence in God that all events, since they come from him, have the same effect upon me. I find nothing p[eaceful?] more than that. I sometimes think God is too tender over me; that he will not only p[rotect] me from the b[arren] evil w[orld], if soon remove me out of it. For he is the joy and end of all things to my soul. I neither propose nor feel pleasure in anything else. And though I may ere after by and by through fear, it is only because I love him better than all else. Your pious soul will, I know, rejoice for me, as these are the returns of your prayers for me, to help me forward on my journey through life and eternity.

[[I know my heart is not clean. I do nothing speak, nothing think, nothing that is good. His Spirit worketh in me only to will but not always to do of his good pleasure.³ For when I would do good, evil is present with me.⁴ I mention this that you may wonder at [the] lov[ing kindness] of our heavenly Father. Surely no worm ever received so much that was so completely unworthy. But he delights to show his power in the lowest d[egree] of weakness, therefore he so vouchsafes to hear me. I hope you will think when you see Miss Cowpers that they grow in grace and in the knowledge of our mighty Lord Jesus the beloved. I find by yours you want consolation. God will deal with you as he did by Abraham; you are his child, but he will try you more before you are called his friend. The honour you will prove before you go hence. I only wish you that confidence of yourself which I always feel for you. I am sure you will finish your course with joy and to the glory of his church on earth. Fear not the storms and tempests of so short a day's journey. Think of his mercies past and humbly wait for more. He that shall come will come. I long you should triumph in expectation till you can triumph in faith. I can rejoice over you, but over poor Mr. Ellis⁵ I could do nothing but mourn.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 5b.⁶

¹The Huntingdon estate in Castle Donington, Leicestershire.

²See James 1:4.

³See Phil. 2:13.

⁴See Rom. 7:21.

⁵Edward Ellis (1711–95) was a contemporary of CW at Westminster, before receiving his BA at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He served as rector of Markfield 1737–49, where LH supported a school. This letter reflects his ambivalence about the emerging revival (see LH to JW, Mar. 15, 1742).

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 117–18.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[Bristol]
[November 7, 1741]

Dear Brother,

All last week I found hanging upon me the effects of the violent cold I had contracted in Wales; not, I think (as Mr. Turner¹ and Walcam² supposed), by lying in a damp bed at St. Bride's, but rather by riding continually in the cold and wet nights, and preaching immediately after. But I believed it would pass off, and so took little notice of it till Friday morning. I then found myself exceeding sick; and as I walked to Baptist Mills (to pray with Susanna Basil, who was ill of a fever), felt the wind pierce me, as it were, through. At my return I found myself something better. Only I could not eat anything at all. Yet I felt no want of strength at the hour of intercession, nor at six in the evening, while I was opening and applying those words, "Sun, stand still in Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon."³ I was afterwards refreshed and slept well; so that I apprehended no farther disorder, but rose in the morning as usual, and declared, with a strong voice and an enlarged heart, "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love."⁴ About two in the afternoon, just as I was set down to dinner, a shivering came upon me, and a little pain in my back; but no sickness at all, so that I ate⁵ a little; and then, growing warm, went to see some that were sick. Finding myself worse about four I would willingly have lain down. But having promised to see Mrs. G—, who had been out of order for some days, I went thither first, and thence to Weavers' Hall. A man gave me a token for good as I went along: "Ay," said he, "*he* will be a martyr too by and by." The Scripture I enforced was, "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."⁶ I found no want either of inward or outward strength. But afterwards, finding my fever increased, I called on Dr. Middleton.⁷ By his advice I went home, and took my bed—a strange thing to me, who had not kept my bed a day (for five and thirty years) ever since I had the smallpox. I immediately fell into a profuse sweat, which continued till one or two in the morning. God then gave me refreshing sleep, and afterwards such tranquillity of mind that this day, Sunday, November 1, seemed the shortest day to me I had ever known in my life.

On Sunday night likewise I slept well, and was easy all Monday morning. But about 3:00 in the afternoon the shivering returned, much more violent than before. It continued till I was put to bed. I was then immediately as in a fiery furnace. In a little space I began sweating; but the sweating seemed to increase rather than allay the burning heat. Thus I remained till about eight o'clock, when I suddenly

¹Capt. Joseph Turner had accompanied JW into Wales; his wife had recently died. Turner appears on a list of married men in the Bristol society in Jan. 1741; see *WHS* 4 (1903), 92–97.

²John Walcam was another Bristol Methodist, a merchant, who may also have been with JW on his journey into Wales. Cf. *WHS* 19 (1934): 161.

³Cf. Josh. 10:12.

⁴Gal. 5:6.

⁵Orig., 'eat'.

⁶Cf. 1 John 2:1.

⁷John Middleton (c. 1680–1760) studied medicine in Edinburgh under Archibald Pitcairne, before moving to Bristol to serve as a physician (with a specialization in obstetrics) for over forty years. Middleton first attended CW when he became seriously ill in Aug. 1740, and became both his personal physician and good friend. CW marked Middleton's death in Dec. 16, 1760 with a poetic eulogy—see MS Death of Dr. John Middleton; MS Funeral Hymns (1756–87), 12–20; and published in *AM* 6 (1783): 445–48, 502–04, 557–58.

awaked out of a kind of doze, in such a sort of disorder (whether of body, or mind, or both) as I know not how to describe. My heart and lungs, and all that was within me, and my soul too, seemed to be in perfect uproar. But I cried unto the Lord in my trouble, and he delivered me out of my distress.

I continued in a moderate sweat till near midnight, and then slept pretty well till morning. On Tuesday, November 3, about noon, I was removed to Mr. [William] Hooper's. Here I enjoyed a blessed calm for several hours, the fit not returning till six in the evening; and then in such a manner as I never heard or read of. I had a quick pulse, attended with violent heat; but no pain either in my head or back or limbs; no sickness, no stitch, no thirst. Surely God is a present help in time of trouble, And he does make all my bed in my sickness.

Wed. 4. Many of our brethren agreed to seek God today by fasting and prayer. About 12:00 my fever began to rage. At 2:00 I dozed a little, and suddenly awaked in such disorder (only more violent) as that on Monday. The silver cord appeared to be just then loos[en]ing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern. The blood whirled to and fro, as if it would immediately force its way through all its vessels, especially in the breast; and excessive, burning heat parched up my whole body, both within and without. About 3:00, in a moment, the commotion ceased, the heat was over, and the pain gone. Soon after it made another attack, but not near so violent as the former. This lasted till half an hour past 4:00, and then vanished away at once. I grew better and better till 9:00. Then I fell asleep, and scarce awaked at all till morning.

Thur. 5. The noisy joy of the people in the streets did not agree with me very well;⁸ though I am afraid it disordered their poor souls much more than it did my body. About 5:00 in the evening my cough returned, and soon after the heat and other symptoms; but with this remarkable circumstance, that for fourteen hours following I had more or less sleep in every hour. This was one cause why I was never light-headed at all, but had the use of my understanding, from the first hour of my illness to the last, as fully as when in perfect health.

Fri. 6. Between 10:00 and 12:00 the main shock began. I can give but a faint account of this, not for want of memory, but of words. I felt in my body nothing but storm and tempest, hailstones, and coals of fire. But I do not remember that I felt any fear (such was the mercy of God!), nor any murmuring. And yet I found but a dull, heavy kind of patience, which I knew was not what it ought to be. The fever came rushing upon me as a lion, ready to break all my bones in pieces. My body grew weaker every moment; but I did not feel my soul put on strength. Then it came into my mind, "Be still, and see the salvation of the Lord."⁹ I will not stir hand or foot; but let him do with me what is good in his own eyes. At once my heart was at ease. My mouth was filled with laughter and my tongue with joy. My eyes overflowed with tears, and I began to sing aloud. One who stood by said, "Now he is light-headed." I told her, "O no. I am not light-headed; but I am praising God. God is come to my help, and pain is nothing. Glory be to God on high." I now found why it was not expedient for me to recover my health sooner; because then I should have lost this experimental proof how little everything is which can befall the body, so long as God carries the soul aloft, as it were on the wings of an eagle.

An hour after I had one more grapple with the enemy, who then seemed to collect all his strength. I essayed to shake myself, and praise God as before. But I was not able: the power was departed from me. I was shorn of my strength, and become weak, and like another man. Then I said, "Yet here I hold. Lo, I come to bear thy will, O God." Immediately he returned to my soul, and lifted up the light of his countenance. And I felt, "He rideth easily enough whom the grace of God carrieth."¹⁰

⁸It was Guy Fawkes Day, a public holiday celebrated with the parading of effigies of "Guy" and the preparing of bonfires on which to burn them.

⁹See Exod. 14:13.

¹⁰Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, II.ix.1.

I supposed the fit was now over, it being about 5:00 in the afternoon, and began to compose myself for sleep, when I felt first a chill, and then a burning all over, attended with such an universal faintness and weariness and utter loss of strength as if the whole frame of nature had been dissolved. Just then my nurse, I know not why, took me out of bed, and placed me in a chair. Presently a purging began, which I believe saved my life. I grew easier from that hour, and had such a night's rest as I have not had before, since it pleased God to lay his hand upon me.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Oct. 25, 1741 (*Works*, 19:235–36).

From Samuel Webb¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[London]
November 20, 1741

Dear and Most Reverend Sir,

By the good providence of God I had a desire to hear the Methodists, so I went to Islington's church one day about two years and a half since. It pleased God that yourself preached from our Lord's discourse with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well.² But indeed your zealous looks and forcible words caused me to think you spoke as never man spoke. When our Lord had convinced her of adultery, I then, and not till then, felt that he knows the secrets of all hearts for I thought mine would abound.

As well as I was able, I kept myself from making a disturbance till your sermon was over, when I went out toward Can[on]bery House, where I plentifully poured out my soul, it being filled with joy unspeakable. I had such a sense of my own vileness and the love of Christ towards me that I was confounded, and I had no inclination to go home any more, this being the first I ever heard the pure gospel preached. Nevertheless, I date my justification from this time; although I cannot but take great shame to myself when I consider the long time with the many blessed opportunities I have and do enjoy of hearing the everlasting gospel preached without greater improvements.

After this I took all opportunities of hearing the word of Mr. [George] Whitefield, your brother [JW], or you. And when you were chiefly at Bristol I found out Fetter Lane society, where I attended the word constantly twice a week. And one thing is very remarkable—although I heard them preach their still doctrine, yet for as much as I went with a sincere desire to honour Christ, all their warnings against the ordinances were taken by me that I must not depend on anything we did as meritorious.

About Christmas will be two years [since] I [be]came acquainted with brother [Thomas] Cooper and Hage.³ And hearing them talk of of the forgiveness of sins, whether I had received that blessing I began to reason. About this time you came to town, last Easter was a year,⁴ and began to preach mornings at the Foundery, which rejoiced me much. So I left journey work, that I might have a better leisure to attend. As I was sitting one day in much doubt, I had a sense of a voice within me which gave me much comfort and I believed it the witness of the Spirit. Accordingly, I declared it to brother Cooper in band, and from that time for three months (to the best of my remembrance) I had such a glowing and bigness in my breast that I thought it my duty to invite all men to seek the Lord, for I had not heard of any that had a clearer manifestation of his free grace than myself.

I have generally found a desire to meditate on the things of God, but commonly a backwardness to closet prayer, though I am convince[d] it is a great privilege. I have for a long [time] been surrounded with much fear and doubt—not of the faithfulness of God, but of my own deceitful heart, which indeed has and does discover itself to be deceitful above all things. Yet I find the little principle of faith conquers, for I continually find those words of our Lord's true, "Look unto me and be saved."⁵ I find now a confidence that the leaven will work till the whole lump is leavened. It has pleased the Lord to show me that it is a lump of corruption that must be thoroughly purged [before] it can inherit that glorious kingdom, which I pray God fully and perfectly to accomplish of his pure grace for the sake of his only begotten well beloved Son and my Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

¹Samuel Webb appears as a single man through the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

²CW preached this sermon on John 4 at St. Mary's church, Islington, on Mar. 11, 1739; see *MS Journal*.

³Likely Samuel Hage; see Samuel Hage to JW, May 6, 1740.

⁴CW relocated from Bristol to London in early Apr. 1740.

⁵Isa. 45:22.

Last Wednesday night you spoke as if you thought your labours would not be blessed but in America.⁶ Now I do declare that I never had the expectation of being blessed so much under anyone's ministry as your[s]. And ungrateful as we are, I believe many are like-minded. And I pray God to make us all faithful hearers, as you are teachers; that you that sow and we that reap may rejoice together. Grant this, oh Father, for the honour of Jesus Christ our Lord.

From your unworthy hearer,

Saml. Webb

The Lord give you to see and consider whether this account be a vessel unto honour.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sam Web's [[experience]] / Nov. 1741" and "Sam. Web.'s Exp[erience] / Nov. 1741."⁷

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/18.⁸

⁶This would be either Nov. 11 or Nov. 18, 1741.

⁷There also appears on the backside of this letter an initial draft by CW in shorthand of a hymn for the Lord's Supper, that appears in revised form in MS Thirty, 15–16, and was then published in *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745), 73–74.

⁸For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Taverner Wallis¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

New Inn
November 24, 1741

Reverend Sir,

Having had from my youth up great drawings of the Father and flights of religion at some times, and at others chasing the pleasures of sin for a season, but at last being convinced that there was no peace to the wicked, I said, “I will return to my Father.”² And this was about August 1738, when I began to read Josephus(?), which gave me great encouragement. And I seemed between whiles ready to do anything to be saved.

Nevertheless, the sins which did so easily beset me had still dominion, for I did but dissemble. I now used the blessed sacrament for the first time, with shame and confusion of face and some tears, resolving for the future to amend my life. And to this end [I] set about going to church and sacrament and giving to the poor. But after struggling some months in this way, found I could not come up to what I ought and to what I must to be saved. Sometimes this would discourage me, and tempt me to give up all hopes; at least for the present, till I had better opportunities to put in practice what I had learned. The fear of man and unwillingness to forsake all was at the bottom, and was what hindered the work of God on my soul. However, I had got so far as to watch over sin and had dominion. And likewise, by being grave, my former acquaintance soon avoided me as I did them.

All this time I had no one to speak my mind to. And having strove to repent but in vain, finding my heart not contrite as it ought, and being recommended to get acquainted with good men if I would be so myself, I thought it was quite right. And having heard talk of the Methodists at Oxford some years ago, how religious they were, I made it my business to renew my acquaintance with one so-called. But to my great disappointment found him of another opinion. But it was by him I was first informed of the society in Fetter Lane. And after I had been there several times and found great satisfaction knowing it was good for me to be there, I proposed to Mr. [John] Bray to be one of the society. But it was answered it was contrary to the rules to accept any person without they were known by some of their members. I went there afterwards but seldom. And having heard Mr. Viney speak against the means,³ my nature being pleased therewith, took the bait—and by that means threw me back again into the world and into sin, which I had dominion over till then. And by those things being convinced this way could not be right, and having the burden of sin on me and fear of death, about April 1740 as I was going down in the stage coach to my father,⁴ it pleased God to give me an opportunity of being acquainted with Miss Jason who was going to Dummer.⁵ After she had resolved me in a few questions concerning the way she was in, I desired her to bring me acquainted with the Mr. Wesley, which she did by letter.

Determined now to set my hand indeed to the plow, I went to the Foundery. And having heard an

¹Taverner Wallis Esq. (d. 1779) was a son of John Wallis Esq. (d. 1754), who had a country estate in Whitchurch, Oxfordshire, as well as a home in Hampstead. Taverner was apprenticed in 1732 to an attorney at New Inn in London. He appears as a single male from 1742–43 in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). There is no evidence after that of any involvement in Methodism

²Cf. Luke 15:18.

³Richard Viney (fl. 1738–44) was a London tailor with business contacts in Germany. He was an early member of the Fetter Lane society and continued for a while to lead the Moravian continuation of the Fetter Lane society.

⁴At the estate in Whitchurch

⁵Katherine Jason, see her letter to JW, July 1, 1740.

excellent sermon by Mr. John [Wesley], it made me say to myself, “What must I do to be saved.”⁶ I went, very much moved with the commendatory letter, and he recommended me to the acquaintance of brother [Henry] Thornton, which was of much service in building me up. And now, by attending constantly on the word, I was soon convinced of the doctrine, and that it was different from that preached in the churches. I was in some months time convinced of unbelief and in February last I found I had forgiveness through the blood of Christ. But after three days, having had a book recommended me to read (and though my conscience told me not to read it, yet through fear of man I took the contrary way) which threw me into great darkness, so that I went mourning for a whole day to find him whom my soul loved. It was not long before I found him and thought I knew what it was to love God with all my heart etc., About a month after this I fell again, occasioned by taking too much care of my health and studying physic and being absent from under the word, so that I thought the kingdom of heaven consisted in meats and drinks and trusted much in the means.

But God, when once my soul asked counsel of him, convinced me of my error. I found once (since I was justified) guilt for speaking unadvisedly with my lips, but found afterwards I had an advocate with the Father and I was again restored to his favour. I once turned back in my heart to Egypt in a time of tribulation and temptation. After this the Lord showed me from whence I was fallen (as the hymn “when I was a little child” describes⁷), but this lasted but some few hours.

I have lately seen my salvation more clear, though in great deadness still and void of the love of God. I am persuaded I have been fighting in my own strength and have not waited patiently on the Lord to work in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. Therefore, [I] have found no comfort or satisfaction in devotion as formerly, being as I take it, fed with strong meal. I have been quit dead to the world till lately, as likewise to the flesh, having had no temptation to abide with me till now. I find I am carried away with lustful thoughts and likewise with the desire of being rich. But I find, blessed be God, I am more than conqueror, finding that those things work experience, etc. I have had temptation to take up with other things rather than Christ, but hope through the grace of God to be willing to lose my natural life to be his disciple. I think of late that I am grown lukewarm, because I can’t rise of a morning as I used to, and that my love to the brethren is grown faint. Nevertheless, in general I have a hunger and thirst after righteousness and doubt not but that I shall be filled, though at present I am all unclean, thinking myself the chief of sinners. I still remain unthankful for this glorious means of salvation and for what the Lord has done for me already and want to have the love of God in my heart.

I am willing now of late to let the Lord teach me and show me all things and have found now the Lord is going to show me my heart (which he did in part formerly but that soon I forgot). I am convinced I have been fighting in my own strength and lay more now like clay in the hand of potter. What has been a means of bringing me into darkness and temptation is the having not took counsel of God but followed my own inclinations and having in my heart turned back into Egypt.

I now see more of my heart and want to be jealous over myself least I should fall away, which thing till of late (I always fancying myself so strong) could see no sign of. The Lord convinced me but last night and showed me that I had depended on former gifts. What I seem to stand in need of is self-denial; to take up my cross daily, and not be ashamed to confess Christ; to watch and pray against temptations; to become a little child; to see more of my heart and to cease from my own works and look unto Christ the finisher of my faith; to have more of the knowledge and love of God and a settled peace (though I don’t find the guilt of sin on my heart). In short, unbelief I want to be rooted out, and every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted; and to have a new, a loving heart: Christ in me the hope of glory.

Sometime after I was justified I found a great sorrow and contrition for my sins, and great mourning looking unto him whom I had pierced. Once I saw that every thought of man’s heart by nature

⁶Acts 16:30.

⁷CW, Hymn on Luke 15:21, *HSP* (1740), 147–49.

was only evil continually and could give glory to God for all the good. But now I seem to have strength of my own and so don't rely on God to teach me, etc. I thought I was the man that crucified the Lord and [had] a very deep contrition thereon. But now these things seem to be forgotten and I seem ignorant that so it is. I seem quite blind to what I was formerly.

I lately have plucked out a right eye and now I know of no idol that I desire to keep. The sin of ingratitude to you, sir, and your brother for your pains, I am afraid lies at my door. I am reverend sir,

Your much obliged humble servant in Christ

Taverner Wallis

I beg you prayers for me.

Address "To the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley."

Endorsements: by CW, "Tav. Wallis / Nov. 1741"; "Taverner Willis [[experience]] / Nov. 1741"; and

"Taverner Wallis / Experience / Nov. 1741."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/19.⁸

⁸For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

**From Henry Thornton¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

Thursday evening, 9:00

November 26, 1741

Mr. Hardcastle's, Chandler, Gray's Inn [London]

Reverend Sir,

If I was to give you an account of my life and conversation from my youth, up till it pleased God to call me out of darkness, I could not do it in so short a time as I have notice to do it in. It would require as many weeks as I have days to transcribe only the material parts thereof, as it should occur to my memory. Or if I was to give you but a short narrative of what has occurred, as to my experience since I was first awakened, till this time, it would take up more time than I have to spare (by reason of my attending to business). I therefore purpose, God being my helper, to give you a brief account of my experience from the time I was first justified to this time, as the Lord shall bring it to my remembrance.

According to what I have, through the mercies of God, received within these few years, I believe that I received pardon of my sins, sensibly in my soul, about Lady Day 1731,² at the sacrament at Bolton Chapel (near Bolton Hall in Wensleydale, Yorkshire). But I did not long continue faithful to the grace given me. For being in a few days to set forward for London, I gave myself up to fulfill the desires of my soul in working all manner of uncleanness with greediness, till I had (to outward appearance) sinned away any show of grace by my wicked course of life and conversation. During which time I had daily checks in my conscience that I was to give an account for this misbehaviour, but I drowned convictions in loud company and diversions of the town.

It would be tedious to mention all my pursuits and convictions, and what great mercies I have received, both before I went in to Ireland, there, and since my return, till it pleased God to awaken me out of that lethargy of sin. In the year 1736 I began to be more reserved in my extravagant pursuits, and left off most of my old pursuits and acquaintances. And then I used to go sometimes to sacrament, and began to live more regular, and [to] think myself a good moral young man. At that time I made suit to my wife, who was a grave, sober, religious person.³ Therefore I endeavoured to copy her, so that I might sooner gain her affections. I, a little before and after I was married, till Mr. [George] Whitefield began to preach in the fields, lived a pharisaical life, though not altogether so strict.

I did not see my want of a saviour till I heard your brother (Mr. John Wesley) at Fetter Lane, and then I began to be in real convictions. I rested neither day nor night. When he was preaching I was under great horror, my conscience accusing me, so that I used to bite my lips for fear of crying out as many persons did at that time. I would not have gone to have heard him, but I could not keep away, although I dreaded to hear him. I continued in this state for a long time, dreading to fall asleep for fear I should awake in hell.

It pleased God to lay his hand upon me, by afflicting me with a violent pain in my breast, so that for the recovery of my health the physicians ordered me to ride out every day—which I did, till the great frost about Christmas 1739. My friends in town threatened me that if ever I went to hear Mr. Wesley again they would tell Mr. Hardcastle, my master, who was very kind to me during my illness—keeping

¹Henry Thornton (1710–63) was born in Redmire, Yorkshire. By 1737 he was living in London, apprenticed to an attorney. Henry appears as a married man in the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46), through Nov. 1745. At that point he and his wife apparently relocated to Leeds. Henry assisted the Wesley brothers with some legal matters through the mid 1750s.

²I.e., the Feast of Annunciation, Mar. 25.

³Thornton married Mercy Gregory in 1737 she appears as a married woman throughout the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46). See CW's hymn on her death in 1757 in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 14–16.

me a horse and giving me all opportunities for exercise he could spare. Notwithstanding all threats, I went to Fetter Lane again (though I went as a thief, creeping in and out for fear any of my acquaintances should see me). And one evening, about July 1739, after I had heard Mr. James Hutton at Fetter Lane in his exposition give an account of his experience, and after that sing a hymn which greatly affected me, being at home, I began to see my vileness. And in the depth of my agony I found deliverance from that oppression. I immediately fell on my knees, blessing and praising God, being filled with love and joy. I prayed so loud that my wife was afraid I should overstrain myself. Therefore she interrupted me and desired me to desist. The devil took that opportunity to assault me with anger, which I immediately gave an assent to and was very angry with her, and reprimanded her so severely that she wept. However, I found afterwards that I had lost all my comfort, and grew worse and worse, the devil often tempting me [that] I had sinned against the Holy Ghost.

I continued going to Fetter Lane as often as I had an opportunity. As I found I had not faith in Christ, Mr. Hutton, [Philip] Molther, and [Richard] Viney had almost persuaded me to leave all ordinances off till I had received faith. I never could be persuaded to leave off prayer. In this doleful condition I was when it pleased God [that] you came to town, at Easter following,⁴ and I happened to go for the first time to the Foundery and heard you preach there. I was thereby convinced that I had been lately deluded, and therefore I purposed to continue all the means of grace as I had done before. You know partly what ensued between Mr. Hutton and me a little after, therefore [I] will not trouble you with it at this time.

It was this spring (1740), the day I do not remember, that I received remission of my sins while your brother was preaching at the Foundery. The words (as I remember) “I have cleansed thee,” or to that effect, I evidently heard in my soul, and Christ was evidently set before me crucified. I could hardly forbear declaring it aloud. I went home rejoicing and continued so for some days. But the devil, for fear he should lose me, in a few days would have persuaded me that I was deluded. I used to be ever praying, for fear that the devil should persuade me I was not justified. Then the enemy told me I trust in prayer and other means of grace. I cried unto the Lord and told the devil I would pray and use the means because Christ had bid me. And in this manner was I harassed for some days. I then began to be in darkness by reasoning, and then the devil persuaded me Christ had not died for me. I humbled myself before the Lord and cried night and day unto him, being in great terror, having lost my saviour. I used to pray in any corner of my house if I was but alone for a few minutes, and used all the means of grace as before.

It pleased God one evening, as I was kneeling and praying in chambers, to show me the terrors of hell, indeed! (My soul now trembles at the remembrance of it.) I thought that the pit was open and I was on the brink and just falling into the flames. And as I was sinking I was delivered therefrom. I know not how, but I was in such an ecstasy of love and joy that I thought I was in heaven. I continued sometime in this ecstasy, praising and glorifying my dear redeemer. I had this love in my soul, though not so violent, for some days. I never after dares deny but that I was justified and that Christ had died for me, though frequently the devil pressed sore at me to deny that Christ was my saviour. The Lord was very gracious in often testifying at other time to my poor thirst soul that he was my saviour, and had redeemed me.

As I was going home one day from chambers the Lord brought several of my former sins into remembrance; and then the devil told me that Christ had died for all my other sins, but not for that sin which was brought to my remembrance. I lifted up my heart to God in prayer, that he would testify to my soul that he had died for all my sins. Immediately I felt the Lord in my soul, and [he] evidently testified to me that he had died for all my sins. I went home praising and glorifying my dear redeemer! It pleased God about this time that you admitted me into the united society, without my desiring it. I took this as a further mark of the love of God to me.

⁴CW arrived in London on Apr. 3, 1740.

I had sometime before this writ[ten] to my relations what God had done for my soul, and declared it to several of my friends and acquaintances in town. Some mocked and jested, and several of my relations thought I was religiously mad. While I lived a reprobate life I was in good company, but now I am turned Methodist I was not worth their notice.

When I heard any person swear of take the name of God in vain, I used to go immediately (if they were at a distance or if near me) and speak to them, telling them (if I had an opportunity) the danger they were in. The devil often suggesting to me that if I reprimanded such or such a person they would knock me down. I immediately called on God for to be my helper, and having before me the command of God, I directly went and spoke to them. And though they sometimes were of the most reprobate sort, yet they have been so far from offering any incivility that they, after some time speaking to them, have been melted down into prayers and petitions, to implore God's mercy to them, to pardon their iniquities and transgressions, and would hardly part with me. Indeed, I have met with different treatment from the proud and genteel sort, who are mostly affronted. But I did not care, for the Lord has commanded me. And I had rather obey his commands than meet those poor wretches in hell, by reason of my not rebuking them. Therefore, in the name of the Lord, and by his assistance, I hope I always shall rebuke and exhort at all opportunities.

I had another evident testimony of the love of God to me this spring (1740). When I was sitting behind my desk in chambers and praying, Christ was set before my eyes, through faith, nailed to his cross. And the blood came from his bleeding side and poured into my heart, which I thought was bare and open to receive it. It was so warm and comfortable that I did not know how to contain myself, being filled with the love of God and love to all mankind.

I began to think myself something now, and to pride myself on the gifts God was pleased to give me, and wanted to keep them safe; and used to murmur when I lost those comforts, and sometimes was in darkness for several days, till I humbled myself before the Lord and received fresh testimony of the love of God to me.

During the time aforesaid (since justified), I have been frequently assaulted with lust to strange women. Even when I used to walk the streets, on looking at a woman I have found lustful desires. I have been frequently assaulted and fell into anger, which greatly troubled me, so that I could not find peace again (after I had been angry) till I had received a fresh assurance.

Covetousness the least of all assaulted me—being willing to part with all, but prevented by my wife, she being my purse bearer, so that I never could do as I would in acts of mercy or charity. Yet, the Lord be praised, what I had I freely parted with. I ought not to blame my wife in this respect, for her being saving, because I have but a small salary—it being but 40 guineas a year. And therefore, if I was to give according to my desire, I should leave nothing for housekeeping, etc.

I have been frequently, and I know I yet have, a deal of pride. The sight of it terrifies me when I see the haughtiness of my proud heart. And also I have been not a little puffed up and conceited at my own performances, the best of them not worth a straw. Neither can I think I am really able to do anything as I ought to do. Neither shall I, till this heart is cleansed from all its idols. In one word, I see myself worse and worse, instead of being holier. This was a great means of humbling my proud heart, for which I used to grieve, and to grieve because I thought I did not grieve enough.

I used likewise to intermix my speech with witty jests, laughter, and acts of levity, for which I had frequent convictions. As to my apparel, I could not leave all gay apparel off at once, because I could not spare those cloths I had. Neither could I throw them aside, for I had no other for some time, not having money to spare to buy new. But by degrees I threw them off and got plain ones, more convenient.

When your brother (Mr. John Wesley) came town (June 1740), he asked me if I would go into band. "But," says he, "I suppose our brother Thornton is too much a gentleman to be in band with poor people" (or to that effect). I was, at those words, most confounded, and wished I had been a beggar rather than a gentleman. I answered I was not such a gentleman but that I would go into band. He therefore put

me in brother Hodges's band,⁵ who gave me always good, comfortable, seasonable exhortations, and used to sound me to the bottom. I did not like it at first, but I thought he did it for my good. Therefore I submitted to it, and the Lord did bless me greatly in that ordinance. I was admitted into close band about five weeks after (the day we separated from the Fetter Lane brethren).⁶

I continued going every day in the morning to the Foundery, and as often in the evenings as I could conveniently. I daily see my wicked heart, and [am] often afraid I never should be otherwise, but always to be so.

I often used to think that my occupation was not a lawful one, and do believe if I had not been married [I] should have quitted my business. I grew very peevish and fretful to my wife, especially when she would have me do anything which I did not like. Yet she bore all my ways with great meekness, only sometimes giving a short reply, for fear of putting me in a passion. Indeed, I was for having everybody think as I did. And if they did not agree with me in my sentiments, I used too frequently to give a rash judgment. My wife often rebuked me (though very tenderly) for this fault, which sometimes I would take with patience from her.

I continued in this state, still relying on God to further the work begun in my soul, when it pleased God on Sunday, the 6th day of October 1740, at the sacrament at the new church in the Strand.⁷ After I had had a great conflict in my soul at the sight of my wicked heart, it was impressed on my soul to pray to God that his Spirit might bear witness with my spirit. I did so, as the Lord enabled me, and after continuing some time in prayer I went in great confidence to the table that the Lord would impart that gift to me at the sacrament. When I kneeled down, I called on the Lord with all my heart (as enabled) to give me his blessing, and at the same time I began to see my unworthiness to receive any of the least of his mercies. When Dr. Heylyn gave me the bread, my soul was in an agony. I sweat very much, through fear I had been presumptuous in asking that blessing. Yet the Lord cheered me with his presence, and I still had faith in him that he would bless me with the testimony of his Spirit. I saw Christ crucified evidently before my eyes, all over blood[y], and he seemed to smile on me. I received the cup in faith that the Lord would bless me, and when I had drunk the Lord was with me of a truth, for I had the testimony of my being justified as received before brought fresh into my mind, and a testimony that Christ was in me and bore witness with my spirit that I was his child, and found a burning love in my soul for God and all mankind. And this testimony I never yet lost, but always have it, though my soul be in great darkness. I often found my soul praying when I was not [praying] with my lips, and rejoicing in God my saviour when I have been very sick or in great pain.

The next morning when I got up to go to the Foundery about 5:00, the devil suggested to me that if I went I should be murdered, and that the devil would appear to me and dash my brains out, or throw me down stairs. I prayed unto the Lord and, after I was dressed, I offered to go. But when I got to the stair head, I could hardly go forward. I called on the Lord with all my might and I passed forward down stairs as if I pressed through legions of devils, and there seemed something to cheer me as I went down and as if it lead me forward. When I got to the door the devil pushed sore at me again to turn back, because it was very dark, but I pulled the door to, as hard as I could, and then I knew he could not get me to turn back. I had no sooner got into the street but my soul was inflamed with love and I went on rejoicing, and was at the Foundery door before I knew where I was. So great was the ecstasy of my soul that I flew on the wings of divine love. I know not how to express it, the blessing I then received.

⁵Joseph Hodges (1710–78), a smith, one of the members of the Fetter Lane society who briefly joined the Wesley brothers at the Foundery, by 1743 sided with the Moravians; cf. Benham, *Hutton*, 93, 411.

⁶This would be Sunday, July 20, 1740; cf. JW's account in *Journal, Works*, 19:162.

⁷I.e., St. Mary-le-Strand, where Rev. Dr. John Heylyn was rector.

October 6. This day at noon it pleased God to suffer the enemy to assault and give me the toothache. I never had it so violent before in all my life. I was as in convulsions with the pain. I therefore, by God's assistance, got with much ado to Mr. Rutter's, the tooth drawer. He at the first pull broke it, but after further lancing my gum he got it out. When he put his instrument to my tooth, I looked unto Jesus for his assistance and was meditating on his sufferings for me. I don't remember that I felt him when he pulled it out, or any pain, my soul being all this day and at this time filled with the love of God. When it was out, he showed it [to] me. I then praised and thanked God for his great mercy. He stared and seemed to wonder at me.

About this time I began to keep Wednesday's and Friday's fast, and did not on those days permit either meat or drink to enter my mouth till 3:00 in the afternoon, and then drunk a little tea. In a few weeks I grew so weak in my body that I was hardly able to go to the Foundery and back, and do my business at chambers. The Lord was pleased to show me one morning, under the word, that he loveth mercy rather than sacrifice, and as I have always a craving at my stomach (ever since my sickness and pain in my breast), that unless I eat oftener than the common meal times, I am out of health. This is mostly, though not always, my method ever since I've been ill. I now began to fast on Fridays only, and that day to eat a breakfast—which I have observed to this day, God be praised, in obedience to his commands, except when I was in the country this last summer.

I continued every morning (except stormy weather or some other accident) to go to the Foundery. I found a great blessing thereby, both as to my health and being built up in Christ. Though [it was] seldom that I had that sweetness which I have heard other speak of, but rather convictions that I had not been, or was not, faithful to the grace given me. And several mornings have I gone from my lodgings to the Foundery and have got there before I knew where I was, being filled with the love of God and my heart intent on Christ only. Sometimes it has rained or snowed and I not known it, so unmindful was I of outward accidents.

I not only now, but before and after I was first justified, have had frequent temptations to expound the Scriptures, which for some hours have continued in my mind. But I always did (and hope always shall when so tempted) ask the Lord if it was his will that I should so do. He always showed me, on examining my heart, that it was pride and self that reigned there, and that instead of teaching I ought to learn my ABCs again. This used to humble my soul, when I see my own nothingness, and I cried unto the Lord for to wash me in his blood and cover me with his righteousness, for I see myself polluted and naked.

Anger, and lust, and pride assaulted me much again. I began to fear I was going back instead of pressing forward, so that I renewed my works, by praying more constantly and doing all the other means. The Lord, after some weeks, gave me peace in my soul for about a month, so that I had not many assaults or temptations to sin that I remember, but night and day, sleeping and waking, I was praying and glorifying my dear redeemer. I now began to think I should soon have a clean heart, and was for laying up those gifts God was pleased to bestow on me and to keep them safe. I soon found that I was caring and musing for what I could not attain, and that I was spiritually proud. For the word expounded gave me, through God's blessing, such a sight of my self and pride that I loathed myself. I now was quite contrary. Instead of rejoicing, I was mourning. Instead of thinking I could do anything, I saw I could do nothing. I grieved because I grieved not enough. This I saw, after a few days, through the light given me, was what I out not to do, but to pray and meditate on the word of God. I did so and found peace again in my soul.

I now was more humble but, as it were, hung close to Christ, ever putting Christ before me. I found temptations assault me on every side, but they did not abide a moment. I began after a few weeks more to be more careless, and God was pleased to suffer me to be buffeted by Satan and often perplexed what to do. I saw mountains of sin and uncleanness and was afraid I should comply with the temptation. But while I have been praying unto Christ, the temptation was not only vanished, but I had no remembrance what it was. This has often happened to me, both before and since. All glory to God, for his mercy endureth forever.

Sometimes I have fallen into a sin, as it were, by accident unforeseen. After I had seen that I had either said or done what I ought not to do, I had an immediate conviction, and had no peace in my soul till I found afresh my pardon sealed. I sometimes was much stumbled whether the faith I had was true faith, and used to wonder that I could not find peace immediately after an enormity, as several of the brethren said they did immediately on looking up to Jesus. But the Lord rebuked me for reasoning several times, and for so doing I have been in darkness for several days together. I was mostly resigned to his will, and often thought if he cast me into hell I should not be unhappy, because I always had the testimony of his Spirit and an anchor in Christ—that he would finish the work begun in my soul, and that he would again bring me into light. This has been my hope in the greatest darkness, ever praying his will be done.

I have kept myself, through the grace given me, from dissenting. Though many times, by the still brethren and sisters, and also by the predestinarians provoked, I have given them, as the Lord enabled me, a short answer, which many times confounded them and put them to a stop. All glory to God.

When I have heard or seen a brother or sister fall into any enormity, or [they] did not walk according to the gospel, I have frequently rebuked them very sharply; for which I have been rebuked several times, both public[ly] and privately. I own I cannot help it, for I cannot speak softly as many can. Though God is my witness, I have no hatred or enmity against their persons, but do it for fear the enemy may lull them into his clutches. I did forbear once to rebuke any for several days, for fear I should cause them to stumble. The devil took this advantage over me, so that I durst not speak to any, though I heard them swear. I was convinced I ought, but I could not do it in smooth words. I had no peace or rest in my soul for this omission. I went to your brother and told him my case. He bid me to rebuke on and exhort as usual. And the Lord did then free me from my load of guilt, and I rebuked and exhorted as before. Though I do it with as much caution as I can to those that are weak, for fear I should cause them to fall back.

This last spring and summer I fell into another error, in not tasting malt liquors or anything strong, but only water, which much endangered my health, having before been used always to drink a little. Sometimes I drank a little wine.

I was affected with a fever this summer for a little time, which by my temperate living and the blessing of God was a means of the fever abating. I thereby became very weak. My master, observing my weakness, ordered me into the country, which was not very pleasing to me. But he insisting on it, I was obliged to comply. A little before I went, brother Kendrick began to preach at Chelsea.⁸ This much grieved me, and so I let him know. I saw he was proud and obstinate, and would not desist, and by many expressions he let fall I found he was inclined to the Moravians. I did always think he was so inclined ever since I knew him, which was when he was with me in brother Ibbison's band,⁹ and have told him so, so that he is always jealous of me. Your brother bore with him sometime. I was glad to hear that you had forbid him preaching, for his soul's sake. He yet continues so to do, which will bring a scandal on the church if not timely prevented.

The Lord was pleased to show me my own nothingness before I went and while I was in the country, which greatly humbled me. Yet when I had an opportunity of speaking to his glory I did, and the Lord enabled me to speak with power, all glory to his name. I found since I came to town that I did not confess Christ as I ought, through fear of man (this fear of man I have yet very much), for which the Lord was pleased to suffer me to be in great heaviness and darkness. Till one day that you was preaching, the words "I have healed thy backslidings and blotted out thy iniquities" was much impressed on my soul, and I found immediate relief, and peace with joy.

⁸William Kendrick, a peruke maker in London, would join the Moravians after CW expelled him from the Foundery society in 1741, and later align with William Cudworth. See Benham, *Hutton*, 91.

⁹Robert Ibbison (b. c. 1706) married Margaret Coultis (b. c. 1707) 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 and become Quakers.

About five weeks ago it was much impressed on my mind that I should revive my learning, and learn Greek, and go into orders. I have not as yet done so or offered so to do, being afraid it was the devil puffing me up. And I know that what learning I have has often puffed me up, so that I find it a hard matter to forget it. I also a few days after thought my business was not a lawful one. I believe this temptation proceeds from a lazy desire of being my own master, and not desiring to do anything. But [I] desire your opinion on this and the other above temptations, which I desire you would give me by letter when you have a little leisure.

I have very lately been much troubled at seeing my abominable heart. For when I have been praying unto the Lord to take away such and such a sin, I see plainly I have no desire to part with them. They seem pleasing to me. O this heart, how often has it deceived me! I see myself worse and worse, rather than better. Many times I am afraid I run back. The mountains of sin such as lust, pride, anger, and all the desires of a beast and devil I still retain. And yet I find God loves me. I dare not give up my hope. I own I have faith, though it be but small. I dare not disown the promises of God to me, though they seem far off. My desire is to obey God. I believe I shall love God with my whole heart, but cannot while I retain these devilish tempers.

There is another evil I must tell you. I know I have loved your brother and you inordinately. I cannot bear to hear any person speak disrespectfully concerning either of you, especially your brother, who I love too inordinately. I found this while I was in the country, and also when I heard of his being ill lately; and especially on this day sevendnight, in the morning, when I heard what a night of sorrows you had the night before.¹⁰ I examined my heart and searched it throughly, whether I was the accursed Judas in betraying my Lord. I find I have not been faithful to the grace given me. Neither have I obeyed all his commands with all [my] heart. Neither do I love him with all my mind. I can say this (though worthy of no praise thereby, I yet being an unfaithful brother and not meet to be called a brother) that I never have gone to hear any other person but those whom you or your brother has permitted to expound or preach since I came to the Foundery. Neither have I had any desire to hear any other.

I do not remember that I ever disobeyed the commands or orders of you or your brother since I have been in band, or ever spoke against your commands or orders to any. But [I] have been, and hope always shall readily submit to what orders you issue. Indeed, sometimes they may at first be against my will. But that I desire may not be, because I know whatever you order is for our benefit.

I never did think it proper that our sisters should meet with us [in band], except upon that extremity when Mr. [George] Whitefield first came over to keep us together, I being several times tempted with lustful thoughts in band while they were in the room.

I desire your prayers for me, that I may be strengthened and enabled to run the race which Christ has set before me with patience, and that I may receive a meek spirit.

On Thursday was a week, in the afternoon, after I had examined my heart (as I told you before), I heard a voice evidently in my soul (while I was musing on your brother, in case he should die) "From all thy idols will I cleanse thee."¹¹ These words most of the afternoon were much impressed on my soul. And I afterwards was filled with the love of God and continued so to be for two days. And when I set my pen to write this to you, I found the Lord was with me, and brought things to my remembrance I have not thought of for a long time. Indeed, I have not had much above four hours in all to write it in, and that at ten times at least, I being so much hurried in business that I could not do it but neglect my master's business, which I do not do at any time wilfully.

I thank God I do not remember that I have committed any wilful, outward sin for some time. All praise and thanks be ever given to almighty God, for his mercies to me. As to heart sins, I see them daily, and they look more terrible than ever. I believe that God will cleanse me from them.

¹⁰I.e., on the night of Nov. 18; cf. Samuel Webb's letter to CW of Nov. 20: "Last Wednesday night you spoke as if you thought your labours would not be blessed but in America."

¹¹Cf. Ezek. 36:25.

I forgot to tell you that the 6th of October, 1740, it was much impressed on my soul that I should write down what God had done for my soul that day. I did so, and have every day from that day to this kept a journal of my experience. But since I began this [letter], I have not once looked into it, trusting in God that he would bring to my remembrance what was material for you at this time.

If you desire an extract thereof, I will at my leisure hours write the material parts thereof out.

As to my being in band, I have great reason to bless God that I was admitted, for I do not remember that I ever parted without a blessing, being always desirous to open my whole heart and speak plainly, for fear I should hide anything in my heart. I always desire any of the band would ask me anything they fear or hear concerning me.

If there be anything herein worthy your notice, pray give God the glory, and the remainder attribute to be

Hen[ry] Thornton

Q[ue]ry, in CW's hand]: Shall he be admitted into the close band?¹²

A[n]swer, in another hand]: Certainly

Address: (top of page 1) "To the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley."

Source: holograph document; MARC, DDCW 8/9.

¹²I.e., move from a "trial band" into a regular band at the Foundery.

From Joseph Humphreys

Bristol
December 3, 1741

Dear Sir,

I believe nothing moves me to write to you but a spirit of love. When I think of that inexpressible union with God, and that glorious discovery of Emmanuel which my soul had under your ministry, gratitude obliges me to love and respect you. I had tasted of the grace of our Lord before, but never so clearly saw his face till then. Surely I then walked in the light and the candle of the Lord shone upon my soul. Christ in all his fullness was then revealed unto me and my Saviour was indeed precious. He gave me also his good Spirit, and my habitation was the land of uprightness.

I then found the pearl of great price; having a full assurance that Jesus and all in him was mine. Thus my time was a time of love and God entered into a covenant with me and sealed me with that promise, "In hopes of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."¹ There I saw that I was in the arms of God's everlasting love. He had loved me from eternity, and would love me to eternity. I evidently saw that all my salvation was secured in Christ Jesus; that he was my living head, and that my all was treasured up in him. All this was the Lord's doing, but your ministry was the instrument. Glory be to God for ever and ever, Amen.

If I should ever hear anyone call you a devil, I would say, "Your words then were not the words of one who had a devil. Could a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

My dear brother, since then I have had returns of darkness in my soul, neither have I in many particulars been faithful to my God. Nevertheless he is so gracious as to be my God still. He remembers his holy covenant, the Shepherd of Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps, watches over my soul continually for good. I am fallen into the hands of a good Saviour.

At present, through grace, I have wonderful manifestations of his love and favour. He has multiplied to pardon. In me dwells no good thing. But I have a fountain ever open to me. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. The night before last, whether dreaming or between sleep and waking I know not, but I had a full sense of a promise of God upon my soul that he would cause his comfort to flow into me as a continual river of water. I am sure my soul thirsteth for God. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. And does not your heart thus far agree with mine? If so, then let us wait till God shall reveal all other things unto us, and make us entirely of one mind. At present let us go on simply declaring to others what the Lord hath done for our souls. Let us not stretch ourselves beyond our line. Let us long for a union in the Lord. Let everyone that is without be astonished at our patience with and mildness towards one another. Above all let us take heed of rash expressions. Let all our words flow out of that fullness of love which dwells in our hearts. Let us do nothing towards each other which may occasion repentance upon a deathbed. Let us admire the love of God in Christ towards poor lost sinners and preach this unweariedly and love one another unfeignedly. So doing, we shall do well.

My sincere love to the flock under your charge. I ask God and them pardon for not loving them so tenderly, nor praying for them so fervently as I ought. Accept this as a token of my love and respect to you. I wish all possible blessings to rest upon you, in time, and to all eternity. If you find freedom to write, I should be glad if you would favour me with a letter. The Lord be with your spirit, and bring us both safe to heaven for Christ's sake. So prays

Your unworthy brother and the chief of sinners,

Joseph Humphreys

P.S. I beseech you not to forget to send me the paper of my experience.

¹Titus 1:2.

Address: “To / The Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley / as the Foundery near / upper Moor-fields / London.”

Postmark: “5/DE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Humphreys Dec. 3. / 1741” and “Humphreys lively / loving acknowledging.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/89.²

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

1742

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[I feel great desires for your prayers. These prayers will not fail to g[–]. The heart will be b[earer] of the fruits. In spite of sin and stain[?] I thank God for you, and do every day for having known you, and for every blessing you have received God shall have my thanks. Though you know my poverty and misery, neither do you despise me. This must be God’s love in your heart, for of all over whom the Lord hath made you overseer, [there is] none so vile, none so unworthy, none so ungrateful as myself. Oh my friend, if you ever name anything of a single ounce of f[itness?] of me it fills me with utter ab[horrence]. I know the Lord will bless you for your mindful care of my soul, so shall you suffer no loss by your w[ork].]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 11a.¹

[1742–44]

[[I cannot express the tender gratitude I feel for your thoughts of me by the dying b[rother?].² I have no doubt of the comf[ort] of my death. I think I feel as sure of him as anything I now see or feel. It is your faith and t[eaching?] that afford this hope to my soul and the unbounded confidence I have in God. You will not think or imagine you owe me anything when but the other day I said God had so blessed me in your friendship and the light and heat communicated by you that I thought there was any moment but I could lay my life down at your feet. Alas it is not even h[alf?] less than it for which under God I am indebted to you. All ob[servations?] are so low, so poor, when this is named that nothing but love can console them. When you know me a little more, you will find I remember more of anything than you can think of.

[[Your brother I may [dp]. You will assume[?] much by him.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 11b.³

¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 127.

²Possibly Robert Jones, who died in June 1742.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 128.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[I can pray for nothing but your on[– and] f[–]. Your [gv–] by this time are over. God has relieved you from the burden. Do not once think about me. I feel always the same towards you, and believe ever shall. But it is sufficient I do so today, and I will trust God for tomorrow. I have had the greatest measure of faith I was ever yet possessed of. I have felt and known should I have asked God for the whole world I should have had it. I saw and knew all things are possible to him that believes. But alas I wanted not God's g[uidance?] nor w[arning of?] s[in?] but his love. I allowed that and might be g[iven?] to his loving correction[?]¹. The memory of my p[–] then is taken from me, but they are all noted in his book.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 13b.²

[1742–44]

[[The sinner will be b[–] and you soon de[liver]ed. There was not one hour when you were here last but I was assured God looked upon you with love. But this you will not believe. Depend both on faith in my prayer for you, and feel comfort which so poor a case can afford. I am sure God will never leave you nor forsake you; and that there is none he loves (as from [the] bottom of my soul I believe he does you) but he corrects. But the fire will not hurt you, I am well assured.

[[Believe me, with most sincere affection,
[[Your most faithful sister in the Lord Jesus Christ.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 13c.³

[1742–44]

[[I give God continual thanks on your behalf that he not only has by your go[ing?], but still continues by your l[etters] to add great comfort and instruction for my soul's growth in all st[rength and] w[isdom]. My constant consolation is that I shall ever remain an one of your inward l[abours of] l[ove] to our Saviour, who is alone able never to forget them, so it is fruit that will abound to your c[redit?]. I would feel less ashamed than I do for your p[atience?] with me.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 13d.⁴

¹This might instead be a word starting with “ch.”

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 132.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 133.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 133

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[Could I find a stronger ap[roval?] than that you have already given to me, I should have tried to have rev[i]led you in it. Depend, if you can, upon the prayers of one of your lambs not worthy yet to be called of your fold. She has yet to receive of you as God's shepherd much tender care, ere she can be of that fold you will soon have joy of over. I thank one I may for the p[urpose] of God must stand, and he heareth prayer, and mine always on your behalf. This he does as he best knows how much of your pastoral tuition is required by me, and means to probe you by his partial ac[ceptance] of my poor petition.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 14a.¹

[1742–44]

[[“The angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him and delivereth them.”¹ I am just rose from off my knees where I have been offering you up. The words above were yesterday given me for you. In the middle of reading the psalms you was uppermost in every one of them. A thing I never experienced before for any one. Fear not, the hour is coming in which you will rejoice evermore. I have had great reason to bless and praise God in all things since we parted.

[[The Lord, who I am sure is with you of a truth, teach you. He will soon send you comfort unspeakable. I have been enabled to pray long and earnestly for you. I have been wonderfully blest this day, for which I am much ashamed. O how is it possible God can love such a creature. It must be you and the rest of his faithful church who are heard on my behalf. What shall I say to you for all his compassion on my soul. Sure I am you cannot expect to hear what is due to you from me. No you will choose to live without it, rather than seem to wrong my heart.

[[I most earnestly commit you to the Lord and pray that he may give you every blessing temporal or eternal.

[[I know your letters are all much for my good. They keep me humble. Oh how does he deal with his dear child! Could you know how much he delights in the pious state of your soul. He sees you a short time hence when you will be all his. Be assured your recompense of this suffering is so great your present fac[ulties?] can have no idea of it.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 14b.²

¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 134.

¹Ps. 34:7 (BCP).

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 134–35.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[As I think there remains no in[centive] that you have not given me to employ my perpetual thanks and gratitude, these my minuter blessings ought be sufficient for my adoration and praise every morning. Pity and pray for me.

[[Your faithful but unworthy friend.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 14c.¹

[1742–44]

[[If you could have done more to engage or enlarge my esteem than you have done already, this l[ot] enough so remained[?] would claim all the gratitude my baseness has to give.

[[Oh my friend, you will mix your tears with mine.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 14d.²

[1742–44]

[[I long to tell you the loose stones of the tower are scattered upon the face of the earth,³ but the mercy seat he has placed with you. He will hide us all in Christ, and let all his glory pass by us when we are about to b[e]hold the fair blessings of the Lord.⁴ I find I am to receive all the blessings through these people which all ever unite to minister to me by the saints. I am so joined in s[weet] h[armony] with them that I am convinced they are to be my fellow citizens throughout eternity. And it adds no small con[solation] thinking you are to become the leader of so glorious a triumph, you and the children whom God hath given you. My faith never has failed me one moment for you, but it is more than I can express. For I should l[ong] to exchange with you did I not fear and know how sad an experience it would be for you. And this alone can make me cease to desire even this b[lessing]: but it does not h[inder] my praying my last end may be like thine. I rejoice in the hope of it.

[[You will no longer doubt of the nature of my faith for you, while it can be brought in his light to my own soul. A way you could never have seen. But though God so blesses you in h[ealth and] ch[arity] to so poor a worm as your weak friend is, it will p[robably] seem to me but in my power to stick more clearly to this point. The present restraint is from God, and I desire to wait his leisure.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 14e–15a.⁵

¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 135.

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 135.

³See Gen. 11:4.

⁴Cf. Exod. 33:18–23.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 136.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[Your desires in their season will be filled. Wait when the Lord of ch[astening? and] l[ove] shall be your portion.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 15b.¹

[1742–44]

[[Did you think the remains of an old nature, or rather the few dregs of it, would make me fear [discipline of the Lord?] to my soul? No, my friend, I hope God's grace will make me mourn with you, and entreat heaven on your behalf. You know not how ef[fective] my prayers may be for you ere long. [...²] The least hope you gathered in the world, the Lord may now call you to deliver up. May he direct you in all your ways and guide you in all his paths. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer.³ Keep your eye upon the cross and your course will be easy.

[[I desire no more than your prayers, not for life, but that I may [prove humble?] in the flames, and be saved from offending my God and my Lord.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 15c.⁴

[1742–44]

[[These trials I have longed much for, that I may know assuredly what spirit I am of. Neither faith nor love are of any value till they are tried, and no Christian will ever have both ef[fective]ly wrought in him but by first passing the fire.

[[The case you mention does not s[urprise] me. That dejection and niceness⁵ shows it is no more than the trials of all sincere minds. [The] cross is underneath all. And the stronger this spiritual temptation, the greater will be the s[ense of] w[oe] and revulsion. I would have him neither doubt nor fear but never depart from the means [of grace]. As to the trouble of his old tempers, these till destroyed will show themselves. My h[oughtiness?] grieved me more than I can express, for no afflictions are like these. In these cases we must pass through the purging fire.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 15d.⁶

¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 136

²CW leaves a gap in the line of shorthand here; likely indicating he has elided a section.

³See John 16:33.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 137.

⁵Used in sense of "squeamishness."

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 137.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[1742–44]

[[What the world calls difficulties I never consider but in this light, that they are utilized to enhance the glory of our conquest, or as trials of our opening faith.

[[Had you not long ago from so many repeated instances of your faith put it out of my power to return you thanks, I should endeavour it now.

[[I am t[orment]ed about the person whose case you so much lament, and did I not hope always from God I should fear his resolution of leaving the world of the living would be exacted. But this is no more in his power to do than to alter his present state of doubts for light. But tell him I say of this cause was he [i.e., Christ] born and for this end came he into the world;¹ and that imp[atience?] in [hg²] will last no longer than till our old nature is quite extirpated. I believed nothing will be found so effectual to remove this as simply to follow the command “Watch and pray, and etc.”³ He always leaves this way to escape.

[[My present wishes are that none but you and your brother should go into the highways to compel them to come in.⁴]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 15e.⁵

[1742–44]

[[It hurt me exceedingly you should ever suffer it to enter into your heart that you pretended anything you was not to me. I have long known your integrity and honour to be such as I have never met with in any but yourself. The Lord will increase it more, then more, and bless all you do.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 16b.⁶

¹See John 18:37.

²The shorthand is “hg” with a dot either indicating a vowel for a single word or that this is a phrase).

³See Matt. 26:41.

⁴See Matt. 22:9.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 138.

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 139.

From Isabella (Ward?) Johnson¹

[London]
1742

Beloved and Worthy Friend,

The time is now in which we experience the words of Jeremiah 8:17, for “Behold I will send serpents, cockatrices among you which will not be charmed and they shall bite you, saith the Lord.”

It is time to take up the prophet’s lamentation (Jeremiah 18) when I would comfort myself against sorrow. My heart is faint in me. “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? ...”² Surely the enemy hath said, Many of the people are gone into the good land but they are weak and dwell in unwalled cities, let us go out against them. Oh when will the prophecy of Balaam be fulfilled, “He seeth none iniquity in Jacob ...”³ Then shall the joyful shout of a king be with us. O woe is us, we are weaklings in the land. How shall we attain the great salvation?

Sunday, St. Peter’s church teachings.⁴ I will lead thee and bring thee into my mother’s house, and he caused me to drink spiced wine and new wine of the pomegranate. The earth heard the heavens and the heavens heard the earth, and the Lord heard both and the clouds dropped fatness.

Sunday following. My beloved is mine and his desire is towards me. I was carried on high on the wings of love and clearly saw this shining hieroglyphic: Δ .⁵ Item, rend not your clothes.

Sunday, St. Peter’s. I found him whom my soul loveth. I took hold of him and left him not, til I brought him into the chamber of her that conceived me, and there I did plead with him (hast thou not said) I love thee? Is not thy heart with my heart? Am I not thy Delilah, art thou not my Sampson? Rest with me. Show me thy secret. Surely thou can’st not mock me.

My Lord’s answer: I washed Peter’s feet.

O Holy Spirit, teach me my master’s word that I may do his will.

The answer: Wash the saints’ feet, for they are foul and spotted. Use diligence. Ask wisdom, that thou err not. Ask patience, that thou weary not. Obedience shall teach humility. Humility has power with God. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes oh daughter of Zion.

Christ proving my soul: Return oh Shullamite, return.

Entreat me not to leave thee. I cannot bear thy word. Thou breakest my heart. For whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, thy God my God. I will follow thee in death and in life. Wast thou not for my sake Mara? O be thou my Naomi. I will now go and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace.

Isabella Johnson

¹Copies of three letters of Isabella Johnson (two to CW and one to JW) are present among the Trevecka Letters collection at the National Library of Wales. The collection also has a letter dated the same year from Joseph Johnson of Aldgate, London, to Howell Harris. And JW mentions in his diary a visit at the home of sister Isabell Johnson on Feb. 1, 1741 (see *Works*, 19:499). However, neither Joseph nor Isabella appear in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). Drawing these threads together, it is most likely this is Isabella (Ward) Johnson, who married Joseph Johnson in 1724 in London. And it appears that they sided with Calvinist branch of Methodism in the 1741–42 split. Johnson’s spelling in her letters is fairly standard, but she uses no punctuation, quotation marks, or paragraph breaks. We will identify only the most obvious quotations among her many biblical allusions.

²Jer. 8:22.

³Num. 23:21.

⁴St. Peter-upon-Cornhill church, just south of Aldgate, London.

⁵She draws a triangle; symbol of the Trinity.

Written in upper left margin: Upon conversing with some Satan had deceived.

Endorsement: by Johnson, “Copy of a letter to Charles Wesley.”

Source: manuscript copy for her records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #506.⁶

⁶A partial transcription was published previously in *WHS* 13 (1921): 36–37.

From Isabella (Ward?) Johnson

[London]

1742

Sir,

I believe you may remember I have long complained under a sense of ignorance. But now I am condemned waiting at your door. In the interim I was speaking to one of the manifold gifts and sweet assurances there was in Christ. I was carried away from a suitable conduct through the pleasure I then conceived. A person turned to me, telling me my conversation was light-minded, though she did not hear my words. Her word was sheathed in my heart. With this wounded mind I appealed to our Lord. He told me she considered not how David danced before the ark. Still fear was in me, and I laid my fear before him. He told me I was as one owing an hundred pence, having received an hundred pounds to pay it with. An uneasy trembling still remained. I appealed again. He told me I was as a simple child, through fullness of affection wantoned in its father's presence. Oh the amazing love! The Creator healeth what the creature woundeth.

Still I discerned all was not right. This was not wise to salvation, but foolish in salvation. In this pensive mournful spirit I went out after the Lord. (Sunday morning¹) I was covered with his presence. I said, Surely the Lord is near. I immediately discovered him passing before me, covered with this inscription, "My name is wisdom."

And the word to my heart was, Who art thou that comest weeping after me, and what is thy name?

Here I experienced my wretchedness by nature. I answered, My name is foolishness.

How answerest thou to that name?

Because of foolishness I believe not in thee. Because of foolishness I follow thee not. Because of foolishness I discern thee not. My nature is foolish, my ways are foolish.

The witness came: The fool hath no hope.

Whilst wisdom proclaimed her name in my sight, I felt all that loss and disappointment could furnish me with. I had no sameness, miserable as I was. I determined to perish in his presence, from whom I could not fly. I began to join the church [in prayer], "Therefore with angels and archangels we praise thee, ..." But soon [I] was interrupted – There is no fools in heaven. I was indeed naked. I was indeed lost. But a word came to me, Isaiah 35:8, "He shall be with them and walk in the way and fools shall not err." Then covering my face I drew near to the table and ventured on the cup of salvation.

I am unable to speak of the different agonies of mind the following week, and the parable of the Lord was brought to my mind: there was five wise and five foolish virgins; they was all virgins washed in the blood of the Lamb, set out for salvation, but in as much as they was found foolish they perished. O the trembling witness to my condition. Here I want instruction and distractedly cry out, What must I do? A little word, but of great importance.

Sunday morning my heart was melted. I said, Surely the Lord is near. But oh he brought me forth a monster of an unknown fire. I was as the great leviathan in the great sea, and thick darkness was my swaddling bands. And the Lord was with me and he said, "I took upon me this nature. I broke these bonds of death and made a free passage to eternal life." O help me to ask wisdom, that I perish not in this dungeon of the flesh, that I might walk after him in the way and follow the Lord withersoever he goeth. I can discern his footsteps, but cannot obtain his likeness. I would resemble him. As one drop does the ocean, I would grant him all his greatness. I would drop into that ocean and be lost forever.

Isabella Johnson

Upon Hearing the Organ

¹Written in the left margin.

My God, shall wood and air resound thy praise
While I stand silent?

Make me an instrument of praise
And Jesus only touch the keys.

Endorsement: by Johnson, “Copy of My Last to Charles Wesley.”

Source: manuscript copy for her records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #508.²

²A partial transcription was published previously in *WHS* 13 (1921): 37–38.

From Martha Jones

[London]
[c. January 1742¹]

Reverend Sir,

Let it not seem impertinent that I trouble you with these lines, for I am greatly troubled, grieved at your grief and sorrowful for the cause. But oh dear sir, do not cast us off, though we be a backsliding people. I know God hath brought you unto us now for good, and he hath given a token, for there are many whom you have made to sorrow after a godly sort, which I trust will work repentance unto salvation. Our dear Lord will not leave nor forsake us, but hath begun to heal our backslidings and doth love us freely. And will ye still continue to chide and to speak such piercing words, as if you would give us up and have no more to do with us. Mean ye quite to break our hearts? Indeed we deserve to be rejected by the Lord and his ministers. But all glory be to him who hath not dealt with us after our sins, neither rewarded us according to our iniquities. Now I know you copy after your great Master; therefore bear with us a little longer, till we shall by the grace of our Lord Jesus bring forth better fruit, and cause you to rejoice over us more than now you grieve. I have a good hope that we shall yet be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. Dear sir, do not condemn all for a few, for the greater part of us desire to be obedient to you in all things, knowing that ye are set over us in and by the Lord. And our love is not waxed cold, but you are dear unto us as our own lives for your work's sake. But the people fear you do not love us. Dear sir, you never loved us for our own sake but for the Lord's. For the Lord's sake then love us still, though we be unworthy. And do not think of leaving us till our Lord calls you, and then—though ye be dear unto us—we shall freely resign.

Our blessed Lord hath always aforetime sent you to us in the blessing of the gospel of peace. Now he hath brought you to search our wounds and, under him, to bind them up. For this end hath your Master made you a son of thunder and of consolation. Stay then, to be as he hath made you, a kind comforter to the mourning soul. For God doth by your mouth succour the tempted. Oh how great is the love of Jesus unto us, who doth by these means and ways relieve distressed souls! Who can express his love? Surely none! We can only wonder, and silently adore.

How did our dear Lord show forth his power among us on Sunday night! How graciously did he declare he had a favour unto his people! How did our Lord in his Spirit descend [and] pass by. And I believe in every soul there proclaimed “The Lord, the Lord, God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin.” O may we all follow the leading of that blessed Spirit and never more cause him to depart, till he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. Amen.

Dear sir, out of the abundance of grief and love I had in my heart I made bold to write. If I have done amiss herein, I hope you will believe it done through ignorance only, and pardon

Your weakest sister in Christ,

Martha Jones

Endorsement: by CW, “Martha Joan / conjuring me not to / leave them.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/94.²

¹This letter reflects CW's sorrowful night in London on Nov. 18, 1741; cf. Sam Webb to CW, (Nov. 20), and Henry Thornton to CW (Nov. 26). It fits best before CW left London in late Jan. 1742.

²For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk>.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[Bristol]
[c. January 25¹] 1742

Some of the expressions of Francis Vigor was these, or words to this effect, a little before his departure. His prayer first:

Lord, fit and prepare me for thy eternal Kingdom. Lord have mercy on me and grant I may never go into the world again, except I live agreeable to thy gospel. O Lord Jesus, thou wast the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world, thou hangest on the tree for all mankind. O Lord, grant that thy death and sufferings may not prove ineffectual unto me.

“I love,” said he, “the whole world. If ever I lives to get up again, I hope we shall strengthen one another in the work of the Lord.”

The day before his departure he said, “I desire nothing but to be with God in glory. I thank thee, oh God, for the light thou has given me. Once I was sorely distressed, but now it is all peace and joy in the Lord.” These and many more expressions he uttered to the same purpose. He was never heard to speak a fretful word, no not in the greatest of his pain, but was patient and resigned to the will of God from the very beginning of his illness to the very last moments. He was asked if he knew he should go to God. He answered he was sure if he died that he should. “O,” says he, “there is none like unto the God of justification. O for a thousand tongue to speak my dear redeemer’s praise.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Frank Vigor’s last / words 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/132.²

¹Francis Vigor was buried at St. Mary le Port, Bristol on Jan. 19, 1741/2. This was the son of Francis and Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor, who was born May 5, 1724.

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

From Eliza Mann¹

[London]
January 26, 1742

Dear Sir,

I had a great desire to write to you that you might remember me when you go in and out before the Lord. I earnestly desire your prayers and the prayers of those that are with you. If we pray for one another I am sure we shall love one another and the absent in body we shall be present in spirit.

O how sweet it is to hang upon Christ continually, to depend on him alone for strength and deliverance. O trust you in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength—strength to deliver from the power of Satan and from our inbred enemies. The Lord has undertaken our case, he shall fight for us. He shall destroy all our enemies and cause their memory to perish. Who is so great a god as our God. O praise you the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all his praise? O Lord, do thou give me a heart to praise thy name and to tell of all thy wonderous works. Fill me with thy love and out of the abundance of my heart let my mouth speak. I cannot express the love of Christ to my soul. He gives me sweet peace through his blood; and at the same time that my soul is humbled in the dust by a sense of my own vileness, his love comforts my soul and banishes all fear from me.

I sometimes find myself beset with many evil thoughts. But I know my God will come with a recompense and destroy all my enemies and make me pure of heart, and I shall see God and live. I groan to be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.² God has given me a taste of that liberty and I doubt not but he will give me wholly to experience it all. My soul seems lost in God. I do not remember that I felt one evil motion, but all was love and praise and every breath was prayer. I know if God could keep me so for hours, he can for years. I cannot doubt of this great salvation, since it is so clearly spoken in the Old and New Testament. The light shineth and if men did not love darkness rather than light, they must perceive it. But blessed be that God who has shown us the light and bid us walk in it. May we never provoke him to withdraw it. May we walk in the light as God is in the light and feel the blood of Jesus Christ cleansing us from all sins.

I feel sometimes such an awful sense of the majesty of God that my flesh trembleth and I dare not look up.

I loathe myself, when God I see
And into nothing fall,
Content, if thou exalted be,
And Christ be all in all.³

Oh that I lived no longer, but Christ lived in me. This is my one desire and may I never rest till it is accomplished. God often calls me to prayer. He bids me ask and I shall receive. In confidence of this promise I ask, though I find the enemies would fain put me off and my own evil heart would find many excuses. But this makes me but the more earnest since I find all that is evil in me is against it and I find it is exceeding good for my soul to pray.

It is in prayer God has communicated most of his blessings to me. It is in prayer mostly that [I]

¹Elizabeth Mann (c. 1713–51) appears as a member and leader of bands for single women in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). In Feb. 1750 she was married to Dr. John Jones, currently at Kingswood School, with JW officiating. She died the following year.

²See Rom. 8:23.

³CW, “After a Relapse Into Sin,” v. 12, *HSP* (1740), 156.

am convinced of any evil. It was in private prayer I was first sprinkled with the blood of the covenant. And after I had long groaned under the bondage of corruption and walked on in thick darkness; when I felt my inward parts were very wickedness and every thought of my heart only evil continually and found every moment ready to sink into hell; God again manifested his love to me in prayer. Nor have I less need of it now. For I know I am not safe while I am on this side of Jordan, but may still return to the flesh pots of Egypt. But the grace of God is sufficient for me. God will not let me rest or depend on what I have received. When I think I have grace for the next hour it seems entirely withdrawn, and by this I am learn[ing] to depend on Christ alone. And I never seemed so helpless in my life as I do now. I feel I can do nothing without Christ, but through him I shall soon do all things. I do not always find a great deal of joy but much sweetness in my soul, and often a deep but loving mourning in my heart that melts me into tears and humbles my soul exceedingly. I find such strong hungerings and thirsting after perfect righteousness, and longing after God, that my soul seems as though it would burst the bands of flesh and fly to him it so loveth.

I love him because he first loved me and still his banner over me is love. Oh who can tell the love of Jesus? O draw me Saviour and I will run after thee. Thy love is more precious than thousands of gold and silver [pieces]. I long to love thee with all my heart. Kindle this flame in me and let it never be quenched. Seal me by thy Spirit unto the day of redemption and fill me with all the fullness of God. Amen. May the God of peace be with you, Amen.

I should be glad, sir, if when you had opportunity, you would favour me with a few lines. By this I should know that you loved in the bowels of Christ Jesus

Your unworthy sister,

Eliza Mann

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

Postmark: "26/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "Eliza Mann – full of love / Jan. 1742."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/107.⁴

⁴For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[c. February 1, 1742]

The enclosed I beg my good friend will enquire about for me. I have sent by Ned(?) sufficient to release him if the case is as represented. But should it not serve that end of setting him free, the half (or as you shall think best) may be given for present relief, and in what proportions will be best for the poor creature. You will, I know, want to hear of your charge you left me.¹ He said last night he had much inward peace and I hope neither (?²) or quiet. I could wish before you trust him too far you may be well acquainted with the utmost measure of his capacity. He holds (as in the society last night he declared³) an error a most valuable friend of mine thought belonged once to me. I always thought it bad, but it has now a most formidable appearance indeed. Oh may the Lord make you to build him up and clearly show you how and on what foundation you can raise it upon.

I beg you to continue your prayers for me. You know me so well that I need not tell you how much I want them, and how poor and miserable a creature I am. Could you see the state of my soul, I know you would mourn with me. Who can express the loving kindness of the Lord, or show forth all his praise? His patience with me is amazing, that neither do or speak one thing to his glory. I could almost die at the very thought of this sad reflection. I entreat your prayers. They avail much. To the God of all love I commend you. I know he will repay you a thousand fold on my behalf. And though I fall, yet shall you ever give glory to him, for a never fading crown of glory will you wear to all eternity. O I am faint and weary in my mind for that time in which I shall not offend the Lord, my beloved. May this time be hastened, and that you may soon, very soon, receive the pledge of your inheritance. And that the Lord Jesus may be your guide unto death and then may you be received into his everlasting arms, which is the frequent prayer and sure hope of

Your most unworthy but sincere friend.⁴

Mr. [Charles] Graves has read prayers for Mr. Ch.⁵ and has made dreadful blunders. I am glad I was not at church. Don't let him speak. Wait the Lord's time till utterance is given him.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/83.

¹In the late 1730s CW helped draw Charles Caspar Graves (1716–87) in the Oxford Methodists. But Graves was forced to renounce them formally when he was ordained deacon in Dec. 1740. CW had reconnected with Graves, was drawing him back into the Methodist fold, and would soon encourage him to become another ordained travelling preacher (see JW, *Journal*, Aug. 20, 1742, *Works*, 19:292–94). When CW left Bristol for London in Jan. 1742, he entrusted Graves's reintegration into the Methodist work to LH, who had recently arrived in Bath for her health.

²A word has been written over and obscured.

³JW had restarted the Methodist society in Bath on Dec. 15, 1741; see *Journal*, *Works*, 19:241.

⁴An abridged shorthand copy of this second paragraph and closing is in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 20e–21a. An expansion of the shorthand copy was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 148–49.

⁵Likely Rev. Walter Chapman (1711–91), another former Oxford Methodist, who was currently Master of St. John's Hospital in Bath.

From William Dallaway¹

Oxford
February 2, 1741[2]

Dear Sir,

I designed to have written to you Saturday but was prevented. I am now on a journey which will detain me from home near a month. I'm pursuing my lawful calling—in which God, I hope, will preserve me, that I stumble not to destruction. Forever blessed be the Holy Spirit that instituted you an instrument to my salvation. Forever be adored that gracious Saviour who stretched forth his hand, after a few hours seeking, to raise me up and bring me to the knowledge of his divine truths. May his mighty arm still hold me, may his heavenly Spirit still guide me, that I may persevere unto the end. And that which he has begun in grace may he perpetuate in everlasting glory.

Your faith was strong, may heaven increase it. May he long preserve you in this world to administer the gospel truths unto the lost house of Israel. May your virtues still flourish and abound in the souls of all those who are happy in your ministry. And may the eternal power spread abroad to all people, that light which shineth in darkness.

No sooner had I felt the divine influence in my soul but the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and I went home in that peace of mind which passeth all understanding. My Saviour manifested himself within me. All was calmness. Freed from fear or guilt, the sting of death is removed, for my Saviour hath redeemed me and I'm assured through his blood he will sanctify me and cleanse my soul from the bondage of corruption before I go hence; for his enlightening Spirit hath greatly enlarged me and taught me the mysterious truths of his gospel. I have felt his gentle breathings of instruction, and he hath showed me the wonder of his almighty love. O my Saviour, do thou still teach me, that I err not in the ways of righteousness.

I expect much tribulation in the flesh. Satan has begun in my own family and is greatly enraged against me. He attacks me in the tenderest part and like a roaring lion seeketh to devour me. But God is my strength and my redeemer. I have need of the whole armour of Christ to support me under his cross. I desire therefore your prayers, and [1]) that God will give me a spiritual brother to assist me in my own house, for I fear others will be denied me; and [2]) that I may still be supported to rejoice (as I do now) under the cross which God for my good hath appointed me to bear.

Remember me to dear Mrs. Norman² and Miss _____,³ for my soul loveth them. I desire their prayers. They have mine that God may preserve them. I hope and trust that God will make me an instrument to bring some to Christ, and doubt not but the rage the devil is levelling at me will awaken some to truth, and that his infernal envy will be undermined by the all-blessed Spirit of eternal grace.

If you write to me directed as under it will be comfort to my soul, and I hope your time will permit it as it may strengthen your faithful brother (though but a child in Christ) and in the flesh,

Your assured friend and servant,

W[illia]m Dallaway

Direct to me a clothier to be left till called for at the Post Office in Norwich. I shall be there about the 10th or 11th ins[tant] and not stay longer than 12th.

¹William Dallaway (1721–76) was the eldest son of John Dallaway of Brimscombe, a wealthy woolen merchant. William partnered with his father and was elected High Sheriff of Gloucester in 1766.

²Mary (Oxford) Norman (1695–1779) was the wife of John Norman (d. 1744). They lived on St. Philip's Plain, Bristol, and he owned the brickyard on which both JW and CW preached.

³Dallaway gives only this line.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Charles Westly / in / Bristol

Postmark: “Oxford.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Delaway / Feb. 1742” and “W. Delaway / Feb. 2, 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/50.⁴

⁴For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[en route to Donington Park]
[[February]] 1742 [c. February 8]

[[I have not one doubt but our prayers are heard for you. I am sure God guards you as the apple of his eye.¹ I wish I were but the thin th[–] part bit as precious to him. Though this I am quite sure of, I would not receive one instance of his love that must be taken from you. I am in great h[eaviness] through manifold temptations. Oh how grievous is it to think but one moment of anything beside the love of our dear Redeemer! How much better would it be to be d[issolve]d and to be with him. My heart is sorrowful even unto death. But this is my cross, which I will take up and fully own till b[lessedness] I attain.

[[I think I every moment drink the deadly wine which does not hurt me. We all find how painful the hours are in which we must not talk of the great love of our Master. Of me you can have no adv[antage]. I long and pray every moment for the time when the whole world shall be converted unto him. My heart longed after him even in a dry place where no water is. Satan tells me “Well now you will go to sleep”; but I call mightily upon the Lord, and am kept.

[[O faint not. God has great favour for you. For your sake I long that God would make me an instrument to strengthen your hands. But I believe he will take even this from me. I hate and abhor myself as in dust and ashes.² I am a compound of all evil. The weak machine would sink into nothing with the thoughts of its own vileness did not the love of Christ now and then draw a veil over it.

[[The God of all grace be with you always.

[[I find it hard to leave off when I am writing to you on things of God. My soul is drawn out to you always. We sang the parting hymn after we left you.³ We pray constantly for you, your brother, etc., [that you] may com[fortably] grow in grace. The Lord increase you more and more till he calls you hence, full of the fruit of your labour, to receive you to his highest mansion in glory, there to dwell with him forever and ever.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 9b–10a.⁴

¹See Ps. 17:8.

²See Job 42:6.

³LH’s group (including the Cowper sisters) had been with CW and JW in Kingswood on Feb. 7, 1742. See the hymn “Upon Parting with His Friends,” in *HSP* (1740), 49–54.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 125–26.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[[Lichfield]]
[[February]] 12, 1741/2

[[We are just come in Lichfield tired after walking and strolling over a most dreary common in the dark, which we once thought must have been our habitation all night. But out of this the Lord hath delivered. We gave him praise, and most praise in the day of our distress, and went on our way rejoicing. How little are all outward difficulties to a Christian. I have no idea of any situation in which my heart could not give glory to God. He that trusts in the Lord can lack nothing. May you ever experience this.

[[We reached Gloucester the second day.¹ Upon our coming into the town, Mr. [George] Whitefield met us, and told me he was to preach seven miles from that place, but would wait on me at 8:00 that evening. Accordingly he did and held forth in conversation till 11:00. Lady Betty² has engaged to write the heads down and send it you. He had a great mind to have me an elect sister; but I told him I was now so much happier than him, and expected so much more than he had any idea of, that I should lose much by the exchange. He talked well, and had collected the very flowers of all writers on that head to convince me. But alas he did not know what a mule he had to deal with. I feared [for] my companions, but I praise God that in the morning I found his conversation had had a very extraordinary affect upon us all, and most effectively settled both me and them in the most certain persuasion of un[r]ighteousness? I had ever experienced. He did not fail to hear of his unfaithfulness. He showed much of the s[corn?] of them all, only concealed with more art. I cannot [believe] God thinks to use him long; he seems alone in the world, and I told him I believed the final overthrow of his hour was near. He could ill bear it.

[[I can never think of Sunday last without giving praise and glory to God.³ Indeed it was one of the happiest days of my life. But this and all other pleasures I resign again into his hands who gave them. And desire nothing but that his holy will may be done in all things. The only h[appiness] of a creature consist[s] in his obedience, and where that is wanting love must be wanting; and just so defective as our love, in the same degree must be our h[appiness], for it is this only principle can keep the soul in peace.

[[We have all experienced your prayers and we hope you have ours. I have not a doubt any moment but you will be determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. Seek no pleasure in anything but God. Despise all earthly things. Let no c[-] find admittance into your heart for one moment. Watch, and Christ will keep all out. Oh may you be more than conqueror through him that loves you. May you spend many days to his glory here and receive a never-fading crown when your earthly [4] can last no longer.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 10b.⁵

¹LH's group was travelling from Bath to her estate at Castle Donington. They apparently left Kingswood/Bristol on Feb. 8; so reached Gloucester on Feb. 9.

²LH's daughter, Elizabeth Frances Hastings (1731–1808).

³There had been a gathering of Wesley supporters from Bath, Bristol, and Wales at Kingswood on Sunday, Feb. 7, 1742; see JW, *Journal (Works)*, 19:250).

⁴CW leaves an open space between these words; likely he could not decipher LH's hand.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 126–27.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
February 24, 1742

I cannot forebear continually giving you the tribute of a grateful heart. We are comforted by your letters. The Lord will, I doubt not, increase you more and more. You are [a] chosen vessel to the Lord, trust his love. Oh, it is able to do all things! Depend on our warm prayers for your assistance on the 4th of April.¹ He who can do all things will, I doubt not, but give you a right and knowing zeal in his cause. He will blend the wisdom of serpents with the innocency of the dove. Let not your hands hang down, my dear friend. Think upon what you are set for the defence of the gospel. Trample on man and devils. The hour is hastening when it will be seen how faithful a Master we serve. Your arm shall even break the bow of Sheol. Believe, believe! All is possible to him that believeth.

This day has been chiefly employed in administering comfort to a man of fortune in this neighbourhood. He has sat by me [for] hours. His darkness is so great it is almost despair—the reflection of a life filled with the blackest enormities. He has present thoughts of coming to live by you (from what I have said) at the Foundery. Your friends all here think of you, speak of you, and esteem you highly. And that you may long shine here as [a] pattern to all that believe, and share everlastingly in the highest joys of the Blessed, is the earnest and fervent prayer of

Your *most, most* unworthy friend,

S. H.

Don't wonder if you can't read this, for I think it is past my skill. But I am hurried. Who was the author from whom that small tract was taken, *The Nature and Design of Christianity*?² Affectionate love from your two daughters.³ Tell the babe we love him and hope soon to see him a pillar indeed.⁴ We abound in pharisees. Do scold me when you write next for this miserable scrawl.

Endorsement: by CW, “Feb. 24. 1742 / [[Lady Huntingdon]].”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/2.⁵ See also CW's shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 27b.⁶

¹When CW would preach a formal sermon at Oxford University; CW, *A Sermon Preached on Sunday, April 4, 1742, before the University of Oxford* (London: Strahan, 1742).

²JW published this tract in 1740 extracted from William Law's *Practical Treatise Upon Christian Perfection* (London: Innys, 1726).

³Anne and Frances Cowper.

⁴I.e., Charles Casper Graves.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription (as if to JW) in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 50.

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 160–61.

From Frances (“Fanny”) Cowper

Donington Park
March 8, 1741[2]

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to hear you have not received the letter I wrote. I know your goodness would excuse my nonsense. But that cannot be expected from strangers. If there had been anything in it that could have been of any advantage to those who have it, I should have rejoiced. You don't know how much I am obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me, when you must have thought me so ungrateful, disobedient, and idle as not to write to one of my best friends—for such I must always call you, and spiritual guide. The Lord hath inclined your heart unto me and I humbly hope he will continue this blessing to me, unworthy of all. We, all of us, join in thanks to you for the sweet hymns you have sent,¹ which we have sung every day since we have had them and rejoiced over them, waiting the second coming of the Lord when we shall be released from sin—our busy enemy, who is always haunting us. I can easily hope for this great gift, knowing that nothing is impossible with God, and that he can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. I know in me dwelleth no good thing, and that my heart is deceitful above all things. I cannot find out its depth of iniquity.

Dear Lady Huntingdon continues her labour of love to my sister and I, by reading and explaining the Holy Word of God, singing hymns and praying with us, not missing any opportunity, at which times we all of us bear you on our hearts. I believe we are often joined in spirit though absent in body. I will bless the Lord of heaven, of his great goodness to me and for causing you to pray for me, a poor worm, and unworthy all those blessings I profess.

I beg, dear sir, you will continue your good prayers for me. For the prayers of the faithful pierce the sky and cannot return unanswered. I will not try your patience any longer. I now commit you to [the] care and protection of our dear Lord, and Saviour.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate but weakest daughter in the Lord,

F[anny] C[owper]

My sister [Anne] desires her affectionate love to you.
We desire you would remember us to Mr. [Charles] G[raves].

Endorsement: by CW, “F. Cowper / Mar 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/43.²

¹The description of topic that follows would fit a set of hymns titled “Waiting for the Promise” that had appeared in late 1741 in *HSP* (1742)237–42. But more likely CW was sending them new manuscript hymns, like those in a set of “Hymns for Those who Wait for Full Redemption,” later published in *HSP* (1749), 2:147–95.

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

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[[March 1742]] [c. Mar. 13]

[[Did not p[ersecution] bring great experience with it, I should much lament your p[resent] situation.¹ Your trial of faith will end gloriously for your soul's brighter luster in a day which will soon bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest all the counsels of the unfaithful.² Let nothing rob you, my friend, of this hope. Look forward with joy. Happy you, whose eye is single! Fear not, your body will soon be full of light.³ Look on God's promises. Alert your[?] enemies the way of the wicked shall not prosper. Leave off wrath, and let go displeasure.⁴ Fret not thyself about the ungodly.⁵ They are ignorant of God's righteousness, which they would have like unto theirs. They can see their sin and be easy with it; nay, happier than without it. And they think this reason good enough to believe he will be as well pleased with them with it as without it. Ignorant indeed are they of this party who can thus think of him. I look on them as the flourishing bay-tree, whose place I shall soon seek and find it no more.⁶ Want of charity does not draw this from me, but God's word obliges me to declare it; for woe to the docile[?] in heart and tongue! I am sure nothing but sympathy and godly sincerity can ever work with God long. No unclean thing can enter into his presence; neither will he suffer his faithful to be grieved with their devices. Faith and love we know will land us safe in our heavenly journey; and so mighty in operation that they will carry us through all the tempests of sin and Satan. I love all that is good in them, and pray they may see more, that they may be of use to me. It is good to know [the] m[eaning] of C[hristian] h[umility]. And how I tremble when I say this—so poor, so weak, so vile as I am; how do I differ from them?

[[I am weary by reason of my sin. Deliverance from this and I ask no more. I wait patiently till the Lord shall incline his ear unto me.⁷ But alas it may be far off. I know that I have not one Christian temper which would bear to be examined for a moment; and tried we must be, as if some strange thing happened unto us. Thus you see what a friend you have to trust. Alas, my friendship is not worth your once thinking of. It is the effect of a selfish pleasure through a real good done to myself. Just as the publicans [i.e., sinners] disapproved by our Lord, what thanks have you to love those who are friends to you in all things.⁸ Heathenish friendship indeed!

[[I hope the time will come when the clean heart shall produce the fruits of true holy friendship, as a real and vital principle, unalterable, incommunicable; and till then disclaim it as unworthy m[ilk] of k[indness] to accept of. You have many jewels added to your crown on my account. And if this be for one poor soul so unthankful to God and you, how vast (I must rejoice to think of it for you) will be the treasures belonging to you for those who have fought the good fight and finished their course with joy. You will enter into the joy of our Lord and your works shall follow you, and great they are. To the Lord I give the glory, and will while he gives me either an heart or thought to praise him. I must do it on your

¹CW was in the middle of an extended stay in Bristol, where he was dealing with some turmoil; see the set of shorthand notes from this period in CW, *Journal Letters*, 121–24.

²See 1 Cor. 4:5.

³See Matt. 6:22.

⁴See Ps. 37:8 (BCP).

⁵See Ps. 37:1 (BCP).

⁶See Ps. 37:35–36.

⁷See Ps. 116:2.

⁸Luke 6:32.

behalf. May the Almighty preserve your heart and eye single to his glory alone. And out of your weakness will he ordain strength.

[[Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he exert himself day and night.⁹ You do not see this b[lessing] for yourself; nevertheless God is faithful—it belongs to you with a thousand more.

[[Our prayers are constant and fervent for you. I have heard by one the hymn for [bl-?]¹⁰] is never [ll-?] at the Foundery.¹¹ ...¹²

[[I do not ask your prayers, for I am sure I know your heart. Miss Cowpers beg to be commended in love.¹³ I have a long letter to send to that beloved friend of mine, your brother.¹⁴ Tonight I had the first sheets of his journal to see, as they are to be printed and nothing shall pass which I think will not do justice to that holy man's grace, wisdom, and judgment.

[[May the Lord keep and preserve you. Stand in him alone, and sure I am you will be soon delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.¹⁵ I have uncommon faith for you even this very moment.

[[Farewell.

[[Your most unworthy friend in the Lord.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 1b–2a.¹⁶

⁹See Ps. 1:2.

¹⁰The shorthand could also be “bf–,” “rl–,” or “rf–.” While it does not seem to fit the shorthand, this may be referring to CW's hymn “The Whole Armour of God,” published as a broadsheet in Feb. 1742.

¹¹JW was in Wales most of Mar. 1742, returning to London only at the end of the month.

¹²CW gives four dashes, almost certainly indicating some material is elided.

¹³Anne and her sister Frances.

¹⁴The letter she sent to JW on Mar. 15, 1742.

¹⁵See Rom. 8:23.

¹⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 108–11.

From Susannah Designe¹

Bristol
March 18, 1741/2

Dear and Reverend Sir,

According to the power the Lord shall give me I will relate his gracious dealings with me since I saw you. Unworthy as I am, he daily poureth blessings upon me. Great shame and confusion of face doth often cover me at the sight of my own vileness. I see it without fear and grieve without pain. I almost hourly feel the power of God and a deep sense of my Saviour's love.

But yet my heart wanders from him. I want to serve him with a holy worship and in every thought obey him. I can say, "Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest I desire to love thee."² I find my hatred to sin increase and the least stirrings thereof is grievous to me. But the grace of God is sufficient for me. I hunger and thirst after Jesus; and although I often feed on the manna of his divine love, my soul is not satisfied therewith, for I am not risen up after his likeness. I want to drink out of that fountain till I am filled with all the fullness of God. I find an unspeakable peace, yet a restless striving attended with a pleasing pain. My heart flows with love and pants and reaches after God, but I am not fully happy in him. But I doubt not but I shall [be].

O my blessed Jesus make me holy, then shall I be happy in thee. Fulfill these longing desires of my soul and let me know the depths of thy sanctifying love. O Lord, my time, my life, my all is in thy hand. Do with me what thou wilt, only take my heart unto [thy]self and let all I am be lost in thee.

I truly experience I want the blood of Christ every moment applied to my unrenewed soul. I feel I hang upon him for I am weak and helpless. Oh who is strong but those that are renewed in the image of God. Yet it is strength to see my weakness, for then I trust in Christ alone. Much private prayer is profitable for my soul. At some times it brings my soul so near to God till I can pour tears of love and contrition into my Saviour's bosom. Then I am tempted to think, "Now I am sincere, now I am in earnest." These thoughts are dreadful to me for some moments, till I throw myself upon my dear Jesus and am helped. Oh what can stand before that name called upon in faith, and what shall become of all my corruptions when the Lord shall come with power to take vengeance on his enemies that would not have him to reign over them. Surely the time is coming when I shall see them again no more forever. Oh that I may not rest on this side of Jordan, or ever think I am anything but a poor hopeless sinner waiting at the feet of Jesus, till his cleansing blood hath washed my soul from all sin. I have a hope full of immortality. I seem as sure as if I had already received it. I listen for the sound of his feet and hear a voice saying, "Surely I come quickly."³ Even so Lord Jesus, come when thou wilt; but oh my Jesus come.

I have lately received another letter from my dear sister, Sarah Perrin.⁴ It is a great quickening to me. She grows in grace daily. I find my love increase to her and I am drawn to prayer for her. We are greatly united in spirit and seem as one soul. I have great hope the Lord will show her what is his will in all things, that she may be more closely joined to us and become a burning and shining light. She is not apprehensive of my writing to you; but I can answer in her stead, her love flows freely towards you and her prayers are not slackened for you. The more desirous we are to love God, the more we love and pray for his ministers. I find a greater hunger after the word than ever I did, and an increase of love to you and

¹Susannah Designe (1712–79; maiden name unknown) of French heritage, was born near the Ely, Cambridgeshire. After marriage, she moved to Bristol about 1733 with her husband James (d. 1769) and opened a private school in their home. She was drawn into the Methodist revival in 1738–39, becoming a devout member and band-leader in the society. See below her spiritual biography Apr. 8, 1742.

²Cf. John 21:17.

³Rev. 22:20.

⁴Perrin was currently staying with her sister Mary in Leominster.

your dear brother and all the children of God. Oh that earthly affection may find no place in me, but that as I draw nearer and nearer the fountain I may drink deeper of the stream, even of that Spirit the Lord has given you a double portion of. May he increase in a hundredfold.

The rest of our friends in Stokes Croft pay their best respects to you. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor bears her trial with great patience. It is the Lord's doing. I hope the work of God goeth on in her soul. I believe the Lord took him.⁵ Her heart was set upon to make room for himself and he will be more to her than ten sons. Oh the abundant love of God to take one into the storehouse of the dead to drive the rest to Christ and make them eager to hasten after. When this soul was received into the outward church by holy baptism, it was unknown to me before I came. The power of the Lord met me the moment I entered into the place and that scripture came to me, "Cast thy bread upon the water and after many days thou shalt find it."⁶ And looking up to the Lord [I] said, "What thanks shall I render unto [thee], O God, for all thy mercies." And while I was yet speaking the Lord showed me how to thank him by asking for all the rest. Oh what a gracious God have we to serve. [He] desires no other return for all his numberless mercies but to ask for more. Which way shall I continue faithful but to look every moment for further supplies of grace to improve that already given.

Dear sir, I shall be glad to see [you] when it is our Lord's will to send you unto us in the fullness of the gospel of peace. I find greater ties both of love and duty to your brother and you than my natural parents after the flesh. Oh that I may always be obedient as unto the Lord, esteeming you very highly for your work's sake, giving all the glory to God, praying for you with all supplication.

Your unworthy sister,

Susannah Designe

Remind [i.e., remember] me in your prayers.

Sister[s] Robertson,⁷ Davis, and Lucretia Smith⁸ give their duty to you; likewise Betty at the New Room.⁹ S[arah] P[er]r[i]n writes she thinks to be at Bristol the latter end of next month.

Endorsement: by CW, "Mar. 18 1742 / S. Design" and "S. Design / Mar. 1742."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/51.¹⁰

⁵Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor's son Francis, who had died in Jan. 1742.

⁶Eccles. 11:1.

⁷Sister Robertson of Bristol is mentioned in JW, *Diary*, Dec. 26, 1740, *Works*, 19:445; by CW, *MS Journal*, July 24, 1748; and (on her death) in a letter of CW to LH, June 11, 1755.

⁸Lucretia ("Chryssy") Smith, a Quaker, was converted by JW and baptized in Apr. 1738; see JW, *Journal* (Apr. 18, 1739), *Works*, 19:49–50.

⁹Likely Betty Brown; see her spiritual account of Apr. 1742 below.

¹⁰A transcription was published in Morgan, "Testimonials," 83–85. For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>.

From Anne Cowper

Donington Park
March 27, 1742

I was much overjoyed and agreeable surprised at the receipt of yours, as I always am when I hear from my dear father in Christ, knowing myself altogether unworthy [of] even your notice, much less your tender care. But I plainly see by this and every other occurrence of life that the Lord is loving unto every man and his mercy is over all his works. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in my eyes. O that I could give him the honour due unto his name. I now too plainly see I love neither God or my neighbour, as I have thus long flattered myself I did. For when I have starts of love, which are very rare, it always springs from this cause: I love God now because he loves me, which in reality is not loving God by myself. In like manner, I now perceive my love to my friends and relations proceeds from the like base principles. And since this is the motive of my love, how can I love my neighbour—every man—but from pride, vain glory, hypocrisy, or some such devilish principle. But as the tree is corrupt, so must its fruits be also. Another great cause was this: I never sought God's glory for he was far above and out of my thoughts. And hence it is that I have never yet performed *one duty free from sin*.

Oh that my eye were single to God, and then my whole body, I am sure, would be full of light; whereas it is now full of darkness and the shadow of death. And yet, vile and wretched and naked and poor and blind as I am, I see God loves me and wills my everlasting happiness. I every day see more and more of his love and my own vileness, and yet I know I do not still see one tenth part with respect to this whole of my own corruption. I am astonished at the hardness of my hearth, that I can constantly see so much of God's love to so miserable a lump of clay and not be even melted into tears. But instead of tears I can ask and receive an answer to my unworthy prayers, without any remorse of conscience, for not returning my most humble and hearty thanks in prayer and thanksgiving. Oh this obdurate heart of mine is harder than flint or the nether millstone! I long for the time when I shall love the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Oh pray the Lord to water this seed which his own hand hath sown, that it may bring forth fruit in due season.

My sister [Frances] is very thankful to our dear friend for his kind concern and faithful prayers on her behalf, for which she would herself have returned a grateful acknowledgment if her weakness would have permitted. But she, together with this unworthy worm, begs the continuance of your faithful prayers, though we almost think this request unnecessary, seeing we are so well acquainted with your unwearied labour of love to us in particular as well as to the whole world in general. We beg our sincere and affectionate love and respects to your dear brother, and our kind love to Mr. [Charles] Graves and all other faith friends. Now that the God of all peace may keep and preserve you constantly under the shadow of his almighty wings is the fervent prayer of

You most sincere, though weakest, daughter in Christ,

A. C.

Endorsement: by CW, "A. Cowper Mar 27 1742" and "A. Cowper / sincere grateful."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/7.

From Elizabeth (“Betty”) Brown¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
April 1742

Account of my first convictions in the year of our Lord 1739 by the hearing of Mr. [George] Whitefield at St. Philip’s church, whereby I by the grace of God broke off my outward sins and heard him often.

But [I] got no further in the way of the Lord until the Reverend Mr. John Wesley came to town. The first time I heard him was at Baldwin Street society,² where I found greater power in his preaching and began to be deeply convinced of sin and to look after a Saviour; but knew but little of him or how to get rid of my burden. For I found I was lost without Christ. But how to come to him I knew not. I began to think that I would use all the means of grace, as the sacrament, and all opportunities that possible I could embrace, being not able to even do³ the work of my calling. But all would not do. I wanted to b(ring⁴) something to Jesus Christ to take off my burden of sins, but I have since found that he wanted me to come and receive his pardon freely. But I wanted to bring good works to my Saviour, as I thought them to be, and so my chariot wheels went on heavily until the Lord way pleased to show me that I must come as a lost, damned sinner, and he would pardon me freely in his blood through faith alone. But I knew not how to get that, for I then knew it not to be the gift of God—until the Lord gave me power to call upon him to give me that faith whereby I might find redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins. Which was at a time when I had no power to call on him.

The Reverend Mr. John Wesley was going out of town when he preached at the Weavers’ Hall.⁵ Then I cried unto the Lord that he would have mercy upon me and pardon me. Then after I heard the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley, and kept close to the word, believing that the Lord would give it me and could not rest following(?)⁶ of him until I had received his pardon freely, which I soon found. For that Lord, he is rich to all that call upon him, whose mercies is over all his works, would have every man to be saved and brought into the knowledge of his truth, came to me under the expounding of the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley at the Weavers’ Hall out of the ninth chapter of Romans.⁷ Whereby, I knew that I had remission of sins in his blood, by his taking of my burden and laying on himself, and imputing his righteousness to me and nailing of my sins to his cross, where I found unspeakable joy for some time, and comfort.

Then I thought the work was done, for I found no anger nor pride nor evil for a great while. But I looked to the thing, that is, to the gift but not to the Giver. For I had fasted three days before I received justifying faith; so then the enemy told me that I received it for that. But the Lord was pleased to show

¹Elizabeth Brown is mentioned by both JW (*Journal*, May 21, 1740, *Works*, 19:150) and CW (*MS Journal*, Sept. 24, 1739) as a member of the society in Bristol This account provides most of our other information about her. It is possible that she succeeded Ann Davis as housekeeper at the New Room. It is unclear whether she was related to Elizabeth (Brown) Hooper. Brown’s spelling is often phonetic; we silently correct verb tenses in a few cases. She uses no punctuation or paragraph breaks.

²JW’s first time speaking at the Baldwin Street society was Apr. 2, 1739.

³Orig., “to even to do.”

⁴A fray on the margin of the page obscures the word.

⁵JW wrapped up his first extended stay in Bristol in late Aug. 1739.

⁶Orig. looks like “folering.”

⁷See CW, *MS Journal*, Sept. 20, 1739.

that it was not so, and that I now must begin to follow him, and that there is no stopping short of the glory of God.

But now the Lord is pleased to show me the corruption of my heart and the evil of my nature, that it is nothing but wickedness continually. The devil is always accusing of me and throwing off his fiery darts to wound my soul. For I find I can do all things that are [evil when⁸] I find it rise. But the Lord gives me power to call upon him, and so am I preserved by looking to Jesus Christ. He keeps me that it do not break out some times. I find a great power against sin and a steadfast hope that I shall be delivered from all its in-being.

O sir pray for me, that I may never rest nor lie down nor stop short of the full salvation being brought into my soul. That I may, through Jesus Christ, perfect holiness in the fear of God the Father. And be made one spirit with He and the Son and Holy Ghost, which I look for and believe I shall receive it even in this life. So come Lord, I say, come quickly. I trust my Lord will enable me to put up my weak prayers for you, that you may still go on in his strength and in the power of his might; making mention only, I remain

Your weak servant and child in Christ Jesus our Lord

Betty Brown

When I am ahearing of Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield, I see so much of the evil of my heart that I think I shall go out of my mind and am just ready to despair a little. Before you came, I went to hear Mr. Maxfield at the Weavers' Hall and the Lord gave me a great power over sin and hath shed abroad his love in my heart in some measure. But now, by the grace of God, I can hear him very well, though I am often tempted to be prejudiced against him. But the Lord, of his love, giveth me to look unto him so that it hath no power over me. But still when I am hearing him and he is in the midst of preaching, I see him in all manner of forms like one that is drunk or else out of his mind. But in all these things I, by the grace of God, am more than conqueror.

Last Wednesday after meeting the public bands a few of us met together. The power of God was great there, but I was in great heaviness. After I came downstairs I took up the Bible and opened it and the Lord directed me to these word – “Fear thou not for I am with thee. Be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of righteousness”⁹ – in which I found great comfort and rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God.

O for a thousand tongues to sing,
My dear redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
[The] triumphs of his grace!¹⁰

I am full of sin and I know that my inward parts are in very wickedness. The eternal God is my refuge and underneath me are the everlasting arms.

Dear sir, pray for me that I may not think higher of myself than I ought, but that I may be kept poor and humble all my days, desiring to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Endorsement: by CW, “B Brown's Experience, A Seal / April 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 9/2/1.

⁸These two words are a guess at writing very hard to decipher.

⁹Isa. 41:10.

¹⁰CW, “For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion,” st. 7, *HSP* (1740), 121.

**From Hannah Hancock¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[Bristol]
April 1742

Dear Sir,

I have [?] endeavour[ed] to let you know the state of my soul. When Mr. [George] Whitefield came. I heard him and received his saying as concerning repentance and faith in Christ, thinking it must be accomplished in my soul before I go hence. And the sufferings of Christ did melt me down extremely much, which caused me to make promises of amendment. But I found it was in my own strength. When I was under the word I could make many resolutions, but when I was away I found that they did not stand; which convinced me it was in my own strength.

When [it] pleased God to send your dear brother here, I heard him with much delight and the first sermon came with power to me. [It] was in the sixth chapter of Romans and the twenty-third verse, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”³ When he explained the wages of sin, the word came with power and I saw the state I was in, how far I was from God. I then could not find any rest for my soul, but was continually crying out: “What must I do to be saved”;⁴ or with David, “A wounded spirit who can bear?”⁵

I went on mourning and found no comfort, sometimes in hope and then in despair. “Behold I go forward but he is not there, and backward but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work but I cannot behold him, he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him. But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold.”⁶

Then I found the drawings of the Father sweetly drew me, which caused me to believe. Although it was long before the Comforter came, I believed he would come. I went near a year mourning before I found my Saviour; and the enemy did sorely beset me, telling me my damnation was sealed and continually tempting that the Lord has sworn in his wrath that I should never enter into his rest. But I found Christ stronger than the enemy.

The sixth of April 1740, being Easter Sunday, I went to the sacrament under the weight and burden of sin and desired of the Lord not to let me depart till he had given me his blessing. There I found him rising on my soul with healing in his wings. The promise was applied, “I have blotted out thy sins out of my remembrance and thine iniquities will I remember no more.”⁷ Oh how sweet was Jesus Christ to me when I could see him with the eye of faith. Then I found I died daily to the world and was in the light of his countenance and went on my way rejoicing. Oh how did I long for others to taste of the same, continually saying, “O taste and see that the Lord is gracious.”⁸

I went on and had sweet communion with God for two months. Then the enemy came in as a flood upon me, telling me I was in a delusion and the Lord had done nothing for me. Then I cried

¹Little is known of Hannah Hancock beyond this account.

²A word is rendered illegible by the wax seal.

³JW does not cite this specific text during his initial preaching in Bristol; one likely occasion, where he fails to give his text, was in the brickyard on Apr. 16, 1739. See JW to James Hutton, Apr. 26, 1739, *Works*, 25:635.

⁴Acts 16:30.

⁵Prov. 18:14.

⁶Job 23:8–10.

⁷Cf. Isa. 43:25.

⁸Ps.34:8 (BCP).

might[il]y if it was so that the Lord would satisfy me, and if not that it might be so.

The Lord heard and answered my prayer and gave full satisfaction, and the second time the promise was applied to me, “Thine iniquities are conquered and thy sins are pardoned. Turn unto me for I have redeemed thee.”⁹ Then I found much sweetness with God and greater power over sin. I could then say with Solomon, “I sat under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste.”¹⁰ I could then say, “His left hand was under my head and his right hand doth embrace me,” and “his banner over me was love.”¹¹

But woe how soon did I forget my Saviour, and how lightly did I esteem the rock of my salvation. I then gave way to reasoning and reasoned myself into the belief of election. I then thought that God had made a remnant to be saved and remnant to be lost. And when the preachers of that doctrine came, I went to hear them and believed all they said concerning the elected love, as [they] called it, and not falling from grace. But woeful experience soon told me I was fallen.

When I came to hear you I [had] great prejudice in me against you; [so] that I could not receive your sayings concerning universal redemption, no[r] sinless perfection. Then I happened in company with some of that belief and they asked me my experience. I told them as far as I had experience concerning justification and they told me I had never need doubt I was elected and I believed them. Then I found myself grow slack and careless in prayer and all duties. By the providence of God [I] was in company and we were telling our experiences concerning prayers. The persons I was with were Baptists. I wished they would have joined with me but I found otherwise. The question I required was whether they thought there was anything in a form; whether people could not pray as well in their beds as on their knees. One answered no and told me it was very cold prayer in a warm bed—which word I found true, but little thought to hear such an answer from them. I then took to that armour of prayer again, and these persons told me a prayerless soul was a Christly [soul]. The word sunk deep into my heart, and [it] pleased the Lord to lay me on a bed of sickness. In the first part of [the] sickness I was in sore temptation and feared death. But the Lord soon removed that fear and filled me with his love. The promise applied to me was, “I will betroth thee to me forever, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, in judgment, in love, in kindness, and in mercy.”¹² The promise of God was food to my soul.

It pleased the Lord to send your dear brother to me. He asked me whether I believed Christ died for some or for all. My answer was for all. The next promise applied to me was, “Thou art comely through my comeliness put upon.”¹³ But after this love and kindness from God, how soon did I forget him; [so] that [I] could believe election. I went careless waiting for his [ir]res[is]table grace and I left [the] bands. But I found my soul was like Noah’s dove; as the dove could find no rest for the soles of his foot till it returned, so was my soul.

I mourned after Jesus Christ for a fresh manifestation of his love. I heard your brother upon the 25th day of February, upon the ninth chapter of Ezra, the third and sixth verses. He showed the remorse of conscience after a soul had revolted from Christ. My soul witnessed what was then spoken. I was then under remorse. I could then look on Christ whom I had pierced and mourned. It was often the language of my soul: I forced the first [desire] to disappear, I turned aside. “O Lord if thou hadst still been here thy servant had not died.”¹⁴

On the 28th day of February I heard your brother on the third chapter of Revelations, the second

⁹Cf. Isa. 44:2.

¹⁰Song of Sol. 2:3.

¹¹Ibid., 2:6, 4.

¹²Hos. 2:19.

¹³Cf. Ezek. 16:14.

¹⁴Cf. John 11:21.

and third verses. He put those in remembrance of what they had received from God. The enemy did sorely beset me, telling me I had received nothing. But the witness of God was with me, bearing witness I had. And the cry of [my] heart was, “Lord if [I] perish I will perish at thy feet.” Oh how ready [is] Jesus Christ to receive returning sinners. He met me while I was a great way off. He ran and fell upon my neck and kissed me with the kiss of peace.

On the first of March the Lord reconciled me to himself, telling me, “I have healed thy backsliding freely,”¹⁵ which gave me much comfort. The Lord has deeply convinced me of the necessity of inward holiness, and I believe without holiness no man can see the Lord.

Sir, I beg your continual prayer. As my first desire was to know my interest in Christ, it is my earnest desire to know Christ living in me, the hope of glory.

From your humble and affectionate servant till death,

Hannah Hancock

Address: “For the Revrd. / Mr Charls Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “H. Hancock / April 1742” and “Hannah Hancock / April 1742 / justified in sacrament.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/86.¹⁶

¹⁵Cf. Hos. 14:4.

¹⁶For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Susannah Designe
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
April the 8th 1742

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire I shall, as the Lord brings to my remembrance, give you an account of his work upon my soul. I have had thoughts many times to write the Lord's gracious dealings with me, but feared lest it should cause pride to arise in my unrenewed heart. And [it was] almost two years past after I had tasted the Lord was gracious before I made any remarks of my experiences, so that I cannot be very particular as to the times and seasons. But the manner I know my Lord will bring to my remembrance, for he hath imprinted it on my mind and I cannot forget it unless I forget God. This I know is possible because I have a nature capable of everything that is evil. But Lord remember me, now thou art in thy kingdom, and pray for me that my faith fail not.

Last summer it was strongly impressed upon my mind to write from day to day, or as I had opportunity, the Lord's dealings to me and my unfaithfulness to him—that by this means I might keep a watch over my soul and improve the grace of God to me. And after I sought the Lord by prayer he showed me his grace was sufficient for me, and he that put grace in my heart would keep it from pride.

Upon the 10th June, 1741, I begun to write as I had time but in this, as in all other duties, I have been too negligent.

I can remember drawings of God's love from my childhood and have been religiously inclined ever since I was seven years of age. I then began to take delight in reading the Scripture. [I] wished I could serve God as the holy men of old, and thought, Oh that I had lived upon earth when the Lord so conversed with the sons of men as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets. I wished I was in the favour of God and desired to obey him, but thought he was a God afar off and did not now make himself known to the children of men. I had very little sense, as yet, of the guilt of sin. But soon after these serious thoughts I was convinced of lying to excuse a fault, and the sin of omitting my prayers.

At about eight year[s] old one of our men servants died in great agonies, which put me in a deep thought on fear of death and hell. I was afraid the wicked one was at my heels whenever I was by myself. This horror lasted some time, but play and other vanities took away these thoughts and I grew careless, read history books, learned not lewd songs with the drunkards but as full of idle folly, which carried my mind far from God and all that was good. I was not easy; at times I had many convictions, but knew not what convictions were and stifled them.

At ten year[s] old I read a book called Russel's *Seven Sermons*,¹ which affected me very much and I considered the danger of putting off repentance till I was older, for many times I had thought it was time enough for me to live sober when so many in years was so merry. In reading this book I became serious, did often weep in secret before the Lord, took to reading the Bible and all good books I found, prayed to God nights and mornings at least, and at other [times] too, but did not look for an answer to them till I came to die.

Now I began to think myself very good and my obedience more than made amends for my former slackness. I had not long harboured these fine thoughts of myself before I was more abandoned than ever. I neglected all duties. Only outward gross sins was restrained and that curbed by the strictness of my parents. It is a good thing to make children stand in fear. We cannot give them grace, but we may feed their corrupt nature by indulging them.

I continued careless till my mother died (then I was almost 12 year[s] old). My fears of death and the day of judgment returned; but they lasted but a little time, no longer than her memory was fresh in my mind. My grief and convictions died together and I was glad to have more liberty to follow my own will

¹Robert Russel, *Seven Sermons* (London: J. Blair, 1700).

and foolish pleasure. [I] left off reading the Scripture, read plays and romances and especially poetry. God was seldom in all my thoughts. I continued about one year and then it pleased God to send me an awakening call by a dangerous fit of sickness. My death being expected, I called upon the Lord to spare me a little longer that I might repent and turn to him with all my heart. I knew not how to make an atonement for my past sins but by my future obedience.

I made many promises of amendment if the Lord would please to try me once more. I had no thought of being saved by Christ, no more than if there had never been a saviour for the sins of the world. No one to show me how I should escape the danger of that destruction I believed I should be plunged into if I died. No one asked me the state of my soul, no more than if I had none to think on or should after death have had no being. But I found I had a being that must be forever miserable or happy. When dread and fear beset me on every side I might well cry out: Miserable comforters are ye all. Yet we were churchgoers and often cried out: The temple of the Lord. My father and my eldest sister went to the Lord's table, and I thought if they were not saved who would [be]. I believe it was my being a child in years that made them so thoughtless about my future state. But we cannot begin too early to instruct children in the ways of the Lord. For while their mind is tender they are capable of impression either of good or evil, and as they are by nature prone to the latter, the more we should guard them against it and admonish them to all that is good. I have observed that good examples before children hath had as great affect as good advice.

After the Lord had raised me up I was very much in earnest according to my knowledge, but I was in the dark. I kept myself retired, read much, loved to be alone, found earnest desires to do the will of God, and was convinced it was my duty to use fasting or abstinence and secretly practised. I was the more afraid, it should be known, because I had heard many that called themselves members of the Church of England count this ordinance of God rank popery. Though I knew not what popery was, yet I did believe fasting was according to the will of God because I found it in his book, and that his prophets and apostles used it.

The family soon took notice of the outward change of my tempers, and behaviour and my much reading and meditating by myself, and strove to shame me of religion—calling me the saint and telling me I was very godly. This did me hurt, but I soon found worse enemies than these to encounter. For the pride of life began to lay hold of me and Satan made use of many to extol my person and I thought had it in admiration. This storm soon overthrew my poor building without a foundation. An outside religion will stand no trial. My chief study became pride and vanity, and my own self was now the God I worshipped.

From this time till I changed my state of life [i.e., married], I was carried away with the pleasures of the world and the vain desires of my own heart. I had many stings of conscience and did not leave the means of grace, but had a good will to all. I thought [I] feared God. And ever since I had any knowledge, I felt a great love to the ministers. And whenever I saw a minister I found an witness from God and looked upon them as his messengers.

The first knowledge as I can remember I had of Christ's suffering was when I was about 26 years of age. I heard a sermon upon these words: "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept."² The preacher showed the misery of them that slept eternally and the happy state of those which rise with Christ. I felt myself very much affected and could not help shedding tears, but refrained myself as much as I could for I did not remember I had ever seen anyone cry at church and I was ashamed. To be particular, this sermon wrought so upon my mind [that] I resolved to turn to the Lord with my whole heart.

I lived some miles from the place where this minister preached, but I went to hear him as often as I could, [and] seemed more in earnest than ever I had been. But my enemy, which always as yet got the better of me, soon put an end to my pursuit after the Lord by sending one of my fellow creatures to take up that place in my affection due to God alone. I knew not that this was a snare of the devil's. I did not

²1 Cor. 15:20.

apprehend any danger near from him as long as I did not see him with my bodily eye. But surely this was the most effectual way to stop the work of God in the soul—of one that hath received justifying faith but not established—of any I know of. How was I like to stand such a trial that did not know I wanted faith? I was not convinced it was a sin, though I was swallowed up in inordinate affection. But it displeased my father. I was very much afraid of disobeying him in so importunate affair. I thought no blessing of God should attend me if [I] persisted to disobey him from whom, next to God, I had my being. I believed I was, in duty, bound to submit to his will in everything that was not contrary to the will of God.

And in the 19th year of my age I was married to him that is now my husband.³ The outward circumstances of life was more considered on all sides than the glory of God. Oh how many with me turneth this holy ordinance of God into sin. But my Lord hath forgiven me this and every sin. O make me faithful to thy grace that I may glorify thy name.

After I was married I became very solid, resolved to live a religious, sober life, had many drawings of God's love, found I was desirous to receive the sacrament, and after I had prepared myself by reading a whole manual of prayers and I thought made myself fit, went to the table of the Lord; not for Christ to make me good, but because I thought I was so. Here I rested and was at peace.

Now I began to be desirous of this world's goods. But God's thoughts are not as ours, nor his ways as our ways. For out of his infinite mercy and goodness he took away all our substance by water, and we were reduced to such circumstances as to work for our bread. This was a great stroke, but even then I found the Lord endued my soul with patience and I darkly saw the hand of God in this trial and had a kind of belief it should be for my good in the end. But I took all the glory of my resignation to myself and all the good desires God put into my heart to be my own. We came to Bristol, it being a hundred miles of the place of our nativity, in the 21 year of my age. I made many promises to the Lord, if he pleased to bring me safe to Bristol, I would devote my life to his glory. But this, as my others, as yet had been in my own strength and was impossible to be kept by me.

The place where I before lived was in the country, the Isle of Ely and county of Cambridge. A place not so much given to outward vice as at Bristol, but very civilized and morally honest, so that I was a very good saint of the world. And my being a little better educated than that rank of people God had now placed me with, my enemy put it into their hearts to tell me how good and how wise I was. This raised my ambition, gave me such high thoughts of myself as made me soon forget God, and I acknowledged him only by that lifeless form I professed. I had never had any religion yet, but what it increased my friendship with the world, then cause[d] it to become my enemy. How blind was my eyes. If I had never another mark but this, it were enough to show me I was not a friend to God. I was in everything conformable to it, a very monster of pride. Yet I had many convictions at times, and whenever I heard any one speak of living in the fear of God it always affected me, and I had fits and starts of religion. I was often fighting, but always overcome. Yet, the Spirit of God strove with me. And when I have been at a play, I thought it would be just if the Lord should suffer the place to be fired over our heads; and have prayed many times if the Lord would preserve me safe out of the place, I would never see a play more. Oh what pleasure had I then of the things whereof I am now ashamed. Yet did I never find power to resist it the next opportunity, till I heard the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

I believe I had been at Bristol a little above five years when I heard Mr. [George] Whitefield preach at St. James's church upon these words: "Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me."⁴ Never did I hear the like before. My heart was like melting wax, my eyes flowed with tears. I felt such drawings of God's love as I never found before. Though I saw myself one of the dead he described, yet with an assurance the Lord would make me alive. I thought I could have stayed all night to hear him for I

³Thus Susannah (maiden name unknown) married James Designe around 1731.

⁴Cf. Matt. 8:22. Whitefield's sermon "*Worldly Business No Plea for the Neglect of Religion*" (London: Hutton, 1739). Designe would have heard him preach in late 1737; he departed for Georgia from London in early Feb. 1738.

had never heard man speak as he spake. I had a rejoicing in my heart and knew this was such preaching as my soul many times hungered after.

But how shall I express the grief I found next day when I knew he was to go to Georgia. I thought, I could go along with him. I think he went the day after I heard him preach. Then did I reflect upon myself that I had not gone before in all my vanities. I was not fond of strange sights nor hearing new things. But that Sunday it was a particular desire of my soul's good that I first went, desiring the Lord to give his blessing. It was the first time of Mr. Whitefield's going to Georgia. I often reflected upon the sermon with great contrition and was much altered outwardly for some time; and his very words, many of them kept fresh in my mind till he returned again. There was a love to him different from that of nature, though I saw and heard him but that one time,⁵ because neither the distance of the place nor the continuance of time wore it away. I found my good will increase and my desire to love and fear God more and more till such time as the Lord brought Mr. Whitefield to England again, though I did not know the way of salvation nor the state of my own soul.

I was much rejoiced at his return and took all opportunities of hearing him.⁶ I found I had not power to stay away but felt such drawings of love attended with sweetness that melted me into tears for my careless living and neglect of duty. But as I had by the restraining grace of God and strictness of education not been guilty of outward gross sins, I was not convinced I had broke the law of God in my heart and was by nature a child of wrath and an heir of damnation. I found I grew dead to the world and such a taste for heavenly things that I thought all my desire was to God alone. I continued in this estate till the Lord called Mr. Whitefield to another place, which now I know to be no more than the drawings of the Father. But Satan told me I was born again and that I was good because I desired to be so. He told me the work was done.

The first miracle Jesus wrought in my soul by turning the water into wine. I lost my appetite for earthly things and begun to taste the heavenly. I greatly lamented the departure of Mr. Whitefield.⁷ But when I heard Mr. John Wesley was to supply his place, it was some satisfaction to me; and the more because Mr. Whitefield gave such recommendations in the behalf of both your brother and you, with a grateful acknowledgement of his obligations to you, and expressed the most tenderest affection of love and friendship. But I looked to man, not through the instrument to God alone, for I thought I should never value another so well nor benefit so much by them—not considering the help that is done upon earth, God doeth it.

The first time [I] heard Mr. Wesley was at Nicolas Street society upon these words: "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted."⁸ Mr. Wesley at this time had not his gown on and I never heard any one preach before without, for I had been so zealous for the Church of England I never would enter into a meeting-house door and it was strange to see anyone. He spoke plain truths, but I wanted smooth things and I could not say I was in that mourning state described. I was in peace, [I] never had yet been convinced of sin, but thought all was safe. My enemy, for fear I should be awakened, tempted me to despise the instruments the Lord chose to open my eyes and disturb his peace. He will drive us to extremes either to idolize or despise the instrument in God's hand.

I think the next time [I heard Mr. Wesley] was at the Bowling Green on a Sunday morning upon the publican and the Pharisee.⁹ It was not the want of a gown that caused my dislike before, but my heart that was not right with God nor my eye single; for now [that] Mr. Wesley had his gown, I despised and condemned him in my heart. Yet I could not deny but he speak the truth. When I came home, being asked

⁵Orig., repeats "of him" at this point.

⁶Whitefield returned to England, to be ordained an elder, in early 1739.

⁷Whitefield left Bristol on Apr. 2, 1739, having recruited JW to take over the work there.

⁸Matt. 5:4; This was on Apr. 3, 1739; see JW letter to James Hutton, Apr. 9, 1739, *Works*, 25:626.

⁹Apr. 15, 1739; see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19–48.

how I liked Mr. Wesley, I said it was not Mr. Whitefield but I would go to hear him when I had opportunity. I do not remember I willfully stayed away one time, but I kept under the word and received it better and better every time; though I believe at the first it was out of respect to Mr. Whitefield I went to hear Mr. Wesley. But I did not find the comfort as I had under Mr. Whitefield. My drawings of love seemed almost extinguished, then I began to examine into the cause and feared I was not in that state of grace I had thought myself to be.

When Mr. John Wesley began to expound the Romans at the Weavers' Hall,¹⁰ I found guilt upon my soul and that I was not a believer. I saw there was not one commandment but had been broken by me; and them from which I thought myself the most clear in the sight of God, I was the most guilty. Nay, [I] was] so abominable that one reigning sin had dominion over others, for pride had often overruled my boasted virtue and kept me from many scandalous vices which others outwardly committed now. I could not say to the common prostitute and blasphemer: Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou. My mouth stopped and I became guilty before God. Shame and confusion of face covered me, but not a horrible dread that overwhelmed me. I knew I deserved to be damned but did not fear it. I felt I was lost unless Christ saved me but did believe he would. And well I might have this hope, for how was my cup sweetened to me. Surely the Lord never dealt more tenderly with any soul as with me. I saw the threatenings of the law on the one hand and the glimmerings of Jesus' face on the other. The moment I knew I was lost, I knew there was a Saviour for me. I cast myself at his feet and resolved if I perished it should be calling out for mercy. I cannot express the consolation I found in mourning after Jesus before I knew him to be my Saviour, and if there had been no other state to be attained I would not have changed for the pleasure of a sinful world. Oh that the worldlings did but know the happiness to mourn after a crucified Saviour. Surely they would forsake their husks. And if lamenting yields such consolation, what must the enjoyment of him be.

I remained in this state for some time. I believed Christ died for me and would save me, but had not that faith to bring the Saviour home to my own particular soul, though I found myself restless for want of him. I had never yet been confirmed. Being brought up of French parents and they not assenting thereto, it was deferred in my youth; and as I grew up, thought a thing indifferent. But at this time, the Bishop of Bristol being in town, and Mr. Wesley preaching upon the ordinance, I was clearly convinced it was my duty. And when I came to the church I trembled exceedingly, and as I kneeled before the alter I thought I had condemned this holy ordinance of laying on of hands and now how justly might the Lord reject me. But immediately after I felt a flame of love in my heart and such a thanksgiving as I never found before. There scarce remained any strength in me. I found it was good to be there. I knew the Lord was there and [had] given me this token for good that he would soon come and speak peace to my soul.

After this I had a waiting in my soul full of expectation to receive forgiveness of sins. Soon after the Lord called Mr. Wesley to London. But I never knew till this time how near and dear he was to me, and I looked upon him as my minister that watched over my soul in the Lord. I thought there was an affection due to him more than to the most tender father and, next to God, I ought to honour and obey him and whomsoever he should set over us in his absence. A little before Mr. Wesley's departure I had a great desire to be entered into the society, but with shame for thinking so slightly of them people, I now found myself not worthy of.

In a few weeks after you came to Bristol, one night at Gloucester Lane, I found much of the power of God. You expounded upon the third chapter of St. John,¹¹ and in the singing a hymn upon the day of judgment, I found I could sing it without fear. I did believe my judge was my advocate and I longed to meet him. I felt great joy and wanted to die. But that time I knew not that it was Jesus made me whole. I continued in this state for some time, till one night, as I was a coming home from Gloucester Lane society, the enemy began to reason with me, telling me I had deceived myself. I had no faith. God

¹⁰JW began working his way through the Book of Romans there on Apr. 7, 1739.

¹¹Sept. 10, 1739; see CW, *MS Journal*.

had not for Christ's sake forgiven me. I immediately cried to the Lord to show me the state of my soul. I prayed all the way home. I found myself restless. I dare not say I was forgiven, neither darest I say I was not. I took the Bible and, kneeling down before the Lord, desired him to show me I had an interest in the blood of Christ, and opened the book upon these words: "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's."¹² This was the first scripture I ever took home to my own soul. The Lord applied it with power. It seemed as if he talked with me face [to face]. And though I could not say this scripture was yet fulfilled in me, because the Holy Ghost dwelt not in me, but I knew God was reconciled to me by that price that was laid down for me, and that I was his and he had given me a measure of his Spirit to profit withall.

Now I had fresh strength for a little while, but doubts and fears soon returned. Sometime I could rejoice in God my Saviour, and then I was in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes I thought my faith was strong, and sometime I doubted I had had no faith at all. About this time I began to be very thoughtful what the bands should be, but was afraid it was something that was not right; and then thought again, How can that be, for if it was not to the glory of God his ministers could not be joined thereto. I prayed to the Lord, if it were to his glory and the good of my soul, I might have no rest in myself till I was joined to that fellowship. After that time I found no peace till I fully determined by the grace of God to enter into the bands. I soon found it great strength to my weakness, and then I did not wonder the bands should be the great butt of the devil's malice, since it was so much to his disadvantage. That night I was entered, I had a great awareness of the presence of God and a sense of my own unworthiness. I could not help saying, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. [...] This is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven."¹³ Oh may I bless and praise God that hath given me such glorious privileges, such means of grace—the pure gospel preached in simplicity and all other opportunities of improving of it. Oh how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.

There is one thing I have oft observed. I never knew one soul that wilfully separated themselves from this fellowship but what fell from one degree of unkindness to another if they continued to absent themselves from the body. For how should a branch grow when it is cut off from the tree? And I tremble for anyone that begins to slightly think of this means after they have been joined to us and once reaped the benefit of it. I do not speak of them that are not fully persuaded in their own mind, for I believe there is many sincere souls in whom the Lord doth carry on his work that is not joined to us. But yet I believe there is not any people under heaven that hath more advantages than we have. It is a sure mark when anyone begins to neglect meeting their private band, sin hath got dominion over them. And then we are like Adam in the garden. [We] get behind trees and hide ourselves. It is some secret bosom sin that is pleasing to the carnal mind. And like Rachel, we sit upon our idols and will not part with them. I could not help speaking of these things because if but one wavering soul may receive any strength hereby, my labour will not be in vain. Neither can I take any of the glory to myself that I [am] still a member of this church, for I have often been astonished to see them that I thought strong in the Lord depart and myself left behind.

Yet when I did not feel the love of God, I was almost ready to deny his work. Still I was slow of heart to believe what the Lord had done for me. When it pleased God to send Mr. [Westley] Hall to Bristol the first time his prayers did very much affect me. On the first Monday as he was in town, all that day I found a sinking at my heart, my faith so weak I hardly knew whether I had hold of Christ or no. And yet I could not give it up, nor ever had since I received that gift under your ministry at Gloucester Lane. But I waited that the Lord would manifest himself to me more clearly. At night I came to the New Room, but I knew not what was the matter with me. I trembled greatly when Mr. Hall was at prayers. I sunk at the feet of Jesus resolving, if I perished, it should be there. Then I found myself as if I had been

¹²1 Cor. 6:19–20.

¹³Gen. 28:16–17.

convulsed, my heart beat within me and I could hardly breath. The enemy tempted me to be ashamed and to remove to the back seat of the gallery. But the Lord showed me it was from Satan and I could say, If it is for thy glory, make me a gazing stock to men and angels. Then the power of God wrought so wonderful upon me that my natural senses departed from me for a time and my hands was drawn in a surprising manner, the back parts thereof almost touched my arms; and when it was visible it was a supernatural power, the devil told me it was not the power of God, for he had that power over me. But I sent him to my Saviour for an answer, and lifting up my eyes I saw Jesus standing, smiling over me, and heard a voice in my inmost soul saying: I see the travail of my soul and am satisfied. Then could I say, My Lord and my God. I cannot express what I felt, my cup was full. Then I felt a power that was irresistible. But had I resorted to wait upon the Lord, I had not found his power.

I was constrained to call every mourning sinner to come to Jesus that had taken me into his bosom. I could embrace all the world then. Who could Jesus shut out of the arms of his love? I could be content to be that soul for which Christ hath not died. I longed for the salvation of all men. I wanted all to taste the Lord is gracious and to be partaken of the love, peace, and joy that overflowed my soul. Oh what a time was this: my mouth was full of thanksgiving, my heart danced for joy, and every prayer was praise.

I continued in this love and peace for some weeks. I saw and tasted Christ in everything. [It] seemed as if I prayed always. And oh how sweet was the name of Jesus to my ears. The sound of that name sunk into my heart and became food for my soul. Many a time I could not help breaking into a rapture, and could not utter any other words but “Jesus.” For all I wanted was contained in it and that Jesus was my Saviour. I had such communion with him as to talk with him as a man talketh with his friend.

But here was my danger. I thought I should be always so as this, and that I should not see war any more. The Lord had spread over me the mantle of his love. My sins were covered. But I knew not that my inward parts were very wickedness, that the root of bitterness remained in me. This is the armour wherein the strong man trusts; yet should I not have been overcome by him from that time to this if my own heart had not betrayed me. And when my love began to wax cold I found I was not so powerful in prayer, and did not pray so often, till at last it was a burden to me to pray at all. Then the Lord hid his face from me and I was troubled. Darkness fell upon me that might be felt, while the enemy said, Where is now thy God? Then I began again to fear I had decided myself and all I had felt before was a delusion. Yet I did not let go my shield, nor leave the means of grace—though when I prayed my heart was cold and dead, and at the Lord’s table I have been afraid the bread would choke me and the earth would open her mouth and swallow me up. Yet when I thought of death on the day of judgment, it yielded me comfort. There was a secret hope in Christ which was the anchor of my soul and kept it from sinking in the many waters. I had something which was more dear to me than life itself and which I resolved not to give up till I hear Christ say, Depart.

One time it was so near gone I hardly knew whether I had hold nor no. I wrestled with the Lord in prayer with strong cries and tears, and these words came with power into my soul: “When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee and through the river, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee.”¹⁴

Then did the Lord lift up the light of his countenance and my spirit again rejoiced in God my Saviour, but with times of contrition mixed with a loving shame for my slackness and unbelief I found in my heart. Now I saw every time I doubted I made God a liar. Oh what a sin is this. I never was so convinced of unbelief till I did in this lowest sense believe. For before I had tasted the Lord was gracious, it seemed not so much to doubt whether he would forgive me, as after such manifestations of himself to my soul, to be always almost ready to deny his work. My doubts was not so great as before, but now the enemy had another device. When he found the Lord strengthened my faith, then he told me there was no God. And the atheism of my own heart first answered, if there should be no God, and then I soon believed

¹⁴Isa. 43:2.

there was none. The Scripture seemed to me was an idle tale; and singing and prayer, folly and madness; and what seems now most strange to me, I prayed myself though I thought I was as one that beats the air.

I could not bear the sight of Mr. John Wesley, he being then in town.¹⁵ It was like fire to flesh to come near him. That devil which told me there was no God was afraid to appear before a true minister of Jesus Christ. But how was the power of God magnified in keeping me from outward sin and close to the means of grace. I do not remember the omission [of] one duty all the time, which was about 12 or 14 days. The thoughts of living as I had before, and going into the world again, was dreadful to me because I could take no happiness in anything therein, and my only grief was the thoughts of losing my happiness in that God I hoped forever to enjoy.

A little before I was delivered from this temptation, how did I wish and desire there was a God, that I might love and serve him. At last I thought I would live as if there was one, for then I should be safe: if there was none I could but come to nothing, and if there was a God I should find him and be forever happy in him.

I had not long made this resolution before the Lord shone gloriously upon me, dispersed the darkness, and my enemies were found liars unto me. Now I knew there was a God and he was my God that so marvellously persevered in the trying hour. Now I began to see what a nature I had, more ready to believe lies than truth. I walked a little while in the light, but doubts and fears returned, weighed down my soul, and then in light again, never at one stay. When I had the love and power of God, I thought I was in a better state than when I had it not. Surely that was thinking myself the better because God was God. My joys was not settled and always attended with pride, and I did begin to find I dressed myself in the gifts and graces of God; and the desire of praise beset me on every side. When I found these evil desires in me and begun to find strivings of anger, again it caused doubts and fears to return and to question whether there was any work of grace in my soul, because the Lord begun to show there was a greater work to do in me. The devil told me it was not begun and one of the great reasons he could give that I had not been justified was I had not felt such terrors as some that was more in earnest than I. But the Lord showed his mercy was not bought or measured by our sincerity, for if we are sincere it is God makes us so.

It seemed not so dreadful to me to lose my sense of forgiveness as the unbelief and blasphemy of my own heart every time I doubted, because I made God a liar to his face after so many manifestations of his love. Then did I pray to him for to put it out of my power to doubt and to increase my faith that I might believe in all the promises and wait till they were accomplished in my heart. I believe it was in May 1741, one Saturday night at the Malt Room as Mr. John Wesley was expounding,¹⁶ I felt a great power of God and these words applied to me: “Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.”¹⁷ I had no great joy but a calm settled peace. I thought upon the words, was afraid to take hold of them, to think I was a child of God; and yet from that moment I could call God my Father. All night I had great sweetness. The morning following, as I was going to the New Room, I begun to examine myself: How was God my Father and by what ground could I call him so? And lifting up my heart to the Lord, he showed me he was my Father by creation, by redemption, and by that Spirit of adoption which cried, “Abba, Father.” The word father, wherever I saw it or heard it mentioned, was strength and comfort to me. And I found access to God the Father, through God the Son, and God the Spirit witnessed with my spirit that I was a child of God. I saw that God accepted of me through the Son of his love, that he looked on me through Christ, accepted of my words and actions for his sake as done by him, and I could with boldness say, O my Father, make me thy obedient child. Doubtless thou wast my Father before, though I was ignorant of thee.

¹⁵JW was there several times in 1740–41.

¹⁶The only Saturday in May 1741 that JW was in Bristol was May 23. He does not mention speaking in the Malt Room, but well may have done so. Designe likely is mis-recalling JW’s exposition of Ezek. 33 on March 21, 1741 in the Malt Room; see *Journal, Works*, 19:128.

¹⁷Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:33.

The enemy told me if I never had deceived myself, now I should. But the temptation seemed to have no power for I could answer with boldness, My Father will not let me deceive myself so long as I look to Jesus. His everlasting arms are round me and his Spirit will lead me into all truth. I found I had greater power over sin than before and could resist temptations with greater strength. And from that time to this, I do not remember I could ever doubt one moment of my justification. Neither did I ever give it up before from the time I received it, but staggered off through unbelief. I have found since, in one sense I can doubt and in another I cannot doubt, what the Lord hath done for me—nor do not doubt what he will do for me if I persevere. But I often doubt of my own faithfulness.

Now I begin to be convinced of heart sin, and that every thought thereof was very wickedness, but did believe the Lord that showed it to me would take it from me. I found myself more watchful then before, and by the light of that Spirit I found ever with me, I could discern the very appearance of evil, and had the power given to resist it. But I must take shame to myself, I did not always use it. Yet, I found I must not rest, for the Lord showed me I should see greater things than these. And I more and more experienced that truth of our Lord: “Without me you can do nothing.”¹⁸ But every day and every hour I wanted a fresh supply of grace, that my soul might not become barren and unfruitful. Oh that my life might be one continual looking into Jesus.

Amen

Address: “To the / Revd. / Mr. Charles Wesley.”¹⁹

Endorsement: by CW, “Sus. Design’s / Experience 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 9/2/3.

¹⁸John 15:5.

¹⁹Written on the inside cover of this small bound set of pages.

**From Elizabeth Downs¹
(a solicited testimonial)**

[Bristol]
April 13, 1742

Sir,

When your brother came to Bristol first, I had not experienced anything of the work of God in my soul, though I was a constant hearer of the word and as duty communicated. As for Mr. [George] Whitefield, I never heard him above twice, and that was when he was going to Georgia. The first of my hearing your brother was in the Bowling Green upon the Pharisee and publican.² From the expounding upon the different states I perceived my case was dangerous, and began to be very thoughtful and restless. Yet I did never think myself safe before, but feared I should be lost. I had still somewhat within me [which] told me I was not right. I strove to help myself by my works. That afforded me no peace. I knew if I died as I was I should be damned, but had a hope God would forgive me when I came to die. Yet, [I was] perfectly ignorant of any inward feeling in my soul, not so much as the drawings of the Father to distinguish it.

Some time after I heard your brother, being one morning at public prayer, I felt myself so drawn to Christ I thought I was thrusting my hand into the wounds in his side. After that I often felt those inward drawings, and began to think it was not so hard to get to heaven as some did imagine. I often said, “Mr. Wesley teaches us an easy way to get there. He says it is but to believe and heaven is yours.” Glory be to God for his grace. But at that time I was not convinced of one spark of unbelief. Soon after this the Lord showed me I was an unbeliever. Yet I thought before nothing could be easier than to believe. It causes me now to shut my mouth against anyone that is not convinced of it, knowing it is by the mighty power of God.

Then I found the Spirit of God begin to move and work in my soul. I was very restless and deeply convinced I was in the lost state, yet constantly directed to apply to the blood of Christ. I knew not what course to take but was filled with horror and dread, find[ing] there was but a poor breath that separated me from hell. I went to you and told you my case. You bid me look to Christ. I said I could not, because I had crucified him afresh. You asked me how long I had been convinced of that. I told you under your brother’s ministry. I asked you if there was hope for me. You told me you could give me none. Then I thought my case was worse than before, and was exceedingly troubled. You bid me look to Christ; there was my hope.

I continued in great distress for several weeks. At last I went to sister Rawlins and told her my condition.³ She said I had frequent offers of grace, but could not believe it was for me. She said I would not let God work with me, but kept him out of my soul through my unbelief. One of the society came to me with great joy, telling what the Lord had done for her. I was struck with amazement and concluded that God was a respecter of persons; and did think I was reprobated, and was for three days in a miserable condition and I wished I had never been born. I could have been glad to quit myself of the world, but I dreaded the torments of hell.

¹This letter provides our only clear knowledge of Elizabeth Downs. She may be the woman of this name buried in Bristol in 1751.

²Apr. 15, 1739; see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19–48.

³Sister Rawlins was head Mistress of the school for poor children that the Wesley brothers had set up in Bristol, near the Horsefair. Cf. JW’s letter to her of Nov. 16, 1742 in JW, *Works*, 31:304.

The Sunday following I went to meeting. Mr. Diaper was to deliver the sacrament.⁴ He took his text out of Revelations, “And I beheld; and lo in the [midst of the] throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain.”⁵ His discourse upon that subject was very affecting. Yet it did not reach me. I was troubled at the hardness of my heart, and thought there was no help for me. I continued in that dead, stupid condition till [the] sermon was ended. I began to think, “I am dead and cold, and have neither life or power. If the Lord pleases he can remove this in a moment and if it be the will of God I shall be thus, his will be done.” Then I said, “Lord, thou are not confined nor limited to the narrow comprehension of my understanding, thou worketh when and where and how thou pleasest. I beg thou wilt give me a resignation to thy will and deal with me as seemeth thee good.”

I felt a great calmness in my spirit. Then Mr. Diaper said, “Now look up and behold the Saviour; see him pour out his blood for your sakes.” My heart was touched. In a moment the Lord revealed himself to me in his crucifixion. Evidently by faith I saw him, with his blood running from his wounds in branches down his arm, his body in great paleness, and his mouth as gasping his last breath. I felt I received a quickening power and the benefit of his blood applied to my soul that moment. After sacrament was ended Mr. Diaper gave out the hymn, and at mentioning the cross [in] particular, I felt, as it were, a change as I thought inward and outward. My heart fluttered as though it would have torn out of my body. I seemed as though I had been convulsed. My mouth was filled with prayer and praise as fast as I could utter from thence. I believed I was justified. Yet I had a continual witness I should have a clearer evidence, but rested very much upon what I had received, and was very much lifted up. But it pleased the Lord to suffer me to fall into great doubt, and I felt my heart turn to the same centre. Then I dreaded I was falling asleep again, I was so dead to every spiritual work.

Soon after, it pleased to God to send Mr. John Wesley amongst us again, from London,⁶ which was the ninth week after I received, as I do since believe, the earnest of my justification. The Friday I went to intercession the Lord gave me great power of importunity, but [I] soon fell again into great heaviness. I went that evening to expounding, and soon after Mr. John Wesley began I felt my heart clipped as though a hand grasped it. The greater he was in power, the stronger I felt my pain. At last it extorted strong groans from me. I was unable to sit, but laid myself on the floor. The excessive pain and workings of my heart made me think it was death pains. Yet all the time I found no terror of death, but seemed so far resigned that I could say, “It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.”⁷ But as soon as Mr. Wesley had done, I found I was somewhat released; but it left a great soreness in my heart.

The Sunday morning following, Mr. Wesley was showing the marks of justification. I found I came short of it, and could not say by the witness of God’s Spirit my sins were forgiven. But I remembered I had heard Mr. [John] Cennick say, “a person might be forgiven when they felt the atoning blood though they [could] not boldly say it.” I thought either your brother or he was wrong. This I concluded: was I to trust my salvation upon man’s opinion, I would sooner be led by the minister than [by] him. One thing I observed, I never found my heart [drawn] to him as it was to you and your brother. And I found, in the end, it was the great mercy of God it was not otherwise. I might have been led into those errors, as he is invincible opinionated. But by the power of God, the words sunk deep into me that morning, and drove me almost to despair. I could have dispatched myself, but by the preventing grace of God I wrote to your brother and told him the distress I was in; and sorely wounded, I found there was no help for me but immediately to fly to Christ. I earnestly besought the Lord to give me some token for good. In great anguish of spirit, I cried to the Almighty. He answered from his holy habitation. Therefore,

⁴Rev. John Diaper was pastor Lewin’s Mead chapel, a Presbyterian meeting in Bristol, 1710–51.

⁵Rev. 5:6.

⁶Given the later mention of CW being “in the fever,” this would have been JW’s quick trip to Bristol to check on CW, Sept. 1–8, 1740; see *Journal, Works*, 19:166–67.

⁷1 Sam. 3:18.

I can say God deals particularly with men.

While I was in prayer, I laid the Bible before me, and the Lord directed me to those words in Zechariah, “Turn to thy stronghold, ye prisoners of hope. Even today I do declare that I will render favourable unto thee.”⁸ All glory be to God; even as he promised, so was it done unto me. Yet notwithstanding [what] I received, [I was] doubtful and thought it was too great for me to receive; but not too great for God to give. I resolved in the morning to carry the copy of what I had written to you, that you might see it. You were at the time recovering of the fever. Your brother set out for London, so that I had not the opportunity of seeing him. But my purpose of going to you was immediately stopped by those words strongly applied to me, “Put not thy trust in an arm of flesh, trust thou in the living God.”⁹ I answered, “Lord I will.” From that moment the intent of going to you was taken away.

In the morning I met the band, being then upon trial. I found a more than usual desire to pray. As soon as I began, I was led to plead the benefit of Christ’s death and sufferings. I felt the power of God in such a manner as I cannot express. I was filled with joy and love, wonder and amazement, that the Lord should reveal himself in such a distinct manner as I thought then few had seen or felt the like. As St. John described him, so did I clearly behold him with the eye of faith, with his garment as white as snow and a glittering belt about his paps,¹⁰ [so] that my soul was filled with direct raptures. Sir, it was not fervent imagination. I know the Father did, with love, reveal the Son unto me; that he communicated the influence of his love to me by the power of faith. But for the time I was in a strong sense of my justification and very clear, which was about fourteen days. And the continual sight of him as described before the Lord, to give me a full assurance of pardon, applied these words to me: “I have blotted out thy transgressions; I have redeemed thy soul; this is the way, walk thou in it.”¹¹ And [it gave] continually strong promises while I was in this comfort, which I never could receive before.

But after I went home from the band the morning I received forgiveness, I sat down to think what the Lord was about to do with me. I never had felt the like before. I felt somewhat pouring over my heart; I cannot describe what it was like particular[ly], but it was as an odour that perfumes. I felt that every sinew and joint was effected. It ran through the very marrow of my bones, and sunk me, as it were, into nothing, [so] that I was ready to cry out several times in the day, “Lord, I cannot contain it.” At last I felt the suffering of the love of God so in my heart that nature began to sink, and I said to sister Nichols,¹² “I believe I shall be forced to take my bed.” She said, “The Lord will enlarge your capacity. He knows you are but an earthen vessel.” I often felt such stirrings within that my soul would seem to be all of a-quiver, ready for the wing to soar to Christ. I wrote to your brother to London to let him know the Lord had answered his last petition for me and given me the benefit of his blessing when he left us.

The Wednesday following, about noon, I was in private prayer. I was immediately caught, as it were, out of the body. Jesus held out his left hand with the crown exceeding bright. I cannot tell you what I felt in my soul at that time, but I beheld it with great amazement. And about the space of two or three minutes after he held out his right hand with the length of half a sheet of paper, white and clean. I looked earnestly, but could not perceive any writing. As to the mentioning this, it consisteth not but upon your desiring me to be particular. I find by daily experience neither sights nor gifts availeth to make the Christian complete, until Christ be formed in me.

⁸Zech. 9:12.

⁹Cf. Jer. 17:5; Ps. 146:3.

¹⁰See Rev. 1:13, with Mark 9:3.

¹¹Isa. 44:22, 30:21.

¹²Likely Ann (Barnes) Nichols (b. 1671), the mother of Charles Nichols; see *CW, MS Journal*, Sept. 2 & 24, 1739.

I do not remember losing the sense of my justification otherwise than by this: while one was reading Mr. Seward's journal,¹³ I sat by and found immediately I was disaffected to the author. Then I felt instantly that I had lost that sweet peace which before I enjoyed. But all that time I did not fall into any doubt, which was Sunday evening till Wednesday following. Then the devil came upon me like a roaring lion, telling me that it was all delusion what I had received, and I had deceived my soul. Then I began to reason with him, "How can this be? Nature could not work this in me. I surely have had a foretaste of heaven; and that thou canst not give me." I found my adversary too strong for me. I saw there was no other help for me but to fly to Christ, and lay hold of him. I strongly importuned him in prayer. The strength of the temptation was defeated for a season. Yet I soon fell into general doubts, and continued for several weeks till your brother's return from London.¹⁴

The morning he took his journey for London again, Mr. [Edward] Nowers read in the desk. While he was in prayer, I felt first a great burning in my heart, and immediately my soul was filled with the love of God, and sweet peace, and those words applied to me again, "I have blotted out thy transgressions."¹⁵ I said, "Lord, if it be thy voice, I beseech thee, give me a further testimony." And it came again, "Thou shalt not die in thy sins."¹⁶

From thence to the Monday, eight days I enjoyed great peace and comfort in my soul. That evening I went to meet my band, but I found there was not likely to meet but the leader and myself. I directly went home, but had not been many minutes in the house before I fell into discourse with one that lived in house with me, of a matter that concerned me not but to rob me of my peace. I withdrew myself instantly, for I perceived the Lord was departed from me. Then I was ashamed and confounded. I thought I dare not to ask one petition more of the Lord, I had so often forfeited my pardon and made breach upon breach. I had often made strong resolutions when I lost the first sense of pardon, if the Lord would but once more try me again with his love, I would walk so circumspect and have such care over all my thoughts, words, and actions that I would not grieve his Holy Spirit again. But I made those promises in my own strength. I know the Lord would have enabled me to perform this and more if I had been faithful to the grace given me.

After this, my causing the Lord to withdraw himself from me by unnecessary talking, I fell into great darkness and continued so some time. Till, as near as I can remember last Ash Wednesday was twelve month, Mr. [Joseph] Humphreys preached in the Room at the Horsefair. He expounded on the seventeenth of St. John's Gospel. I believe then he had the power of God and the Spirit with him. I felt the application of it to my soul when he expressed those words, "Jesus is praying for you up to the Father." I said, "Lord wilt thou give me an inheritance in the kingdom." It was applied to me again, "Thou shalt have an inheritance in my kingdom."¹⁷ My soul seemed as though it was taken unto another region. It lasted but for a few moments. I cannot be particular, but I think it was that time only I received power under Mr. Humphreys to receive any promise by faith—I mean under his preaching.

But as soon as you returned from London,¹⁸ I found you came not alone. I know of a truth the Lord was with you. I felt the gospel reach my heart continually; great workings and strong struggling for many months, even to this day. [I am] frequently under such a deep sense of that love of Jesus to me, though such a deep revolter and backslider, that I stand amazed at the boundless mercy and long suffering God the Lord shows me. More that every breath I draw loudly calls for praise I am not in hell. I do very

¹³William Seward, *Journal of a Voyage ...* (London: Oswald, et al., 1740).

¹⁴JW was again in Bristol Nov. 11–20, 1740; see *Journal, Works*, 19:172–73.

¹⁵Isa. 44:22.

¹⁶Cf. John 8:24.

¹⁷Cf. Matt. 25:34.

¹⁸CW returned to Bristol in early April 1741.

often stand astonished and wonder I had not been there long ago.

The Lord has brought to my memory very fresh great deliverances he wrought for me above twenty years ago, as I thought then was of chance; but the Lord shows me that he hath watched over me for good from my youth up until now. Yet I feel in me a spirit of ingratitude. I want to be more thankful. I find a continual desire of being set free, that my whole life might be spent in praise. I seldom come under the gospel delivered by your mouth but in an especial manner I feel the workings of my heart: longing, reaching, panting after Jesus; that some times I have faith as I think to be healed at once. My soul will be inflamed with love to Christ. But when I feel my heart cold and hard, I fall into great heaviness, and am ready to think I deceived myself, and am presumptuous because I cannot doubt of a deliverance. This I find the Lord has so far wrought in me, I am contented to <...¹⁹.

I have endeavoured to write what may be necessary, though I have been tempted not to write. But I know I believe and feel, by the continual witness of God's Spirit, you are the true ministers of the everlasting gospel. And God forbids me to disobey you. I desire to praise God with the utmost sincerity for his great mercy in sending you amongst us. Far be it from me that I should do anything to grieve you. This I know is of the Lord. Also, my heart has been often grieved at our ingratitude to you when we have such continual manifestation of your love and faithfulness, witnessed by the daily care, and pains, and trouble you go through for our sakes. Your sufferings are great, but your reward shall be great.

Sir, I beg you will hold me in continual remembrance, and bear me upon your heart before the Lord. Pray for me, that the Lord may direct me in my prayers what petitions to ask for you as my faithful pastor and shepherd, that am

A prisoner of hope,

Eliz[abe]th Downs

Endorsement: by CW, "Eliz. Downs's April 1742 / Exp[er]ience / Justified in the Sacram[en]t of the Dissenters."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/53.²⁰

¹⁹A fold in the letter obscures one line of text.

²⁰A transcription was published in Morgan, "Testimonials," 85–91. For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. April 15, 1742]

I am very sorry my dear friend should make any excuse for writing such short letter. Your remembrance of me will be sufficient, were it by a word to convince me of your prayers, which I feel continuously.

Your hymns are a great comfort to us, and more now as poor Miss Fanny [Cowper] declines so fast. That obliges me to keep close by her. The Lord increases her every day. She sent for me last night thinking she was near her end. We prayed continuously till she said she was comforted. She said then she should not die that night, though she knew she should [die] in this illness, and then broke out into such overflowings of thanksgiving to God and in such affection to me [that] nature well nigh sunk. I then asked her how her soul was. She said without doubt or fear she knew God would finish his work. She seemed extreme[ly] desirous of death a week ago, but then said she was sure the reason why she was not released was that she had so much will. But *that* is now taken away, and it is plain for as to eating or drinking she has none left. She speaks but little to any but me, and loves none to be near her but me. A single word of complaint has never once passed from her mouth, but says if it was more she could bear it. About three nights ago she said she had not one part about her that she not feel pain from, but it was no uneasiness to her. Had she chosen she would be just what she then was. Thus she goes on—no seeming great joy, but a broken will, settled peace, and sure hope. She told our chaplain¹ the other day that she knew she was not fit to see God, but sure she was that this would be accomplished in its time.

I proposed sending for her papa² or any of her friends in the flesh. She said no, no. Had not her sister [Anne] been there she should not have had a thought about her. Her whole of worldly love seems cast on me—as the instrument God had made use of for her soul’s good. This instance of God’s love to me in this soul sure will make *me humble* all my days. I don’t feel the least regret to part with her. And the people of the world that was to hear our discourse would wonder extremely, for we all talk of her death as if we were talking of something that was to happen but with no appearance of anything but joy. Her [words?³] of tenderness hurt me violently last night, but else[wise] I have felt a sure hope of her happiness.

What letters you write more, as you can have but little time, direct to her. And I think it will be great pleasure and delight to hear from you and that you bear a love to her, that while she lives I desire you will give the time you have in writing to her, for I feel from her disposition I want to give her all my happiness even of the low world. But her baptism of fire is at hand. The Comforter will soon come. With her illness and so many *worldly affairs*, I am almost in as great a constant hurry as you can be. Our constant prayers are with you and your brother. Our pillar(?) wrote today. We was all delighted with it and hope you will make him inform us of the work of our Lord.

Many things you have said to me came into my mind—your distress of soul and backwardness to the ministry. And something rebuked my concern: “What are his thoughts of himself? Must not *God’s work be done by him*?” These are just, as they entered to stop farther thought with relation to your state. I hope you will find shortly more supplies of strength. Go on with a single eye and there is nothing can stand against a believer in Christ. I have wrote this long letter and I do assure you when I sat down to write had a vast number of things that now must be deferred till another post. “May the Lord preserve

¹Rev. Edward Ellis, rector of Markfield, was also serving as LH’s chaplain.

²William Cowper, Esq. (1695–1756), Knight Harbinger to George II. Their mother, Anne (Scudamore?) Cowper was apparently deceased by 1741.

³The word is nearly illegible; CW rendered it “excess” in his shorthand copy.

your going out and coming in.”⁴ We shall be in prayer at three o’clock. I could be angry with Mr. [Charles] Graves. He says there is two designs to communion, but I shall have [more] next week—and says no more. I am in a hurry.

Your most faithful sister,

Miss Cowper is extremely yours.

Address: “For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Foundery / near upper Moorfields / London.”

Postmark: “?/AP.”

Frank: “Free Huntingdon.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon] / April 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/4.⁵ See also CW’s polished and somewhat abridged copy in shorthand in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 24c–25a.⁶

⁴Ps. 121:8.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 52–53.

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 156–57.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[April–May 1742]

[[She neither doubts nor fears any m[oment]; bids me say to you she now remembers you in all her prayers, and believes God will give her p[ure] eyes before her hour of death that she may be able to pray for you in full triumph of faith. She has a most true affection for you, reminds us of [sr?] often and wishes the k[ingdom?] to be with you. She seems to have no sort of love of anything but the church of God, so strong is this b[eacon of] f[faith].

[[My h[earth] can never be faithful [to any?] one.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 12b.¹

¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 131.

From Elizabeth Halfpenny¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
May 1742

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire, I have given you a full account of the state of my soul at present, and also of some of my former life as I thought would be proper to mention, as it now occurs to my mind.

It pleased God that when Mr. [George] Whitefield first came to preach in Bristol I went to hear him at [St.] Nicholas church, and seemed to approve of his doctrine, and was a constant hearer of his and seldom missed any opportunity. Mr. Whitefield's doctrine had some effect upon me, so that I was in part convinced of sin, and shed tears very often. But [I] received no glimpse of the light of God's countenance and went on still in darkness and had no thoughts of a Saviour. Now I clearly see that I was then grovelling in the dark and knew not whither I went.

When Mr. Whitefield was going to Georgia, I was unwilling to be a hearer of your brother, Mr. John [Wesley], who was then to come here to Bristol. [I] went to Mr. Whitefield on that account and testified to him my unwillingness to hear Mr. John, whom Mr. Whitefield recommended as a faithful shepherd in such a manner that induced me to consent to be his hearer. And accordingly I went to the Bowling Green,² where he had not long been preaching before I was tempted to think he was a Roman Catholic. I found now that I was a hearty bigot, as it was well known.

When I was under your brother's doctrine those words had great effect upon me which I had in my childhood meditated upon: "Ask, and ye shall receive, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you."³ My business calling me among those who they call the fashionable people of the world, who endeavoured through their pretension to have love and tenderness for my soul to entice me from hearing the word, by telling me such things as the world doth. But all their devices had no effect upon me (blessed be God!). At one time I went to the Bowling Green to hear Mr. John, where I heard him speak of entertaining strangers, which I found affected me much. But [I] rather esteemed him as a saviour than a minister, and so continued in that dreadful state for about a year, my soul never being at rest but when I was with him or hearing him talked of. But this idolatrous love proceeded no further than trusting in the arm of flesh. But yet I was not willing anyone should know it, lest I should be told I was in error. I had promised to go into the country, and at the time of my going your brother was just come down from London, and I went down to the New Room in order to see him because I could not go away before I had seen him. I went down but he was not there; but Mr. [Thomas] Richards and Mr. [John] Ellison were there at breakfast, who sung a hymn whose first line is, "O thou who when I did complain,"⁴ at which time I was in some measure supported under my heavy burden.

While I was in the country I had the liberty of coming to the room at Kingswood where I saw Mr. [Edward] Nowers, to whom I was pressed in spirit to speak concerning the idolatrous love I had for your brother which he had so often warned us against. But fearing he would put a wrong construction on what I should speak to him, I refrained for that time. But afterwards I spoke to him, upon which he told me it was no strange things to him to hear of those things, or in other words to that effect, and I found considerable relief at that time. Sometimes after, I went to Rose Green, where Mr. John expounded on

¹This is apparently the Elizabeth Halfpenny buried in Bristol in 1746; nothing else is known of her beyond this testimonial.

²JW's first time preaching at the Bowling Green in Bristol was Apr. 8, 1739; see JW to James Hutton, Apr. 9, 1739, *Works*, 25:627. He does not give his text.

³Matt. 7:7.

⁴This hymn, by Samuel Wesley Sr., was included by JW in *HSP* (1739), 138–39.

“the fiery trial,”⁵ in which trial I was then in and continued therein sometime. When Mr. John came down from London and expounded in the New Room,⁶ I then found my affection grow cold toward him, at which I was grieved and troubled very much, not knowing at that time that it was a conviction from the Lord.

At the first time of expounding at Weaver’s Hall, Mr. John was expounding on the death of Lazarus,⁷ when I found such work in my heart as I never felt before, and saw that necessity of a thorough change of life, a blessing so great that I knew not how to praise God for. I went home, and for some time would read ne’er a book but the Bible. I began to feel the drawing of the Father, which continued a considerable time. I was very glad to hear people talk of the love of God, though I myself was not a partaker of it. But I could always rejoice to hear talk of the loving kindness of the Lord and I desired that the Lord would teach me what I knew not.

New Year’s Day [1740], you expounded “the barren fig tree”⁸ at the New Room, which made a considerable impression on my heart which continued about a fortnight. I had no rest because of my desire to have more knowledge of the Scripture. When you said that we might be put on a level with whores and drunkards and outward sinners, I could not receive the saying and staggered at it very much. Mr. John would often say to me, “Oh that you could become as a little child” (blessed be God!). I believe his prayers are heard. I was at Temple Backs at one time,⁹ there the Lord was pleased to enlighten my understanding to see the meaning of part of the Scripture. I felt, as it were, a mountain removed from my heart and clouds from my understanding. Oh what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits and his unspeakable mercies? Sing ye heavens, and rejoice O earth, for the Lord had done it. Let the floods clap their hands, and the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.

About two years ago I went to Rose Green, where (under your ministry, blessed be God!) I received forgiveness of sins,¹⁰ since which I found that I thirsted for Christ more and more, and more of his love. I found that whatever temptation would beset me would work together for my good if I would cast all my care on the Lord and not in my own strength.

At a certain time in my band I received an extraordinary measure of the love of God, which made me think that I loved the Lord alone. I had no love for the world nor the things thereof, I counted all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. Ever since, the word of God sinks in my heart with greater power and demonstration, and I enjoy a closer union with God.

The time that your brother read the letter in the bands which Mr. [John] Cennick wrote, it was of great use to me.¹¹ This underhand dealing of Mr. Cennick could never be right, which made me have no conversation with him. And at that time, the Lord strengthened me to be upon my watch against Mr. Whitefield coming here; and so I never heard him, neither have I had a desire to speak to him ever since. But the Lord hath gathered me as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and I doubt not but he

⁵JW preached on this text, 1 Pet. 4:12–12, at the Rose Green on May 18, 1740; see his *Diary, Works*, 19:420.

⁶Apparently referring to JW’s brief time in Bristol, Nov. 2–7, 1740, during CW’s illness.

⁷John 11. Halfpenny appears to be skipping around chronologically. If she means the first time JW is known to have preached at the Weaver’s Hall in Bristol, this was Apr. 21, 1739; see *Journal, Works*, 19:50 (JW does not give his text, but this would fit since it was Good Friday).

⁸Luke 13:6–9.

⁹I.e., the Malt-house in Bristol at which JW and CW preached. JW preached on Luke 13 there on Nov. 13, 1740, which is likely the occasion described here.

¹⁰This was on June 22, 1740, with CW preaching on Ezek. 16; see *MS Journal*.

¹¹See JW, *Journal*, Feb. 22, 1741, *Works*, 181–83.

will, if I prove faithful to the grace I have received.

Sometime ago, I could not believe that there was any such state as perfection before death, but under your doctrine on a Saturday, I was convinced to the contrary. Being at Kingswood on sacrament day, in an instant [it] was brought to my view by the eye of faith, the form of a tall parson in his surplice. His hair was white and [he] seemed to move on the ground with his back towards me, but he was soon vanished. The first time of my coming to hear the word, after being confined from it a considerable time, the word came with such power and demonstration that I was so full with the love of you, it caught me to overflow with tears several times which left a soreness at my heart, which I never felt before.

Oh that I may be always upon my watch, looking unto the Lord, that I may have no head knowledge, no wisdom of my own, but that wisdom which flows from God. Oh may I ever give the glory to God for the blessing that he bestowed upon me in drawing me to hear your doctrine and enabling me to continue in the way that he hath appointed. Now there is nothing troubling me but a continual fear of you and your brother's death. But it comes to mind often that the Lord will strengthen me if he should be pleased to call you hence. I now can rejoice in tribulation and persecutions. And as I have been a partaker of the benefit of your prayers, Lord grant that I may always be teachable with respect to your advice and direction to me, being sensible it will be for my good.

Your unworthy servant and daughter in the Lord,

Elizabeth Halfpenny

I have omitted one thing which I have undermentioned:

At the time you expounded at Rose Green I thought it was a very unsuitable chapter which you was upon, which was the sixteenth of Ezekiel, and was much offended at it. But before you had done, the Lord was pleased to set to his seal, and I received forgiveness of sins. The words came with so great power that I seemed to be lifted off the ground, and never since have I fallen in doubt of my justification. And now if I find any darts or temptations assaulting me, they are not burdensome to me.

Endorsement: by CW, "Eliz. Halfpenny's Exp[er]ience May 1742."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/87.¹²

¹²A previous transcription was published in Morgan, "Testimonials," 91–94. For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Elizabeth Sayse¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
May 1742

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire, I have endeavoured to give you a full account of the state of my soul at present, and also of some part of my former life as I thought would be proper as it does at present occur to my mind.

It pleased God that about five years ago I went to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield preach at St. Nicholas church and thought that strange things were brought to my ears. The word came very sweet, but my understanding was not opened. I approved of his doctrine, which seemed as a lovely song of one that hath a elegant voice, and heard him constantly. And when I heard him recommend Mr. [John] Wesley to the people as one to be preferred before him, I thought that impossible.

When Mr. Wesley came, I went to hear him in Nicholas Street society,² but at that time the word had little effect on me. But at his preaching at Clifton church,³ the word came very sweet and with power. I shed tears, but knew not well for what reason. I went constantly to the societies, and at one time when the people were taken with violent fits of conviction, some of whom being in a few minutes set at liberty and sang praise to the Lord, I also sympathized with them and thought that I also must have been [a] partaker of their condition before I could be a Christian and wished to undergo the same convictions. When I came home, I did not refrain from acquainting my neighbours what strange work the Lord was reviving in the midst of the years.

Sometime after, Mr. John Wesley went to London and Mr. [John] Cennick came here, who I heard expound at Bedminster, on the Revelations. But it was all a mystery to me. When you expounded on Isaiah it all seemed very sweet.⁴ But when you, or another, said that we deserved to be damned, I thought I might be excepted, thinking I was not as bad as a whore or a drunkard. But soon after I saw that my inward parts were very wickedness, and could put myself on a level with the chief of sinners. I was very angry with my husband when he put himself in the bands. I had great convictions, insomuch that when I went to bed I feared I should be in hell before the morning. I was afraid to go to prayer for fear of the devil, who I thought was in every corner of the house. In this condition I came to hear the word, expecting to quiet my conscience, which was as the troubled sea that cannot rest.

In this state I continued for several weeks. When my husband talked of faith and forgiveness of sins, I thought we might receive forgiveness of sin but not in such a manner as to know and feel it applied. Thus I went on in darkness and deadness until it pleased God, whom quickeneth the dead, in great mercy [to] pass by me when I was in my blood and said unto me, "Live!"—which was, at your repeating the eleventh verse of the thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel, "Say into them, as I live, saith the Lord God: I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn

¹Elizabeth was the wife of Thomas Sayse, a hooper, who appears on a 1741 list of the bands in Bristol; cf. *WHS* 19 (1934): 162. There are marriages listed in Bristol of a Thomas Sayse to Elizabeth Cromarty in 1733; and a man of the same name to Elizabeth Merreyman in 1735; it is unclear which may be her. A widow, Elizabeth Sayes resided on Hanover Street in Bristol in 1775, according to *Bristol Directory*.

²JW first preached at this society on Apr. 1, 1739; see *Journal*.

³JW filled the pulpit of the church in Clifton, Gloucestershire, for the Sundays of May 1739 while its curate (John Hodges) was ill. His text on May6, 1739, the first Sunday, was Gal. 3:22; see *Journal*.

⁴CW began expounding through the book of Isaiah at Weaver's Hall on Aug. 31, 1739; see *MS Journal*.

you, turn you from your evil ways, for why you die, O house of Israel.”⁵ I gladly received the exhortation and could with great joy testify that I had redemption in his blood, the forgiveness of my sins.

When I came home I could not be persuaded by my husband not to think that Christ lived in me, being so overflowed with the sense of pardoning love. But soon after, I gave place to the reasoning devil who asked, “How can these things be?” And so I was in doubt about the certainty of it, which I reneged the more when I felt stirrings of anger. And what to do I knew not. One night my husband and I were coming to the Room where I expected to hear you, but one told us that Mr. [John] Cennick was to be there—at which I was so displeased that I would have returned, and attempted to go back three or four times had not my husband used his utmost persuasion that I might not. But as soon as I came to the Room, I was for going out. But I found at Mr. Cennick’s giving out a hymn that I was taking the enemy’s part against my own soul, for when the hymn was sung those four lines of another hymn came to my mind which are written below, and the Lord spoke those words to my soul and applied them to my heart; so that, to the great comfort of my soul, I could once more declare that the God of tender mercy had healed my backsliding and written pardon in my heart as with a pen of iron. I could wish to die that instant, because I was not at all afraid to meet the King of terror.

I know thou will accept me now,
I know my sins are now forgiven.
My head to death O let me bow,
Nor keep my life, to lose my heaven.⁶

Thus I went on my way rejoicing.

Soon after, I entered myself in the bands. And when I came with the bands the first time I had reasoning with myself in this manner: “As I have now entered into the bands, I must certainly cut off the right hand and pluck out the right eye, and forsake all that I may be Christ’s disciple, for no man putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of heaven.” I did not long continue in the light of God’s countenance but fell into doubts and fears. The poor and needy sought water, but there was none and her tongue failed for thirst. I was so feeble that I could scarce speak, my sorrows compassed me about on every side. I thought I should never any more have the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. I had no rest in my bonds by reason of the absence of my God. My very body was ready for the grave. The spirit had well nigh failed before him and the soul which he had made.

Sometime after, I went to hear your brother, Mr. John [Wesley], preach at Temple Backs⁷ where the power of God was in an extraordinary manner. But I was so much cast down that I was obliged to have the help of one of our sisters to place me in a convenient place for hearing, where I some time waited, expecting to find relief, being sensible how God did visit others then present with his loving kindness, and the word seeming to me as a tinkling cymbal. I was as a dead man out of mind. But before it was over, I heard Mr. John speaking thus, “Is there one soul among you that seems to be forsaken, from whom God hath hid his face? Is there not one that would gladly accept of a Saviour.” In speaking [these] words or some others to that effect, he fastened his eyes on me and applied himself to me as though he had known my desperate case, and offered salvation to us so fervently till at last I received it in such a manner as I never expected. I felt in my inmost soul that I was forgiven. I was as if I was flying on the wings of love up to my Saviour’s breast. The angel of the Lord came upon me and a marvellous light shone into my prison and my chains fell off. I found that my Saviour was a physician that healed both

⁵CW quoted this verse near the end of his sermon on the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1–11), in Weaver’s Hall on Sept. 30, 1739; see *MS Journal* and copy of the sermon (MARC, MA 1977/597/8).

⁶CW, “Justified, But not Sanctified,” st. 8, *HSP* (1739), 152.

⁷This was the location of the Malt-house where JW and CW preached on occasion.

soul and body. In short, I cannot express the happiness I then enjoyed.

I always found great comfort when I received bread and wine in remembrance of our Lord's body and blood, which I actually fed on by faith as my body is fed by meat and drink, and [it] always left a lasting impression on my heart. One time in particular, at receiving the sacrament, I felt the power of God in such a manner that I was as one that had but little strength left. I seemed to the minister as though I was in heaviness, who told me that it was a place for rejoicing and not for mourning. At one time I heard you encouraging us against martyrdom, at which I seemed to stagger, fearing when I should be called to suffer for Christ I should recant. But some time after, when parting with a friend, I thought I was a stranger and pilgrim on the earth and could readily (had I been called that time to suffer) jumped in and clapped my hands in the flames, for I counted all things but dung and dross so I might win Christ.

But I soon was lifted up and trusted in the gifts and graces. I was rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing. But all this while I was not sensible that I was lifted up, until you met our private band—when you asked me if I was not troubled with self and pride, which struck me as dead for I knew not what to answer. And when I came under the word I found it to be quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. For I was so sensibly cut by it as my body might be by a sword and would often wish to withdraw myself from such searching.

Thus I went on mourning for the loss of my Saviour as one that mourneth for his only son. I was as Noah's dove and could find no rest till I was again taken into the ark. The name of a Saviour was as ointment poured forth. I hungered and thirsted for my Lord, and every place seemed melancholy by reason of his absence. I could not lift up my heart to God, for he seemed as though he was not pacified with me. I had no power to pray to God but to the Son. It was he to whom I sued for pardon, that he might reconcile me again to his offended Father, which he did one night [when] I was at prayer. For before I had ended my prayer to Christ that he might reconcile me to his Father I could not only cry, "My Lord," but, "My Lord and my God." And in the night time I had such a view of the presence of God that humbled me to the dust. I became in his sight as a dead dog. I saw that I was in his sight less than nothing, and vanity, and as a beast of the field. During my seeing the vision the words that came to my mind were those, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee. [...] Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock and will cover thee with my hand when I pass by. And I will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen."⁸ So gracious a sight it was that I know not how to forget it, Rejoice O heaven, and you that dwell therein. Shout with joy you worms of the earth for the Lord omnipotent's condescension in thus humbling himself to behold a sinful worm, even dust and ashes, and favouring me with such amazing love and condescension.

After this, the Lord was pleased to uncover my heart more and more, and so all evil tempers did beset me sore. But the Lord gave me strength as my day was. I have gone through close trials, which always worked together for my good. For I found that temptation always stirred me up to lay hold on the Lord, for suffering faith did always brighter glow and purify the heart. I go to prayer generally with reluctancy, but when I am at prayer I find the Lord reproves and convinces me of my folly for as much as he then gives me an extraordinary blessing and [I] could then wish to be always at prayer.

Since Mr. John's coming here this last time,⁹ I find that I am quickened and strengthened considerably; and more especially when the hymns on universal redemption are sung.¹⁰ At a certain time when the leaders met, everyone was asked concerning the witness of the spirit. When I was asked when I had received it, I mentioned the time at which we were all affected so much that we were all as one

⁸Exod. 33:19–23.

⁹JW's most recent visit to Bristol had been in Feb. 1742.

¹⁰CW, *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741).

mighty blaze, the fire of love, God being in the mist of us as in the holy place of Sinai.

The more I press forward, the more I feel of the evil and corruption of my heart. And though I feel my sins rise as mountains, yet the Lord gives power against them. He deals tenderly with me and no temptation happens without his making a way for me to escape that I may be able to bear it. I doubt not, but the Lord who hath bestowed upon me his grace and blessings in such a manner as he has done, will (if I am faithful to his grace) bring me into the rest of the people of God. I have no more to add but that I shall acknowledge you as my father in Christ, and that it is my bounden duty to pray to God to give you the choicest of his blessings in time and eternity.

Your unworthy servant and daughter in the Lord,

Elizabeth Sais

Endorsement: by CW, “Elis. Sayse / May 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/126.¹¹

¹¹A previous transcription was published in Morgan, “Testimonials,” 95–98. For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Elisabeth Vandome¹

[London]
May 1742

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I desired to send you a few lines to let you know how gracious the Lord is unto me, but can't express it in any means, for it is inexpressible. God's love overflows my soul continually. I can cry unto the Lord. Methinks I could always pray for all my brethren and sisters in Christ, and for all mankind. My heart is filled with his love toward all, yet I desire more of his love. Although he filled me as with marrow and fatness, my soul still hungers after him. Indeed he has wrought a great work in me. O how shall I praise him enough? How shall I give him thanks for all his mercies and loving-kindness unto me? Indeed, I could always praise him and can never weary of praising. But still I can neither praise him nor love him enough. All my desire is unto him, and to the remembrance of his name. I could be always among God's children. All my delight is to do his will in all things. My soul continually cries, "Father, thy will be done." I am happy, happy indeed, in the Lord. O who would not desire to love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth? Seeing his yoke is so easy and his burden very light. O that I could but persuade all to embrace him. God has given me to feel in a measure how he so loved us as to give his life a ransom for all, for methinks I could lay down my life for any soul.

All this has God done, but I cannot express what I feel. For wherever I go my heart is ready to break with love, but grieved only to see the careless world. O that they all might feel what I feel and much more! O that we might all rejoice together in the Lord.

Dear sir, pray for me that the Lord may never leave me, no not for one moment; for then I should fall. And may the Lord bless you with all heavenly blessings and strengthen you mightily with his might! O champion of God, reverend sir, I am

Your unworthy daughter in Christ

Elisabeth Vandome

Endorsement: by CW, "Elis. Vandom / wrapt / in devotion / May 1742."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/131.²

¹Elisabeth Vandome (d. 1768), as well as her sister Lydia (d. 1806), appear in bands for single women throughout the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

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

From Joan Webb¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
May 1742

I was one that always lived a sober life, and I kept to my church and sacrament every Sunday. For some time I had strong desires to serve God, but I was often terrified at the thoughts of death. I had two texts of Scripture that often came to my mind; one was, “He that keepeth the whole law and offendeth in one point is guilty of all,”² the other was, “Perfect love casteth out all fear.”³ And I thought I had not that perfect love which made me often to fear. Then I thought to pray more and oftener for I was very desirous to love God.

A little after that Mr. [George] Whitefield came to town and I went and heard him but was not awakened as yet. My husband at that time left me and I was in great trouble. One day I opened the Bible and where I opened I read, which was Isaiah the forty-first [chapter] and from verse the eighth to verse the fifteenth. I found great comfort in those verses. I did not know that I was to apply the promises to myself. I had then some hope that God would bring me out of all my trouble.

The first time I went to church after my trouble the text was the last verse of the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah. I felt the words but did not know that it was from God. My heart was soft with weeping. I after[wards] came to hear Mr. John Wesley. He put it very close to us whether we did love God. I thought I could then make answer, Yes surely, for I had took great care to live a sober life. But I thought, “How should I be sure that I did love God?” Then he said that some of you will say, “How shall we know if we love God?” He said, that it was as easy to know as to know whether we were hot or cold. I thought it was not. He said if we loved one man or woman better than another, we must certainly know it. I then thought, did not I love my husband better than God. I was willing to put it off and thought it was my duty.

I heard him again and was fully convinced that I did not love God, which was a sore burden to me. I was so grieved with the thoughts of not loving God that my other trouble abated. I had then sweet drawings. I often heard the word, and one time Mr. Wesley expounding upon these words, “He that is born of God doth not commit sin.”⁴ I thought as Nicodemus did, “How can these things be?”⁵ For I thought the best Christians did sin while they lived here. I was careful in hearing and it was made very plain to me that he that was born of God might live without sin. It was great things to me, but I thought nothing was impossible with God. I was taken with a great trembling, and turning my head to the window and looking in the element, I thought I saw God and Jesus Christ standing at his right hand. I strove to hide my trembling from the people. It was so powerful that I was obliged to come out for fear I should fall down. I was so ignorant that I did not know that I was to be justified. I knew it soon after that and thought if ever I was, that was the time, but was not able to lay hold of it. I desired the Lord to show me if we were to know our sins were forgiven. I opened the Bible and read a chapter in the Epistles of John and was fully convinced. I laid down the book and said I would wait God’s time. I was very desirous to put myself upon a level with harlots and publicans but I was not able, for I still thought myself better than they.

¹This may be Joan (Ashford) Webb, who married Thomas Webb in Bristol in 1710.

²James 2:10.

³1 John 4:18.

⁴Cf. 1 John 3:9.

⁵John 3:9.

I then spent much time alone in tears and prayers, desiring the Lord to show me, and one day in pray[er] the Lord showed me in a moment that I was the same by nature as the chief of sinners. Then I could see what great reason I had to bless God, for I saw that it was nothing in me but the restraining grace of God that kept me. I could not rest day nor night, my burden was so great. I put in a note to desire the Lord to show me if I was justified. I then received the witness in myself. I thought I felt Christ in my heart. Such comfort I never before tasted. It lasted some few days before the enemy of my soul come to tell me it was great things to know my sins were forgiven.

I then came upon trial in the bands, whom I heard had the same temptation, which greatly strengthened me when ever I was doubtful. It came to me Christ died for sinners, and I knew I was a sinner, and then all my doubt did vanish. About Christmas I was earnestly desiring the witness of the Spirit when I came to the [New] Room. You were praying and earnestly contending for the same which I believed I then received—for that comfort was sweeter than the other. I then could rejoice if I heard the archangel sounding the trumpet. I hardly knew where I was. How could I praise God who had been so merciful to me, a helpless worm before that time. I saw our blessed Lord on the cross always looking upon me for two days and two nights. But I could never walk by sight without I felt it in my heart. I thought I would often pray that I might not be tempted, for in the beginning I was afraid of temptations. For I always found the devil could never stand before earnest prayer. One time I felt such a heft upon me that no tongue is able to express and I could not tell what was the meaning of it. But I could then say that if God had cast me into hell, he was merciful. It lasted three or four hours.

After I had received the witness of the Spirit I had some times fears and doubts. But I found the witness grew stronger, till I found that all my doubts were gone. The large manifestations I had in my last sickness I am not able to express. I was no more afraid of death than I was to go to my bed, for I had a strong witness that the Lord would finish his work before he would take me hence. About a fortnight after, I sat up [i.e., kept a night vigil]. I had such a cry in my heart for holiness. I wanted to be far from all company, that I might cry aloud unto the Lord for holiness. That cry lasted about three days.

I find my burden is greatly lightened, for it seems to me that my burden is laid upon Christ. I find I have nothing to do but to look to him, for I greatly see my own helplessness—that I am no more than a leaf that flies before the wind. I see all my thoughts and actions [are] very imperfect. I see that I am now kept every moment by looking to the Lord, but I have never no doubt. I do so much believe that I shall be delivered from all sin as I do that I shall one day die.

Dear sir, pray that seed may be sown deep in my heart. And the Lord grant that you that sow and we that reap may rejoice together in that day and hear that comfortable sentence, “Come you blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.”⁶ So I remain,

One of your weak children in Christ,

Joan Webb

Endorsement: by CW, “Joan Webb’s Exp[er]ience / May 1742.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/136.⁷

⁶Matt. 25:34.

⁷For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Susannah Designe

[Bristol]
May 1, 1742

Dear and Reverend Sir,

As far as I know of my heart, I have given you a plain account of God's proceedings with me.¹ From the beginning I found many temptations, both before I began to write and after. But by praying and looking to Christ I found his grace sufficient for me; and in obedience to you, for his sake, I began and found the Lord greatly assisted me in bringing to my remembrance his work upon my soul as though I had kept a journal of my life.

But if I forgot God, he did not forget me. O my long-suffering Lord! How did he bear my manners in the wilderness of my life, when I was a stranger to him? How often did his Spirit strive with me! But I steered aside like a broken bow, rejected his counsel, and would [take] none of his reproofs. Now did I see how he did lead me from step to step, preserved me from my youth up unto this present hour and moment. Surely it is that I may glorify him here and be happy in him to all eternity.

Dear sir, I earnestly desire your prayers that the Lord may carry on his work in my soul, and that the enemy may get no advantage over me by turning that into poison to my soul which is intended to the glory of God and the good of others. I do not know that ever I felt my heart more free from pride or the desire of praise than at the present. But I cannot trust that, because I know it will deceive me. Nothing but the grace of God can keep me, and he that keeps me this moment I believe will keep me the next. O may I give him all the glory, but yet own a grateful acknowledgement unto you. For the Lord hath often made you an instrument in his hand of bringing my soul low before him. O may I ever acknowledge you my spiritual father! O may I be faithful unto death, that I may receive a crown of glory and be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your unworthy daughter,

Susannah Designe

Address: "To Revd Mr Charles Wesley."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 9/2/4.

¹This is appended to her account begun (and dated) Apr. 8, 1748.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
May [5–8,] 1742

We all rejoiced over yours.¹ Dear Miss Fanny, weak as she is, wanted a pen and ink to copy them² out, that she might have them by her. We talk of the approaching hour [of death,] and I pray by her as one whom the Lord has summoned. She has no joys, but settled peace, and says she expects more surely the completion of all Christ's promises than anything she sees. Oh happy soul, who will soon be delivered! What shall I say to tell you how happy I think her. My tears would convince you if you were here. Oh the slave I am to sin and Satan, a vile worm! You never can know how evil my heart is. I wear out God's love, and shall even his mercy in time. I feel no desires that his will should *not* be done in all things, but how miserable is it to find pleasure in anything but him? This thought distracts me.

I know I do not offend in my tenderness of this object before me. She is placed here by God for this end. And when I think of this my Saviour's love, I could fall down, never to rise no more before Him. First to reflect light through this poor vile clay! And then make it the instrument of leading her to her spiritual father by whom God has given her blessings many, and these only as pledge of those that neither eye hath seen nor ear heard that she now waits for, full bought with hope. This is great! But what tongue can express the love that brought her to witness this here? I often weep over her to testify what my words never can. What you have done for this soul you will find repaid you in a day, and when you think not of it. We pray for you over her every night and often in the day, to which she ever adds a most sincere amen. Especially when we entreat the Lord to reward your labours of love to us all a thousandfold.

She sings, prays, or reads all day and all night, and says why should she sleep [and] waste her time. I think you would love her now. I feel that for her I never yet did. If you can figure to yourself that you could ever see me in her state and I ever able to exact from you that pity, love, and joy I feel for her—with these ideas, my dear friend, sit down and make a hymn for just such a one. I want to sing over her. I hardly can ask you this when you almost every post favour me by showing in the kindest manner your remembrance of your absent friends.

Your return to Bristol³ will not fail to remind you of the many journeys you made to Bath—and I should have said “painful ones,” had you not been sent by one who bears all our burdens when he sends us of such his messengers. Many blessings were conveyed to our souls by them. I long for gratitude for this as well as all things else both to God and you.

Thursday night [May 6], eleven o'clock

I have not long left, that dear soul ready to yield her spirit to his hands who gave it. Oh pray for me, for my tears must pray for her. I now behold so saint-like a countenance. She told me she thought her stay could not now be long here. She found all nature sinking within her. She was so composed. She seemed unmoved at my broken accents in prayer, which even three days ago affected her with a return of love and tenderness, though her desire is never to have me from before her eyes one moment. Her affection seems the strongest, without betraying weakness or what may be called inordinate, that is to be conceived. It is easily seen she loves to have me and me only do all things for her, but never shows or expresses any anxiety if I do not. All her broken sleeps are only for fresh supplies of strength for prayer, singing or reading. And when she awakes out of them it is with a verse or line of a hymn, a short lifting up her heart in prayer. Should she continue long, she will convince all who are not already [convinced].

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²In his shorthand copy CW clarified, replacing “them” with “your hymns.”

³CW was returning from Wales to Bristol.

Cease not to pray for us. This witness in death may add many souls to the faith,⁴ and I believe one is here. Our chaplain is much affected and takes great pleasure (when we allow it) being with us.⁵ But as I never accustomed him to that much I am under now, and chose to have *him* seek it of me. But he is observed by all to be extreme different in. I spoke strong[ly] to him and I consulted my word of life upon the discourse, and these words first presented to me: “This Levite shall also be given unto thee.”

I have seen Mr. [John] S[impson] and have had some hours’ talk by which you will find, my friend, all your fear of stillness for me will break.⁶ I cannot believe they could arise in your heart from the persuasion of any particular charms or propensity in the doctrine. Neither could I think they could proceed from the fear of any extraordinary address or rhetoric in this poor misguided man. For I think these talents he can never be accountable for. But as I cannot thank my heart, but head, for any escape of this sort, I can ascribe nothing to any pretensions I could suppose myself to have of superior grace that could be my security, and without this I shall always fear myself. And as far as my weakness will let me never separate this fear from a firm confidence in Christ, then he must be my wisdom in all things, and will be so if I seek him.

Saturday morning [May 8]: We all mourned over yours.⁷ I cannot think but you felt with us, or rather our tears of gratitude over your letters aroused from you some moments of sympathy. Dear Miss Fanny joyed over her letter and she now says she shall bear you on her heart while she lives and with her last breath pray for you. She owes you all the obligations she can to anyone, and indeed (except it be myself) she says true—none can owe you more! You have all this due to you, but mine are of that nature they can be never paid here. But sure I am “for as much as you did it unto one of these you did it unto me,”⁸ will sound throughout heaven. I, the door keeper in the house of my God, shall witness the wreath your brow shall be crowned with; and I now rejoice in hope thereof, and will rejoice till that which I now know only in part shall be done away.

We have no tune to your last hymns.⁹ Don’t make any more in the same measure, and send us a tune for these we have. I have a very fine one from Mrs. Edwin,¹⁰ which you shall soon have. I shall beg another time you will let me know before your moving. I have now a small parcel I wanted you should have had delivered into your own hand when you come to town [i.e., London]. It will be left, if I know certainly when that would be. You have had a letter from your brother;¹¹ do in that affair as you will. I

⁴This is the point where the text filed in MARC, MA 1977/504/1/90 ends, and the section now filed in MARC, MA, 1977/504/1/41a begins.

⁵Rev. Edward Ellis, rector of Markfield.

⁶Continuation of the discussion LH had with John Simpson, mentioned in LH to CW, Aug. 1741. Simpson now resided in Ockbrook, just north of Donington Park. See also LH to JW, Apr. 19, 1742.

⁷This letter is not known to survive.

⁸Matt. 25:45.

⁹These were surely manuscript hymns, and *HSP* (1742) was already in print. Given themes in their letters, the most like hymns are a set titled “Hymns for Those that Wait for Full Redemption,” that appeared in *HSP* (1749), 2:147ff. The early part of this set are in a metre that CW rarely used.

¹⁰Catherine Edwin (1702–73), who was currently a close—but disruptive—friend of LH (they were later estranged when Edwin affiliated with the Moravians). This is a case of the common practice in the eighteenth century of referring to more mature unmarried women as “Mrs.” Unawareness of this practice has led some to confuse references to the unmarried Catherine as being to her sister-in-law, Lady Charlotte Edwin.

¹¹This would be the letter that JW mentions in a letter of May 17, 1742 to CW, were JW suggested that one of the two of the brothers needed to plan a trip to Donington Park before Frances Cowper died (see *Works*, 26:77). The earlier letter to CW is not known to survive.

leave it to him and you, do what you think best.

May the Lord bless and keep you. And after you have done his will long here, and converted many souls to righteousness, you may shine forth as the stars forever and ever.

Miss [Anne] Cowper is sincerely and affectionately yours, as is your dying sister and daughter. I must send my communication with Mr. S[impson] by an other post, or as so little worth, when you have the book will be time enough.

It is possible she may hold a good while longer, but in the hand of the Lord are issues of life and death.

Say a great deal to [Thomas] Max[field] for me. He wants none of my wishes, happy soul, though he has so many of them. I have sent Mr. S[impson]'s conversation to Mr. [John] W[esley],¹² who will send it [to] you.

(no address or endorsement, but CW's shorthand copy of his response appears on the last page)

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/90 & MARC, MA 1977/504/1/41a.¹³ CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy can be found in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 29.¹⁴

¹²See LH to JW, Apr. 19, 1742, *Works*, 26:75.

¹³The beginning of this letter is found in 1977/504/1/90; at some point the last four pages became separated and appear now in 1977/504/1/41a (mixed with a letter of May 23, 1755). The two parts were still together at the time CW prepared his abridged shorthand copy, for material from both appear there. Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 56.

¹⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 164–65.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. May 15, 1742]

[[The enclosed has put me into such a mixture of joy and delight, my heart is full of praise, I know not myself. See how God is with you. Forget not this his love to you. An answer to your prayer has this soul obtained.¹ You must give him glory. Added to my joy of today I had my dear friend's letter.² They ever fill my heart with comfort. You can have no idea how great a blessing I think your friendship. Who but yourself could rejoice at any future prospect of h[oliness] for me. Indeed, when you do, I cannot help wondering at your charity. It is only that love you bear to God can make you ever once think of me who am less than the least of God's people.

[[I find my heart so full of gratitude upon receiving yours that I could not let this day pass without your knowing how often you are the subject of my thoughts and prayers; and not of mine only, for my dear little saint³ I believe will be held up before I seal this to put in a prayer of commendation for you, the last she will ever write. She is in a fine frame of mind. You would delight in her, but I want more and more fire till the vessel is filled up to the brim. This dear creature has the Lord in her and could rejoice the heart of any Christian. She has all her faith can give her; but should our faith be more, shall we not grasp all the promises, all the riches of Christ! Can our desires end? I do not yet see what I imagine to be the divine nature; this exceeds all the bounds of my comprehension. I think I can lie at our Lord's feet and bless him for his love, his infinite love to this ransomed soul; but at the same time I lift up mine eyes and hearken to those gracious words of his, "Ye shall see greater things than these."⁴

[[Why say you nothing of Mr. [John] Hodges as my child in the faith? Had he not your prayers? I feel jealous of any that is not to be your c[are and] r[esponsibility]. I want more to follow you than you would have yourself. That poor dear soul which is now your child I trust God will comfort as he lieth sick upon his bed.⁵ Tell him I love him and we pray for him and shall continue so to do.

[[The Lord has taken away all impatience about my dear saint. Her sufferings are great, but her thoughts of death when she shall meet her Lord are full of hope and joy. I fear she still loves me too well. It is beyond what you can conceive; but she hopes (she says) she does not offend as it is the affection of a child to the parent. But when shall all idolatry be taken from us? Not till God is all in all in our souls.

[[Farewell, my friend. The Lord be your God unto death and crown you with everlasting glory in his day. Oh may we meet at his right hand!]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 5c–6a.⁶

¹LH had apparently received a letter from one of CW's converts in Bristol.

²CW's letter of c. May 12.

³Fanny Cowper.

⁴John 1:50.

⁵Apparently a convert in Bristol?

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 118–19.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

[London]
May 17, 1742

[[Dear Brother,]]

I am in a great strait. I wrote to Lady Huntingdon (just as I did to you), “I am inclined to believe one of us must soon take a journey into Yorkshire.”² It was then in my mind to desire you to go first, on(ly) I was afraid you would think I shifted (off t)he labouring oar. But on the receipt of your last I altered my design, and determined to think of it no farther yet. I sent word this morning to Brentford and Windsor of my preaching there on Thursday, in my way to Bristol. But within two or three hours I received a letter from Lady Huntingdon, part of which is as follows:

My [[dear friend]], the very thoughts of seeing you here has filled us with great joy. Poor dear Miss Cowper is still living, and it is very remarkable, in the beginning of her illness she said she should be glad to see one of you just before she died. Her eyes with mine overflow with the loving-kindness of the Lord, who has even a regard to the desires of our hearts. . . . I beg you will set out as soon as may be after receiving this, as every day she has lived this last fortnight seems a fresh miracle, wrought for some purpose not yet known.

She then tells me she has ordered a horse for John Taylor³ to come down with me.

It seems to me I ought to go, and that without delay. I think of going early in the morning to Bexley, and correcting Mr. Piers’ sermon;⁴ and of setting out for Donington on Wednesday. If you write thither as soon as you receive this, your letter will be there near as soon as me; and I will either go on into Lincolnshire for a week, or come straight to Bristol, as you will. Let all the brethren pray for me.

Adieu!

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Wesley / in / Bristol.”

Postmark: “17/MA.”

Endorsement: by CW, “May 17. 1742 / B[rother]. going to dying Fanny C.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/5.⁵

¹On Monday, May 17, JW was in London, CW in Bristol, when JW received a plea from LH that one of the brothers should visit Fanny Cowper, rapidly nearing death. JW seems to have kept to the hastily revised plans outlined in this letter, except that he did not leave the London area until Thursday the 20th, reaching Donington Park on Saturday the 22nd to find Miss Cowper “just alive.” He stayed there for three days.

²From JW’s endorsement on Lady Huntingdon’s letter to him of Apr. 29, 1742, we know that he wrote her on May 9; that letter is not known to survive.

³John Taylor was apparently the younger brother of the preacher, David Taylor, and like him was in service to the Earl of Huntingdon at Donington Park.

⁴A visitation sermon preached by Rev. Henry Piers before the clergy of the Shoreham deanery on May 21, 1742, which JW was helping him prepare for both delivery and eventual publication.

⁵Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:77–78.

From Sarah Colston¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
May 20, 1742

Reverend Dear Sir,

According to your desire I have written the particular works of God in my soul. I was brought up very strict in my duties till I was about nine years old. Then my father died and soon after I began to leave off everything that was good; and live to the desire of my own will. Yet I was never happy. I have often felt the sweet heavenly drawing of the spirit of God, and I thought I could give all the world to be a Christian, but I did not seek after it. In the year 1737 I went to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield and thought never man spake like this man.² Then I began to go to church and left off my carnal company. Then I thought I began to be very good and I was upheld in it by others. All this while I knew nothing yet as I ought to know. Oh, how ready are we to believe the devil that we are good when our souls is in the brink of hell.

March 1739 I went to hear your dear brother the second time of his preaching in Bristol, and God showed me that he had great work to do for my soul by his ministry; and I never missed one opportunity, night or day, if I knew where he was to be. The first time of my being convinced of sin was in hearing Mr. Wesley expound the second chapter of the Romans at the society in the Castle.³ There I knew I never kept one of the commands of God. Then I felt I was in my sins and in a state of damnation, and the more I heard your brother the more clearer it was to me. Yet I do not remember that I felt any horror of soul, to be afraid of God's wrath or damnation. For I did believe that God would give me faith to feel my sins were forgiven me through the blood of Christ. Still I went on my way rejoicing. Yet I knew I was in a lost state till I felt my sins were forgiven for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Tuesday, May the first, I went to the Society in Baldwin Street where your dear brother expounded the sixth of the Acts. Then I felt a strange alteration in my heart—but the time was not fully come. Yet I did expect it every moment when the Lord would give me that forgiveness of sins.

The next day, Wednesday the second of May, when the power of God was upon our brother [John] Haydon, he sent for me, for he saw me the night before. And while I was there, Mr. [John] Wesley came; and after he had sung and prayed with him and I, he went to preach at Baptist Mills. And while he was away I felt in one moment Christ died for me. I knew my sins were forgiven me. I felt such a change in my soul which was unspeakable. I then spoke with these words: "Now my soul is like a storm that is over." I felt such a peace and love in my heart which no tongue can utter. Soon after the enemy came, reasoning with me, telling me it was only a delusion; that I only thought my sins were forgiven; there was no such thing, it was all nature; it was because it was new doctrine or because I was high spirited that I felt such a love and power; it was all delusion, that I did only deceive my own soul.

Then I thought, Do I not love God? Do I not hate sin? Do I not feel I have power over anger and other sins which before I had not? I found I had, and I knew God did not love sin, and I knew the devil did not love God, and I knew by the spirit of God it was not his will that I should commit sin, and I knew the devil would not give me power over sins, for if Satan be divided against himself how should his

¹Sarah Colston (1716–67) was active in the Methodist society in Bristol from her conversion experience in 1739 through the end of her life. In addition to this letter see her letters to JW, of Apr. 25, 1742 and June 6, 1745; as well as her listing in the Wednesday evening band in Bristol in CW, MS Spencer.

²See John 7:46.

³JW began a series on the book of Romans to a society in Castle Street, Bristol on Apr. 5, 1742 (see *Journal, Works*, 19:47); it was likely the follow week, Apr. 12, that he expounded Rom. 2.

kingdom stand. At last I gave way to reasoning and let go my shield. Then my soul was in heaviness through many temptations. Then I begin to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then I felt sin stirring, and unbelief. But the Lord soon unveiled his face and showed that he loved me.

Then the devil brought another temptation before me—that all the glorious privileges belonged to the Jews and not to the Gentiles; that they was the beloved people only. That held me some weeks. Then I searched the Scriptures night and day and the Lord showed in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah and the [Book of] Romans that he was no respecter of persons, but willing that all should believe and be saved. Yet I do not mind that ever I utterly lost the sense of my justification; though sometimes it was as a spark amidst the floods of some temptations.

The later end of October in that year I was very heavy and the devil told me I should never hold out to the end, I should soon give up all and turn back into the world.

November the first I had the happiness and pleasure to breakfast with you at sister Turner's near Stevens Church.⁴ After you had prayed and were singing these words of the hymn:

Jesu come thou serpent bruiser;
Bruise his head,
Woman's seed,
Cast down the accuser.⁵

I felt such a power and love of God in my soul that I did not know how to live when I came home. I was praying and singing all day long. I shall never forget that day and hour.

This was the way I went on in general, never at one stay, till May the 28th, 1740 (Wednesday), as I was with your dear brother and the leaders at the hour of prayers, about 2:00 in the afternoon. I felt in a moment such a witness in my heart that I was a child of God that I never had any doubts or fears from that hour to this.

Yet I am never easy, for I do feel such hungerings and thirstings and burning desires after God that are stronger than death. Yet I feel such a peace and love that the world is nothing to me. Yet I want more, so that I could praise God that I am alive in gospel days. And now in this hour my soul is waiting upon God. Oh that I may always learn to live but from hour to hour.

Dear sir, pray for me that I may be faithful to improve my glorious talents every moment of my life and never rest till I am pure in heart and born again of the Spirit [so] that I cannot commit sins. And I hope I shall never be wanting to offer up my weak prayers for you and your brother, that the Lord Jesus will bless you and lead you by his Holy Spirit and strengthen your faith to preach the everlasting gospel, faith alone in the blood of Jesus Christ, and free grace and love to every soul of man, and inward holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. And may you heart be fired with the love of God and may he give you that peace which passes knowledge every moment.

So prays from her heart, though the least and unworthiest of all your flock,

Sarah Colston

But when I think what God have done for my soul and what he does daily and hourly, it goes beyond my thought or tongue to utter. Yet I know I have an evil nature. But I have power over all sin and I finds such desires and breathing after God that takes away my strength, which makes me cry, "My Jesus and my all. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee."

Fulfil, fulfil, my large desires,

⁴Ann (Holister) Turner, the wife of Capt. Joseph Turner. They were married in 1712 in Bristol and both appear in the Bristol band lists.

⁵CW, "Prayer for One That is Lunatic and Sore Vex'd," st. 4, *CPH* (1741), 53.

Large as infinity;
Give, give me all my soul requires,
All, all that is in thee!⁶

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 9/2/2.

⁶CW, Hymn on Rev. 22:17, st. 22, *HSP* (1742), 304.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. May 20, 1742]

[[Some of my [anquishing] saint's¹ words have been: "I am so happy and filled with joy I hardly know what to do." I said, "My dear your hands are very cold." "Oh, they are best so and pleasantest; a few minutes ago they were very hot, and I then thought the same. I have found that I feel it not." She called me to pray with, and after continuing in prayer she then said "Oh my mother, my dear mother, God will bless you, I know he will. It is you that have led me on and guided me in the ways of the Lord. I must conclude what I suffered from a sense of glory to God and love to her. I cannot tell you for I am broke to pieces.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 13a.²

¹Fanny Cowper.

²An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 132.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[May 23], 1742

I have just parted with your brother who has been, I doubt [not], to pay his last visit to our dear friend Miss [Frances] Cowper.¹ She decreases hourly in bodily strength, but her soul is wondrously borne up under a great fight of affliction by pain almost all over her. I yet have not reason to think about her death, and yet I cannot say I have before me any view of her life. But good is the will of the Lord.

I also received your letter.² Your care for me I am much obliged to you for. But as I fear error so much for myself, and know assuredly nothing but the Spirit of God can lead me into truth.

Neither³ I think he never can cease being a helper of the friendless. I must ~~think~~ and am sure what that man⁴ has [is] by letters he has never learned, and knowledge he has that puffeth up as he is not faithful to his grace. But his testimony is not only sensibly true but rationally so. But grace he may not have—as is plain both your brother and you agree in, from the only sure mark, that he bears no fruit. Could he humbly follow after, now his experience has been declared, in all good works, meekness, and love which he sees, it is my opinion it would lead him to the perfect day. I hope you are too just to me to think my thoughts on all these things are not submitted to you and your brother. But this I do affirm, my whole soul says what he says is true according to all the evidence of things not seen. My littleness of faith has experience. But I know that rather than mention this without the consent of you and your brother, I could bear all things. I think myself under obligation, were you to declare my testimony of the devil, to be silent, knowing all submission is best. If it was of God, it would be rather strengthened by bearing to have it doubted; and if false, the only method must be by such simplicity to have it effectually removed.

But from the latter part of your letter you would rather convince me you had no faith, no not in the least degree. For because you might find none for that moment you were a-writing that letter, and which the occasion of had (you own) filled you with alarm and surprise from those ? from there caught,⁵ you bring your consequence that you never had any faith. You and we *all* shall forget all good we receive from our Lord. Nothing but the finger of God can cast out these devils within us. And writing his laws upon our hearts by that power first can totally extirpate these enemies of unbelief [in] us. But I must beg you to consider that what you say of yourself. I trust neither a false notion of being humble (and which I charge you often with) can bring you to these declarations, nor any impatience of temper to disown the works of God. Or if this is positively the case, you cannot but think the testimony of believers and the promises of God you cannot assent to as facts of your own experience. But [more] of this when we meet.

See Mr. [Edward] Ellis if you can but for an hour, if you can't spare no man. May the Lord bless and lead you in all the blessedness of the gospel, which is my constant prayer and must continue to be so while I am the servant of Christ.

[Selina Huntingdon]

Miss [Frances] Cowper is, with much affection to you, desirous to be remembered by you in prayer.

¹JW was there from May 22–24, 1742.

²This letter of c. May 19, 1742, is not known to survive.

³I.e., “On the other hand.”

⁴Apparently this is a continuation of LH’s discussion of John Simpson begun in the letter of May 5–8, 1742.

⁵The phrase is difficult and one word is undecipherable.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/82.⁶ See also CW's much abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 20b.⁷

⁶The last three pages in this file come from a later letter, ca. Oct. 30, 1742. Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 54 (first three paragraphs).

⁷An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 147.

From Mary Thomas¹
(a solicited testimonial)

[Bristol]
May 24, 1742

Reverend Sir,

According to your desire I have given a short account of my state.

When Mr. [George] Whitefield came first to town I went to hear him. I very much approved of his doctrine. When I heard him preach the last sermon at Rose Green and telling that there was one coming after him whose shoe latchet he was not worthy to unloose, I found that [it] was he that stood by him. I found great love in my heart to him. After that, the first opportunity I had, I went to hear Mr. John Wesley and my conscience soon told me it was the true gospel of Christ that he preached.

I likewise began to think how I had spent my life, having lived almost fifty years in this world. I found that I was ignorant of God. I always thought myself as good as my neighbours and a great deal better than some of them that did curse and swear and got drunk. I always had a good name amongst my acquaintance, which was pleasing to flesh and blood. But the Lord soon showed me that I was a devil and had only deceived myself and all that knew me. When I went to church I seldom found anything there that disturbed me except it was being there too long. But when I came to hear Mr. John Wesley, I found nothing but discontent in my mind. He told me things that I had said and done when I was a child, and from my youth up, even until now, and conscience always said, "Thou art the woman."² So that I had no peace in my mind. When anyone did cry out in the Room³ I always wished to be the next, in hopes to receive forgiveness of sins. But God did not see fit to grant me my request.

When you came first to Bristol I seemed to like you better than your brother, and I thought your way of delivery was finer than his. I thought I should be easier in my mind in hearing of you than I was in hearing of him. But alas, I found it worse and worse every day.

Last St. James Fair was twelve month,⁴ [when] you ordered the society to come and speak with you; which I found a great grief to me, for I was ashamed to think I was no better. But I came as I was and you asked me if I was justified, and I said no. You told me I was in a state of damnation, which words pierced my heart, though it was what I had heard many times. Yet it never pierced my heart so much as it did then. I then was ready to cry out, "My punishment is more than I can bear."⁵ I saw myself banished from the presence of God. I then began to think the day of grace was past. I began to think how I was brought up when I was a child to know the Lord, and what a love I had for Christ when I was a child. But after I was grown up I did reject the Spirit of the Lord in doing that I knew I ought not to do. And the Lord hath said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man."⁶ I could find no comfort for me. I knew not where to go. I began to wish I never had heard them. I was quite out of hopes and wished I knew the worst, and earnestly desired the Lord that he would by what was preached that night show if I should be

¹Mary ('Molly') Thomas (c. 1695–1745), active in the Bristol society; for an account of her death see JW, *Journal*, June 6, 1745, *Works*, 20:82–83. It is possible she is the "Mrs. Thomas" converted under CW's ministry Sept. 15, 1739 (see *MS Journal*); but this could also be Margaret Thomas, who died in 1740 (see CW to JW, Oct. 24, 1740).

²See 2 Sam. 12:7.

³The New Room, on Horse Fair.

⁴An annual fortnight-long festival in Bristol, beginning on July 25, the feast day of St. James. So, around the end of July 1741.

⁵Gen. 4:13.

⁶Gen. 6:3.

saved or not, for I longed to know the worst. When I came to the Room you were there. The chapter you were on was concerning the woman taken in adultery and the Lord said unto her, “Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more.”⁷ The word seemed as spoken to me. I knew not where I was. For a short time I felt such a heft [weight] go off my heart that I cannot express it. I was assured that Christ died for me. I feared nothing where I knew I had Christ with me.

I was in this joy for about a fortnight when, being at the Room one night before you came, there were two young women sat behind me and telling how they were, and they had cried out such a time and what an agony they had been in before they had received forgiveness. They said that those that did not feel those agonies, that they deceived themselves. Here the devil got me again in his snare in putting me to think I was not justified because I had not been taken in such a manner. Here I soon lost my joy and began to drive on heavily. Sometimes I was ready to give it all up. Then the Lord shed abroad his love in my heart, and I could have lost my life for the truth of it. But as soon as that joy abated I was in fear, and so continued till the ten days before Mr. John Wesley fell sick.⁸ When he was telling of the five wounds Christ had received for us, then I found his blood applied to my heart, saying, “Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.”⁹ Then I found great joy and sweetness in my soul.

I then went upon trial into the bands and there I found great love to my band. When Mr. John Wesley came last to Bristol I was taken into the public bands.¹⁰ I have not now such joy as I had. I see myself the worst of sinners and stand amazed to think that I am out of hell. I see I can do nothing to the glory of God. I find every imagination of my heart is only evil continually. But I know when Christ speaketh the word I shall be made perfectly whole. In the meantime, I beg your prayers that the Lord will give me power to fight manfully under his banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil. May God pour a double portion of his Spirit upon you and your dear brother, and all his faithful ministers, and grant that the word may be as seed sown into good ground and that we may bring forth fruits a hundredfold, which is is the prayers of me,

Your unworthy servant,

Mary Thomas

Endorsement: by CW, “May 1742 / Mary Thomas’s Experience / A Seal.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/128.¹¹

⁷John 8:11.

⁸JW fell sick in Bristol on Oct. 30, 1741; see *Journal, Works*, 19:235.

⁹Cf. Matt. 9:10.

¹⁰JW most recent visit to Bristol was Feb. 1742.

¹¹A previous transcription was published in Morgan, “Testimonials,” 102–04. For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
Tuesday, May 25, 1742

My dying friend,¹ upon my going into her room in the morning, told me she had parted a few hours before with our faithful minister and guide in the Lord Jesus, Mr. [John] Wesley. But she said he had expressed some hope of seeing her again and she too thought it—providing God might continue her for that end. We went to prayers. All I asked for, she continually interrupted by saying “Yes, yes, I am sure all this will be,” and said “When I ask anything for Mr. Wesley the Spirit seems to imply the thing is done. Why do you continue to ask?” As soon as I ceased praying she began in an extreme loud, strong manner, asking severally for all in most vehemence. When she had ended, she said the thoughts of death grieved her most when she thought of me, knowing my extreme weakness. She knew how often I had seemed distressed when it had (at different times before) threatened a near approach. She then, by way of comfort to me, said, “Nor in life nor [in death] I shall not [be] parted from you. I shall lie near you and I desire as near as possible. You won’t go to my funeral will you?” I answered, if she desired it I would. “Oh yes!” with great expressions of pleasure in her face. “I should be glad.”

Here I must spare myself the painful reflection of the thousand affectionate things which so often hurt me upon every remembrance of them. With such multitudes of blessings, they which I neither look nor ask for myself, she passed this day in rather high [spirits] and exalted, thanking a mere worm. God was alone exalted in her soul. I prayed and sang much with her this day. She said she had received much hope for her sister,² expressed great concern for any peevish word that had in her whole sickness dropped from her to anyone and was all calm.

I left her while she was put into bed, and in a short time I was fetched to her as they thought [she was] just dying. When I came she seemed quite senseless, and the apothecary thought she would never speak more. I knelt down and [put] my face close to hers, and asked her how she found her soul towards God. She said, “So happy, happy, sweetly, sweetly. Don’t grieve. I am not now dying. If it should be the will of God, I shall see Mr. Wesley. But as God pleases; I don’t desire it else.” In this state she continued all night.

When I came in the morning she expressed fear for me, lest I should have taken cold by being with her up so late, and said, “I never see you but you give me new joy and comfort.” If I did feel this, I dare not say it. Soon after she was seized with the most violent colic. “O pray for me, for my sufferings are more than I can express!” In deep distress of spirit we fell on our knees and besought the Lord that she might instantly be delivered from that extremity. He was present to heal that moment, for by when we had rose up it was gone, and no more returned. But her agonies for fully five hours was as extreme as possible. I often pressed her, “Call upon the Lord” and not to let him rest. But she said, “Do you pray, for I can’t.” She seemed to have no access to the throne of grace for several hours. And then she seemed not easy but when we either prayed or sang with her. But when that spirit returned she would suffer none of us to pray. And when her spirit was well nigh gone, by frequent amens we found she was in continual prayer. She was told it was Ascension Day, and that in a few hours she would ascend. She seemed very joyful and said, “Do you think it will be so soon?” She found comfort in the sacrament and desired them to let St. John come to her, who was at the foot of the bed. She was told that was an messenger to her, but invisible to us. She said, “Yes, but he is there.” She turned to her sister and said, “When I am gone, where will you go?” She said “Home.” “I am sorry for it.” Which was all she had said to her. After this I came to her and asked, “I fear your pain and suffering is now so great you must have forgot me.” She [said,] “No, no, surely; and the Lord in heaven forever bless you.”

¹Frances Cowper.

²Anne Cowper

This is all I can recollect of our departing sister. Things don't go here so well as usual. Don't write often. Be careful what you write. Keep in remembrance what I told you at B[ath] about those papers. The Lord will do as seemeth him good. Pray for us. Miss [Anne] Cowper leaves me on Thursday, your dear brother tomorrow,³ and he bids me tell you not to stir till you hear from him. He will be at Birstall on Saturday.⁴ May the Lord direct, preserve, and keep you till ripe for glory and then take you, in order to place your nearest himself.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/93.⁵ CW's polished shorthand copy can be found in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 28.⁶

³JW actually left the morning of May 25.

⁴JW was in and around Birstall for two weeks, so CW was being directed to write him there.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 57.

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 162–63.

From Frances Cowper

[c. May 27, 1742]

I cannot be unmindful of all your dear labours of love to me, a poor worm, unworthy of all things.
The Lord Jesus bless you in time and eternity and give us to meet in glory.

She trembles so she could write no more but desires you to commend her to your brother.

Endorsement: By CW, “May 1742; Fanny’s Dying Words.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/44.¹

¹For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. May 28, 1742]

[[Fanny's Death]]

About 7:00 on Thursday evening¹ the Lord called upon my dear friend to deliver up that spirit he had given her. Her spirit had been during all her illness so resigned, and her will so broken, that though I expected a great change at her death, I found none. Your brother left us on Sunday morning for the north,² and that day she passed in great spirits and seemed as well as usual. She was put to bed about 10:00, and as soon as in bed they came for me. I found her faint and extreme[ly] cold, and not able to speak. I kneeled down by her, she whispered, "Don't grieve for me, I am not now dying." I asked how she found her soul towards God. She said "Sweetly, sweetly! Oh very happy!" I then bade her pray. She said, "I cannot; do you. If it is the will of God, I should be glad to see Mr. Wesley once more, nought else." In this state of insensibility she passed the night. She seemed rather better in the morning, but soon after complained of most intense pain in her bowels and stomach. We entreated of the Lord immediate relief from that extreme suffering, and in about three minutes after we rose from prayer the pain left her. She said, "Your see, I have no faith when it comes to be tried, or why should I complain?" I pressed her to call without ceasing upon the Lord. She said she could not, and now and then would call upon us to pray.

At 5:00 on Thursday morning they called me to her like she was dying. But this immediate fear passed and we received the communion. She seemed to express pleasure upon hearing it was Ascension Day. But her agonies of death for full forty-five hours can hardly be conceived. About six hours before she expired she asked if they did not see Saint John at the foot of the bed. They answered it probably was a messenger to her that was to be invisible to all those but herself. She said, "Yes, he is there." I never found her able to pray except the last hour, when her speech was near gone. Then by some amens we heard, we thought she was at prayer. About that time I asked if she knew me. She said, "Yes, my jewel, and the Lord forever bless you." This is all I could get from her. I thought her change of countenance before she expired was something more than I could have conceived—from a face full of anguish and misery, at once converted to the most angelic complacence I had ever seen. And so [she] died.

She drank of her Lord's cup, and so did I. For from 7:00 till 9:00 of the day in which she died, oh what did my soul undergo? Not from thoughts of her loss, but rather through doubts, fears, and distress of soul I thought it was not possible to go through it. The very thoughts make me now ready to sink into the earth. I was for this time without faith, love, even without God. I fell continually on my knees, when my soul would let me pray. But oh, I have never in my whole life, nay all [my life] put together, found the like misery. My soul was shook within me. My face when it was well nigh over showed it. The apothecary observed me and said he had never seen anything for whom he had had so much compassion. He thought it was owing to my fear at the approaching loss. I flung myself down upon the bed by Lord Huntingdon, and I am persuaded Satan was in the room. I felt even a sensible power over my body from him. He wanted to drive me to all sort of violence that was desperate, and the remains I feel now. But our Lord will deliver the prey from him.

Our dear sister is to be laid close by me, as near as possible [in] the vault of the family, which thought upon gave her pleasure.³

¹May 27, 1743.

²JW's *Journal* indicates he was in the area until Monday morning, May 24 (19:266).

³Frances was buried on May 30 in Ashby-de-la-Zouch. *WHS* 7 (1909): 39.

[[The Lord Jesus be your guide in life and through death.⁴]]

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/99. See also CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 17a.⁵

⁴This line found only in shorthand transcription.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 140–42.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]

[May 30, 1742]

My spirit was refreshed by my dear friend's letter,¹ and indeed it wanted all comfort. I think I almost live without hope. And did you not hope for me, I should sink beneath my load of sin. I think I am content to suffer this for I look only unto the faithfulness of my Lord. Yesterday I attended my dear departed sister to the church where will ere long be the repository of my ashes, and according to her last request saw her laid down as near the place where I am to lie as possible, her head being placed where will lie my feet. What will you say to my *spiritual sufferings on this occasion*? Natural or what is judged grief? It was like neither resembled it. For when she expired I felt a joy, and have never found one moment in which self had seemed to resist it. But thus does my spirit mourn, that at last I should be of the number of those who come when the door was shut. I could, were I near you, pour out my soul in much sorrow unto you. But I will praise and adore him for his love to you. I know I have felt and said I wished you could rejoice even upon the condition that my consolations were small. That dear saint's prayers you now feel. She often, very often, gave to her faith words. And the morning before she was struck with death, which was but a few hours, she sat up in her bed and with a loud voice and mighty earnestness prayed for you, and said she had had all her petitions. The last week she lived, in prayer with me, when I offered you up, she stopped me, "He will be blessed, I am sure he will." And she said at last when she prayed for you, your brother, or wretched me, it was like asking something she had already received.

I have not been able this last week to set pen to paper, not even so much as to endeavour noting any particulars of her death. I think to draw up a few short observations upon the whole of her sickness. But I am so weary of my self and all I do that I much doubt if I shall do this.

What you say of your charge with respect to his health I give praise to God for.² As to the temporal affair, I think he ought to be cautious what he signs. But as to myself, I should always choose to let a brother do me wrong, as I do not find by this his good can be evil spoken of. I should be quite silent and quiet about it, and let him do what he will. He (our friend) has one [who] will plead his cause, and it is better the servant of the Lord swear not. I speak now as I am sure I should act myself, thinking of nothing but God.

Enclosed I send you something that pleased me.³ I think I know why, because it is well a confirmation of my opinion of the Count of Zinzendorf. He will be found thus.

I read with so much delight and longing after those who do nothing but serve the Lord and live to him that them I call only blessed. Pray for the time when every breath I may draw may only be to love and praise him. I feel as one lost in all things but those of God.

Your dear brother I hope to see now in a few days. The Lord will bless his going out. He gave us great comfort but I could not help telling him I was sure you loved me better than he did. He flattered me by telling me you only showed it more. May the Lord bless and keep you and every spiritual blessing may he multiply upon you. And pray that the Lord may do with me as seemeth him good, and if he will lay his hand on me, his blessed will be done. It is through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom.

More I shall think on by the next post and tran[smit.] Miss [Anne] Cowper desires her most affectionate love [to you].

¹Likely CW's letter of c. May 25, 1742.

²The identity of this man in Bristol over whom CW had care is uncertain.

³The identity of the enclosure is unknown.

May the Lord Jesus be your guide in life and through death.⁴

Address: “For / The Rev’d Mr Charles / Wesley at the ~~new-School~~ ^ Foundry / in Bristol ^ London.”

Postal Marks: “31 / MA,” “4 / IV,” “Bristol,” “Free Huntingdon.”

Endorsement: CW, “[Lady Huntingdon].”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/97. See also CW’s polished and abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 16c.⁵

⁴There is a stray portion of a sentence below this line on the page, that reads something like: “Her loss ceased(?) from the strength of temptation being so interim(?)”

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 139–40.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. June 1742]

[[My desires have been long that God should appoint or honour me to deal amongst his people. You ch[urched¹] near me, where I could be a l[eader] with them has been my p[etition]; indeed that was my dear Miss Fanny [Cowper]'s. But my p[etition] has been added still f[requent]ly to ask for an h[ousehold] in En[field], an h[ousehold] of the faithful where all things might be in common.² Nothing less than this would be a trial of our faithfulness, or make any stand against [the powers of Satan]. H[appiness] would be fully to live among the faithful, who while scattered about the world would be even shamed to own them. A little then supported by the un[ion] of such well dedicated to God's service and the good of all. Oh the thought is delightful! By this nursery we might soon stop stillness and all other growing evils. Do think about it. God would prosper it, I am sure he would, should this receive room or be thought worth my further consideration.

[[Let us not be weary in well-doing. Leave the work to God. He will revive it in mere years; but he will crush us beneath his feet if we aim at less than the salvation of all men. The Church [of England]'s foundation is sound and ap[ostol]ical, and p[robab]ly may be one of the best national churches upon earth. I had as leave be called daughter of the Church of England as another. But oh what hard mouths of w[ickedness], what vile p[ro]fessors? of such a faith, what intolerable deception, what a sorry bad f[lock] of] g[oats] about her.³ God in his own time can alter all this. She has you her witnesses, for in you and your brother, whom God has called to show what he will do for her, and bring to her through you his message. You are to wrestle against principalities and powers and sow in hopefulness.⁴ Cease not to do it. A nation is the same to God as a single man.

[[I am with great t[enderness] of s[pirit], most faithfully
[[Your friend in the Lord Jesus.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 12a.⁵

¹LH was trying to persuade CW to take a parish appointment.

²See the refinement of this idea in her letter of July 19, 1742 to CW.

³See Matt. 25:31–46.

⁴See Eph. 6:12, 2 Cor. 9:6.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 130.

From Anne Cowper

Donington Park
June 2, 1742

My Dear and Well Beloved Friend in the Lord,

Your kind letter came safe to hand in due time,¹ and filled my heart with joy and my eyes with tears, to see the goodness of my dear Lord in raising me such a friend in my lost estate, who I may truly say is of more value than the temporal riches of the kingdom. For you have brought me tidings of eternal happiness which none in the world can take from me. Whenever I think of your abundant labours of love for all the fallen race, and me in particular—for I account myself your daughter in the faith and therefore your particular care—my glad heart dances for joy. I am ashamed of my long omission in not having sooner returned my hearty thanks for all favours, and especially for your last favour, which lays me under more obligations than I am able to express. But this you may rest assured of, that so long as I remember the Lord who bought me, I cannot forget *you*, who were the instrument, under God, of plucking me out of the jaws of the lion who was ready to devour me.

We were all of us greatly refreshed and comforted by the sight of your dear brother. And my dear sister, who I trust now rests in the almighty arms of our dear Lord Jesus, was in such ecstasies of joy when she saw him that we questioned if she would not then have resigned her breath. But I suppose the Lord had not then finished his work. She had always great power in prayer for *you*, and said her prayers were all sealed that she offered on your behalf. I expected her death would have been a very bitter draught, but the Lord has turned my sorrow into joy, and I now give God glory that he has taken her out of this vale of sin and misery, where no true joy is to be found but from the hopes of being where, I trust, she now is singing the everlasting song.

I cannot omit begging your faithful prayers for your weakest daughter in the faith. Though I trust he who first placed me under your care will still present me to your memory when you are offering your faithful prayers before the throne of grace. I never fail mentioning you when I offer my unworthy sacrifice, and trust the Lord always receives them, weak and corrupt as they are, since they always come from the sincerity of my heart, if this wretched heart does not deceive me.

Now that the God of all peace may keep you, now, henceforth, and forever, under his almighty protection is the earnest and fervent prayer of

Your unworthy daughter and humble servant to command,

A. C.

P.S. If you still intend remembering and owning me for your daughter, please to direct for me to dear Lady Huntingdon, who will convey it safe to my hands; for I know not how soon I may be called from this blessed abode. But I trust I shall have dear Lady Huntingdon's and your faithful prayers wherever I am, which at this present is almost all my comfort, for I doubt [not] my own are unavailing.

[note added by Lady Huntingdon]

I could not see this go to Bristol without reminding you there was yet being one who can only pray for you though not for herself, and that through manifold temptations I am drinking my cup of suffering. But the blessed will of the Lord be done. I wish your perfection(?). Pray that God may keep me thus all the days of my life if it is in his will. Then will be a day of unakerath(?) rest. O may you enter in and be blessed evermore.

Endorsement: by CW, "Miss Cowper / 1742 June 22 [sic] / after F's death full of loving / acknowledgment."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/10.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

From Naomi Thomas¹
(a solicited testimonial)

June 1742

Reverend Sir,

I have given you a full account of the state of my soul at present, also of some of my former life as I thought would be necessary as it comes into my mind.

When Mr. [George] Whitefield came here to Bristol to preach in the churches I went to hear him, and also wherever he preached or expounded. [I] heard him with great delight. But though I did believe his report, yet the arm of the Lord was but in little or no degree revealed to me before the Lord was pleased to send your brother, Mr. John [Wesley], to preach his word in such a clear way and manner as he did; which made me often think it was another gospel in comparison of what I heard before. And it pleased the Lord to cause it to have great effect upon me. For many times by his preaching I have been, as it were, sawn asunder and at my wits end, not knowing what to do. And then I found that what I had done was as nothing. I had not as much as begun to be a Christian, but still I was out of Christ and in a sinful state and under the covenant of works and chained down under the wrath of God and thought I must have forever perished.

So I went on bemoaning my lost state by original sin. A small time after, I went to hear your brother Mr. John at Baptist Mills, where the Lord was pleased to show me plainly and more fully than before that I was under the yoke of bondage and that I was a slave to sin and the devil. I then knew not what to do, but could scarce keep myself from crying out in the bitterness of my soul, “What shall I do to be saved.”²

I came to my house, but none but the Lord knew what I felt at that time. Neither can I express it. I went on for a long time in doubts and fears, and without any hope. Neither could I tell my condition to any person. But still I was ashamed of my own vileness—which made my burden the heavier. I went to hear your brother at Clifton church,³ where the word came with such power into my soul that I was taken in such a manner that I never was in before, and was afraid I should expose myself before all the people. But [I] could not mind one word of all he spoke, for my bones seemed to me as if they were out of joint. But I made shift to come home with much ado.

Monday morning following I went to Newgate to hear your brother, where I was taken in the same manner as before; and still I was afraid men should see me, so I came home. One of my friends would have me go with her to the Brickyard the same day, but I told her I was afraid to venture again knowing how it was with me twice before. But in the evening I went to the society in Baldwin Street and there I found that the Lord had not forsaken me, but made his power to be known by such a rebellious wretch as I (who had resisted the motions of his Spirit) in taking away my senses and strength for a small time, and afterwards giving me ease for a little space from the burden I was under and enabling me to come home as if nothing had been the matter with me, and giving me such joy and comfort all that night that I cannot express.

So I went on (expecting a greater deliverance than what I had already received) in great joy and peace. Afterwards I heard yourself, sometimes being wounded by it and afterwards healed again, the Lord setting his seal to your ministry so as to cause it to come to my soul with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.⁴ One time in the Bowling Green you preached on those words, “I in them and they in me,”⁵

¹Nothing is known of Naomi Thomas beyond this account.

²See Acts 16:30.

³JW preached three successive Sundays at the church in Clifton, Gloucestershire in May 1739.

⁴See 1 Cor. 2:4.

⁵Cf. John 17:23; CW preached on this chapter at Bowling Green Nov. 4, 1739; see *MS Journal*.

which came with such power to my soul that then I had redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of my sins, and [was] filled with such joy that I cannot express.

A little time later, I went to hear you at the Brickyards, where the Lord was pleased to give me a clearer sense of his pardoning love than before, for then I could speak to you and not before. And at Mrs. [Rachel] England's society I desired you to return thanks for the great mercies I had received by your ministry that evening. Neither can I declare the comfort I have received through your ministry time after time, neither can I be but astonished at the goodness and love of God to such a sinner.

Thus I went on in peace and joy until I found myself much ruffled in mind, and begun to question the truth of all I had experienced before. But blessed be God who soon gave me relief from those words written in a book which I then opened: "Think not of thyself wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort; for this is the way to the kingdom of heaven"⁶—from and through which words I was comforted and supported considerably under the troubles my soul was in at that time. And the Lord enabled me to call upon him, though in a broken way. And at that time I could say that the Lord had begun that good work in my soul, and that he would enable me by his grace to hold out to the end and endure with patience what he should be pleased to lay upon me while on earth and would keep me from all sin. I went to hear you at the malt room on Matthew 24,⁷ and could then say "It is good for me to be here";⁸ at which time you described what wars and rumours of wars were in the souls of men, and told us that if we did not experience it in our own souls we never knew what it was to be born again. Which I hoped I did, for I had found such conflicts and fightings in my soul many times.

At a certain time I heard you expound on the five wise, and the five foolish virgins.⁹ By the lamps are meant, you said, an outward profession of faith and holiness. By oil in our lamps was to be understood true repentance and faith in Christ. And then you told us we could not be Christians unless we had our hearts furnished with the graces of the Holy Spirit of God as a prevailing and abiding principle in our souls. In the evening I heard you expound from the same chapter, when you showed the necessity of good works and said we could not be Christians without them, neither could we be saved by works without faith in Christ. Then I seemed to be dead and dull until the next morning, when (blessed be God) I was again in love and peace and desired to be more heavenly minded, and that I might see more of my own vileness and the corruption of my own wicked heart, and that the Lord would enable me by his grace to hold out to the end.

Friday following, in the evening, I heard you expound on the sufferings of Christ,¹⁰ and what he underwent for poor sinners, with which I was much affected, so that my desires reached out after him that is altogether lovely. So I continued next day, in love and joy; and also till Sunday following when I went to the Lord's Table in comfort and belief that in and through Christ I should be accepted.

But soon after I was in doubt again and did not know what to do. But the Lord was pleased to confirm those words to me which I before received and believed touching the suffering which Christ has gone through in our stead. And so I was again restored to my former peace and joy and still desired the Lord in his own way and time to deliver me from all sin. For I know and sometimes do believe that the Lord will cleanse me from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and enable me by his grace to perfect holiness in his fear—notwithstanding all my fears and distresses I am in, many times occasioned by my own deceitful heart, though often like a watered garden. Yet I do hope that I shall renew my strength, and not rest until I obtain the blessing, and lay hold on the promises of the gospel until they are fulfilled in me. Oh that I may [be] enabled by the grace of God to say with holy David, "Thy words have I taken as mine

⁶Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Ch. 30, §4.

⁷This was likely on June 21, 1740; see CW, *MS Journal*.

⁸Cf. Matt. 17:4.

⁹Matt. 25:1–13; CW preached on this text in Sept. 1741 in various settings.

¹⁰CW began in late August 1741 to preach a sermon on "Christ Crucified" in various places.

heritage for ever, for they are the joy of my heart.”¹¹ With many such texts of Scripture the Lord has been pleased to comfort me. But I must own with shame that I have fallen by my negligence and unfaithfulness to the many graces and mercies that I have received from time to time, and am sometimes ready to cry out “Oh that it were with as in months passed.”

I went on in this uncomfortable manner, dead, dull, and weary of myself, and did not care whether I came to hear the word or no. But the last time you came from Wales, in the morning, I heard you expound. The Lord manifested himself to me again.

But I sometime after grew slack and gave way to my corrupt and deceitful heart, and did not attend the ordinance of hearing the word as I used to do; which made me grow dead and slack and almost without desire to hear the word at all, and made me sometimes afraid to call upon the Lord in prayer. But the Lord was pleased to show me my vileness, and the corruption and deceit of my heart. The last time you met the bands I seemed unwilling to meet. But blessed be the God of mercies and long-suffering, who (in tender compassion to such a backslider as I) melted me down with his love in such a manner that I could find no word whereby I might worthily praise him who loveth such a sinner as I as though I had never sinned against him, and who has been so often called upon to return to the God of my salvation.

Dear sir, pray for me, that the Lord would never leave me nor forsake me, but that he would enable me to hold out to the end, and not begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh, but be a follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises, which is my earnest desire, and that I may go on from strength to strength. Although I am now in the dark, yet I know the Lord has not wholly forsaken me although (through my own deadness and coldness) the Lord hath left me to weaken in darkness at this time. But yet I do hope that the Lord will deliver me out of this present state which I am in at this time. Oh that I may look on him whom I have pierced afresh and mourn for my sins. And the Lord grant that I may never rest till I am in Christ a new creature.

Yesterday evening I heard you in great joy, though in much grief to think that I had so backslidden from what I was. But yet the Lord did then appear to my great comfort, and through the exhortation I was enabled by the grace of God to hope against hope that the Lord will deliver me from all appearance of evil; which is, and I hope shall be, by divine assistance, the earnest desires of my soul who desires your prayers for me.

Your willing though unworthy servant

Naomi Thomas

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/129.¹²

¹¹Ps. 119:111.

¹²A transcription was published in Morgan, “Testimonials,” 99–102. For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. Westley Hall¹

(Sarum)
July 17, 1742

Dear Brother,

I think I cannot at present put you upon anything that may serve to strengthen our hands, more than making a plain, perfect, and public declaration of *what* that Church of England is wherewith you do agree, and *what* is your agreement with the same. For my part I know of only one foundation of the Church of Christ, and this is what I have endeavoured to lay here according to that scripture, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.”² You may easily infer that this way of proceeding will not soon enlarge our special building, and indeed I have found more and more the necessity of not making haste in this matter.

As to the outward order and economy of our little family, we meet on Thursday evening to confer of the proficiency of such as are upon trial, to censure or exclude any that shall break the bonds of unity among us, to propose such as desire to come upon trial, and to admit as many as have been approved of all the leaders (of their sex) into the society. On Sunday morning all the leaders meet to confer, first of their own state, and next of their several bands; and then two or more of each sex confer separately with such as are admitted on trial, till all agree in declaring their particular approbation of each of them. Every Sunday evening is appointed for thanksgiving in general, and afterward some join in a love-feast. Every morning at five only such as are of the society, or upon trial, meet for prayer and thanksgiving, general and particular. At noon we are engaged to intercede for each other, and all the day have regard to the watchword (e.g. “Watch and pray, etc.”), which is given out every morning and made the subject of inquiry and conversation when any of the society meet together. Several of the Sabbatarians, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, etc., have openly renounced the doctrine of reprobation which they were bred up in, and some communicate with us at the cathedral every Sunday, whilst others are waiting for baptism (by immersion), and others repelled from the communion by their party professors for thus appearing to condemn their party spirit.

I have been engaged to preach at many of the villages round about, and am called to more and more; and several persons come to hear for eight or ten miles round, some of whom afterward do constantly attend at Sarum. I have had leave to preach in a very large church about five miles off, which perhaps may be continued, and at a little one somewhat nearer, where after prayers we were obliged to go out into the churchyard because of the press.

I have many things to say to you, but I have not time or room to add more now, but I am
Your affectionate brother,

W. H.

Our bishop and clergy seem to look toward them with surprise at the increasing number of communicants, and you may suppose have not omitted to declaim against the sect which is everywhere spoken against.

Address: “To The Revd Mr Charles Westley³ at The Foundry Near Upper Moorfields London.”

Endorsement: by JW, “b. Hall, Jul 20, 1742 / ad Aug. 6.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/611.⁴

¹Hall was apparently still serving as curate at the parish church of Fisherton, near Salisbury.

²1 John 5:1.

³While addressed to CW, by the time the letter reached London CW and JW had changed places, so that JW dealt with it.

⁴Previously published in JW, *Works*, 26:80–81

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. June 27–July 17, 1742]

I have till this day, since May 22, found no liberty of writing and think if God permit to pursue this method of sending an account of each day to my friend, that once in a fortnight one of the journal letters by this means may reach him. A short account of Miss [Fanny] Cowper's death I, having sent,¹ will not further mention that—but only with respect to myself, that no event could have happened that could have showed me my own heart more. I found so evil an impatience that my outward hope of seeing her die in triumph was not answered. That I was for a time only looking about me, and said “How can these things be?” My hope it did not utterly take from me, but such darkness and distress of spirit I have laboured under as cannot be expressed.

Nothing makes me glad and I much questioned if anything could make me sorry, till by a most severe overturn I was roused and found to my shame and amazement that I was in the everlasting arms. For while the event was doubtful, either life or death, I had a degree of joy and happiness that I do not know I have ever experienced but when walking with God in the times of (?²). Fear came upon me when I thought my Lord [Huntingdon] had been hurt or in danger, but as to myself I had but too sensible measures of God's love to me. But as to my body, I am without fear or thought about it. I want only to dwell with God and walk before him with a perfect heart. And this desire above all, not to offend him. But I am so evil. Oh my God how hast thou patience with me? Surely my latter end will not be worse than my first.

My soul has been this three days in constant supplication towards God to give unto my friends and me a little Herrnhut, a spot upon this globe that the gates of hell cannot prevail against. I am sure it must be a town of our own building, secured in property to us alone, that the few souls who are forward enough that are now scattered may become a household to the Lord, a community of goods. I have by [me] a plan for this purpose and rejoice that there might some time become such a people. And should God ever give me sufficient for such an undertaking, I think it is one of the first things I should do. Nay I think I could with joy engage in such a design, as I truly believe God would be with us in this undertaking and carrying it on for this purpose, that his own should not be scattered as sheep that has no shepherd and together be able to make a stand against the powers of Satan. Half an hour's discourse upon this head with my friends would make me very happy.

I rejoice to find the fruits of my friends' labours and that there is witness in many dark corners rising up to show the power of God unto salvation through the glorious gospel of Christ.

Wednesday, June 30. Had great weight upon my spirits all this day and the last night. Found no power to speak to some company this day, which has oppressed me beyond all measure. Oh my baseness and vileness, that one day should pass without declaring the goodness of God! The devil always whispering in my ear, “You can do no good, it will signify nothing.” But from this misery I suffer by neglecting it, I am sure good was to have been done. God would have blessed what I had said. And if the Lord ever suffer me any more [opportunities] I think nothing shall ever make me hold my peace.

I know myself so wretched that I have hardly patience with myself one moment. Such constant trouble that I mourn and grieve in my soul without ceasing. I feel a great eagerness of spirit after the Lord. But faithfulness, love, or any one thing whereby my soul could be comforted, I know nothing of it. Oh should not the Lord deliver me from this present evil world, my portion must be with devils! Oh snatch me, snatch me from this lake of fire! Suffer not this to destroy me. But though Satan would make

¹See her letter of May 28, 1742.

²The word is extremely hard to decipher. CW simply gives the letter “r” in his shorthand extract, but no word beginning with that letter seems to fit.

me fear my spark of confidence at times, [it] is yet alive in me that the Lord will not have me fear. He will surely make the way plain before my face. This I trust my friends absent will not fail to ask for me. They shall be able to obtain for me the way wherein I should walk.

Oh how gladly would I die, could I by so doing perform the will of God! Oh the distress of my soul! Who, who can paint it? No anguish like unto mine. How glad would I forget myself and only look unto the Lord. But I cannot see anything but the impossibility of God's bearing with me one moment. Whither shall I go then from thy presence, or wither shall I fly from thy Spirit?³ I thought I should be able to rejoice in my retirement. But I find no peace, for there is none for the wicked. I long to weep my life away, but this is vain likewise. Where shall this evil spirit awake to? And then my coward nature starts back at this conversation. But I sometimes think a way will shortly [be] opened, and this spirit of intercession for a commonwealth of the faithful continuing with me carries conviction with it all night. When I waked, never so often I found these words or the like in my mouth: "Lord, suffer it to be so." And when I ever pray for it, it is as if my whole heart would fly upwards towards God. He will not deny the prayer of his Spirit, for it maketh intercession. The misery of one moment's separation from the Lord is very grievous. And this by a worldly life is subjected to meet with so many interruptions or at least so lessened by not giving constant attendance to the work of the Spirit that the soul does not feel its liberty for this. I rather take it to be it quenches the Spirit of God and brings us into bondage to the world.

Thursday [June] 31. My soul chooseth strangling rather than this safety. I feel no desire after anything in life. I would be void of all things but God. But [I am] so burdened and it is more than can be expressed! Surely thou will turn and refresh me again after that thou hast afflicted me. I find neither freedom nor ease to go among the servants, either to pray or read. I find myself alone, I live without either giving glory to God or good to man. Oh wretched soul that I am!

I parted this morning with one that I trust God has sown the good seed in her heart.⁴ Gave her books but I found no delight in this work as usual. Pressed her to do all good in her influence, but found all this day such an oddness about myself or rather mixture of evil that, could anyone see the distress of my heart while my outward man seems to think of nothing, it would amaze anyone. Found great stirrings of anger, as for this fortnight, more than for three years.⁵ All my made-up righteousness is now pulled down. And whatever I have thought myself, I am worse than ever. The devil would flatter me and tell me, "But you have such provocation that it is not possible to avoid it." But the highest demands for it would never be complied with, and his strength can do all things. But I think there is such a thing as "being angry and sinning not,"⁶ and I think it is very possible to feel this. A Christian that is angry and feels no reproach or remorse from the Spirit will find that, under the outward appearance of it, they feel no revenge or bitterness. But this was not of that kind, and therefore I suffer accordingly. But I find the bottom of it. It is the witness of my spirit, the pride of my base nature, that puts impatience at restraint.

July 6. This whole week I have been so straitened in this very purpose that I begin to be weary of every intention. So dark, so unprofitable that, as I am hardly able to think of myself, much less to write, I have spoke to many of the sick that come to me. And so strong[ly] that I believe many are frightened from me. My heart has not lost the spirit of prayer, but it is like praying to God afar off. I force myself into all means of grace but often am so dead that I merely mock God. I trust I shall be refreshed by the coming of some of the faithful in the Lord. I see so much vanity of the great and rich that I long often to sink down to poverty. But the Lord holds mine eyes that they behold not vanity with any desire after it. [I] found my heart and desires this day raised very much by the hearing a passage out of Bishop [William] Beveridge wherein rewards for the faithful were set forth. My soul longeth for to be one of those. I think

³See Ps. 139:7.

⁴Anne Cowper, who was returning to her home in London.

⁵That is, since the initial "good work" Christ worked in her in June 1739.

⁶Cf. Eph. 4:26.

always, nay every moment, there is no undertaking so difficult but I should rejoice to undertake it, so I could be numbered among those that are so esteemed by the Lord. All outward things are nothing, a sad, dull tale everyday repeated—and when not strengthened by divine love, insufferable. For even love makes all outward things to be rejoiced in—not for their own sakes, but as he alone is the author and giver of them. I feel my soul now thankful for the sound that this moment reaches my ear of some distant bells that raise my soul to him. Oh could my prayers and sighs enter his ears as these do mine! A sort of sorrowing joy, a mixture that our dear Lord feels for the wandering of his flock. Methinks I could fly to him. My love would bear my soul, if once disengaged from this lump of clay. Oh give me, give me to dwell with thee forever!

July the 13th. I have this week been called to comfort the mourners. The Lord has led two this week here, and that by near accident, as man's thoughts are. Both I have still with me, one a poor girl of a sorrowful spirit. How does she go mourning all the day long. Such a picture of humility I never saw. I feel my heart so united with her that when she weeps my spirit mourns over her. She has forsaken all things. She has had good desires in her childhood, but by David Taylor was first brought to see her heart.⁷ She has, in this poverty, no wants but Christ. She lives without joy. Neither is she impatient, but waits his time. She thinks the Lord not hard in his tarrying. She doubts not his faithfulness. But her sins are a sore burden, too heavy for her to bear. She wept bitterly at the reading to her Hannah Richardson's conflicts.⁸ A fellowship in suffering brought those tears. Upon my talking and praying with her she said, "I had comfort, but as the morning cloud and early dew that passeth away."⁹ I never look upon her but with love.

Spent on Sunday [July 14] some hours with poor women. Found them very simple and joyful at the glad tidings of the gospel. We all rejoiced and gave much glory to God and partook of our absent friend's joys. As to my own soul, oh how it longs after all who love the Lord!

These three last days I have been much refreshed by the coming of a most faithful soul who is a little child. I found I could open my heart with that simplicity to him in that affair that lies so impressed upon my mind, that God would shortly find out a resting place for his people. It struck him much and his heart was lifted up to God for this end. He bore it on his heart. And the Lord, by examining an note of reference, directed him to the 34[th. chapter] of Ezekiel. Which lo, the very letter explains God's actual promise of this thing to us, and at the end of the 36[th. chapter] commands us to ask it of him. Thus saith the Lord God, "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."¹⁰ This brings me to entreat that these three chapters be read and explained upon to the church. And to be instant with God night and day in behalf of this his promise to us.

After the time he had afflicted me, he hath brought forth my soul and new[ly] comforted me by this hope. The Lord grant they may receive it with like power to their soul. This will be the seed from whence shall spring the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ. Let us take heed how [we] neglect these promises. Let us ask him for the means that lead to this end. All the children of God will be brought to this and we shall all think the same thing. We are for some end devised at present.

The Lord increase you more and more.

Address: "For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Foundery / in upper Moorfields / London."

Frank: "Free Huntingdon."

⁷David Taylor (1715–83) underwent a spiritual awakening in the mid-1730s, while a servant in LH's household. With her encouragement he was soon preaching and gathering societies in the Sheffield area, in some association with Benjamin Ingham.

⁸Charles Wesley, *A Short Account of the Death of Mrs. Hannah Richardson* ([London: Strahan, 1741]).

⁹See Hos. 13:3.

¹⁰Ezek. 36:37.

Postmark: “19/IY.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon August¹¹].”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/85.¹² See also CW’s polished and somewhat abridged copy in shorthand in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 22b–24a.¹³

¹¹This may indicate when CW received the account.

¹²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 57–59.

¹³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 152–55.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[London]
Saturday, July 31, 1742

⟨Dear Brother,⟩

Yesterday about three in the afternoon, as soon as intercession was ended, I went up to my mother. I found her pulse almost gone, and her fingers dead, so that it was easy to see her spirit was on the wing for eternity. After using the commendatory prayer,¹ I sat down on her bedside, and with three or four of our sisters sung a requiem to her parting soul. She continued in just the same way as my father was, struggling and gasping for life, though (as I could judge by several signs) perfectly sensible, till near four o'clock. I was then going to drink a dish of tea, being faint and weary, when one called me again to the bedside. It was just four o'clock. She opened her eyes wide, and fixed them upwards for a moment. Then the lids dropped, and the soul was set at liberty, without one struggle or groan or sigh.²

My heart does not, and I am absolutely assured [[God does not, condemn me for any want of duty]] toward her in any kind; except only [[that I have not reproved her as fully and plainly as I should have done.]] *Absurdum, iniquum, injustum, supra omnem modum mihi videtur, quod quis isto modo me lacessat.*³

Now, I would have you send me word immediately whom I shall take into the house to keep the accounts, etc., etc., etc., in the room of Thomas Meyrick?⁴ And what [[woman, young or old, in the place of Betty Brown⁵]]? I wait your answer.

I will carry the books to Evesham, if I do not send before. The day of my setting out hence (if I have life and health) is Monday fortnight; and on Thursday fortnight I hope to be at Bristol.

I shall write Lady Huntingdon word of my mother's death tonight. She is to be buried tomorrow evening.
Adieu!

Address: "To the Revd Mr Wesley ⟨...⟩."⁶

Postmark: "31/IY"

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Brother's of my mother's death]]"; and in longhand (later), "July 30, 1742. / B[rother] of my mother's quiet death."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/25.⁷

¹BCP, Visitation of the Sick, "Commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure."

²This letter agrees with JW's *Journal* account in putting Susanna's death on July 30. For some reason when her gravestone in Bunhill Fields was replaced in 1828, the date was listed as July 23.

³"It seems to be absurd, unfair, unjust beyond all measure, that anyone should attack me in such a manner."

⁴Thomas Meyrick (or Merrick, d. 1770) was member of Foundery society and had been for a time JW's business manager or "steward" there. He had now become one travelling preachers.

⁵Apparently the housekeeper at the Foundery; likely the "Elizabeth Brown" who appears as leader of a band for single women in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–47).

⁶The strip containing the remainder of the address (and the charge) is missing.

⁷Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:82–83.

From Anne (Wesley) Lambert

[London]
[August 1742]

Dear Brother,

This comes to return thanks for all favours, which I ought to have done some time ago. But I trust this fatigue which I have had will in some measure excuse my silence.

A few days before my mother died, she desired me, if I had strength to bear it, that I would not leave her until death, which God enabled me to do. She laboured under great trials, both of soul and body, some days after you left her. But God perfected his work in her about twelve hours before he took her to himself. She waked out of a slumber and we, hearing her rejoicing, attended to the words she spoke, which were these: 'My dear Saviour! Are you come to help me in my extremity at last?' From that time she was sweetly resigned indeed. The enemy had no more power to hurt her. The remainder of her time was spent in praise. [remainder of this side of page torn off]

[back side of letter]

[...] not at rest, for which uneasiness I cannot see any reason. The enemy at present has great power over her. I hope God will deliver her in his good time. I have been very ill since my mother's death, and far from well now. I am indeed greatly tempted since I came hither to be uneasy, especially when I am very ill [remainder on page is struck out to obscure and bottom of page is torn off]

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 1742. S[ister] Lambert of my mother's death."

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/186a.¹

¹A transcription was published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 225–26.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon¹

[Donington Park]
August 4, 1742

The Lord, I believe removed from you one you much loved.² But I have the pleasure to believe it was because he loved her better; that he has taken her from you, that he might deliver her from the evil to come.

Enclosed I send you your brother's elegy upon Mr. Jones.³ However partial I may be to his performances of this kind, it would never prevent my considering well the end proposed by any such undertaking. I believe you will agree with me in thinking this will not be of any good in the printing it—and what does not tend to that, really and substantially, the fewer of those sort of things appear[ing] out in the world from those devoted to our Lord's interest, the better. Many, I think, under the character of an elegy would not buy this (I mean of the better sort) and poetry to the others is but ill-understood. And I think no distinction of rank ought to be regarded, lest too great a deference should be paid to that, and the gentleman considered more than the Christian of which we make our boast. I think to speak my mind plainly is best. Some plain account—unornamented—of what his life and death was under the character of a believer (if any is to appear) would seem to have most weight, in which we might boast justly of God's love to him. I would have as little of all creatures thought on as possible, that God may be all in all.

The enclosed [account⁴] I send you of the poor woman. When you have read [it], you will send to your brother. I conclude you have prevented, at present, his thoughts of an northern journey I hope he will make. Prevail with Mr. [Charles] Graves to call on his brother.⁵ Surely a Christian heart subsists not without love and obedience to those of our own house in the flesh. The Lord forever direct and lead you into all truth, keep and preserve you, close to himself that you as the good shepherd, after you have converted many, may have a blessed portion high above them all in that glorious mansion, that where our Lord is there you may be also.

Address: 'For / The Rev'd Mr Wesley / at the Foundery / near uper Moorfields / London'.

Postmark: '7/AV'. *Frank:* 'Free Huntingdon'.

Endorsement: by JW, L. Hu. Aug. 4. 1742 / a[nswere]d 14'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504, Box 2.⁶

¹This letter was sent to JW, in London, but LH instructs him to forward it to CW, and refers to it as her "last" letter to CW in her letter of Aug. 16.

²Susanna (Annesley) Wesley, died on July 30, 1742.

³Robert Jones of Fonmon Castle, a recent strong supporter and friend of the Wesley brothers had died unexpectedly on June 8, 1742. CW channelled his grief into an extended elegy, into which he wove doctrinal disputes with the Calvinistic Methodists (see lines 432ff). It is likely this fact, in addition to the ornate style, which led LH to hope it would not be published. But CW issued (likely in August) *Elegy on the Death of Robert Jones, Esq. of Fonmon Castle in Glamorganshire, South Wales* (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1742). JW subsequently included it in the *Moral and Sacred Poems* (1744), 3:210–32.

⁴See next item.

⁵Richard Graves (1715–1804), older brother of Charles.

⁶Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 59–60.

[Account enclosed in letter – covering last two weeks of July 1742]

For this fortnight [I] worked much on instruction and some short exhortations to the weak have at times been of great use in this point—especially among my work people, who I pass part of every day with. I have found much comfort in this myself, and rarely ever am out of the presence of the Lord. He is as a pillar before me of light and knowledge. More of this understanding I want, to keep his whole law. Yea, I then shall keep it with my *whole* heart. Clouds and darkness are the habitation at times of his fear. But there shall go a consuming fire before him, which shall burn up his enemies,⁷ and destroy all them that persecute me, and shall say unto my soul, ‘*I am thy salvation*’.⁸ The Lord often appeareth *out* of Sion, and in great beauty. Surely he hath done a marvellous thing of late! And I find so much done by this act of his love, that I am all love and wonder. The baseness of my heart on Miss [Fanny] Cowper’s death, that felt impatience at her not having so much light as I expected; and my heart then used to say, ‘We have prayed so much. I have so much longed for this triumph of faith in the last moment, that we shall surely have it in her.’ Not considering we should not be heard for our much speaking, or that there was not anything in man that could incline him [God], but only for his holy name’s sake. The devil thrust sore at me, but I looked to my Lord; and though in the dark, he bade me tarry his leisure.⁹

After Miss Anne Cowper was gone, I walked a little way from this house to the waterside, where there are some houses for the poor, in number about six, two of which are ale houses and are the harbour of the devils themselves. I called in at one of the other houses to see a poor woman that I used to think meant well, in order to stir her a little up. After talking for some time, she told me she had been lately with one of her neighbours. She had some hope before she died she should know whether she should be happy. They would both know my opinion of it, and I answered them “As she believed, so would it be.” I told them I would come down and read to them. They seemed pleased, but particularly her whom I went to see. When I went, she took eagerly after me and pressed me in an uncommon manner to come again.

A few days after, her daughter came up to tell me her mother was extreme ill, to send her something for the colic. I told her, so old as she was, I would not give her anything till I had seen her, and would come down to her. And as soon as I was well able, I took a friend and went. I found her in great bodily sufferings, as they seemed to me. But upon feeling her pulse I could not find that so much as ruffled. But her sweats were the most violent I had ever seen. Her agony being so great she could not contain [it], and said, “O this [is] nothing. I possibly may die, and what will become of my soul! O pray for me! O mercy! Mercy!” Her trouble and humble misery were such [that they] brought tears from all our eyes. I beheld her with my heart filled with love and pity, and said, “Now, where are all your good works? What is become of all your honest labour for sixty years? And what are [you] a poor perishing sinner at last?” “O,” she cried, “It will not do. I am too bad to be saved.” Her tears and expressions of her sufferings were more than can be imagined. I then told her, “Well now you are quite lost. You will find him that came to seek and to save just such as you are now. My life upon it, he will soon come.” “What!” she cried, “to such a sinner as I am!” “Yes, it was only for such he died.”

These extreme agonies had so affected her body that we thought it had raised a fever, yet by her pulse we could not discover it. She lay thus all night. I went the next day and found her the same. No medicine was of any use, though I tried many. Her cry was still the same. I told her the next day I would come again and bring our chaplain to give her the communion. She seemed pleased and said she should die. I told her joy and peace would be her portion first. But she would not be comforted. We went the next day and found her the same. We received the communion with her. I found God’s Spirit to be present with her from my own, and with joy I then said as soon as it was over, “O what a loving Saviour have

⁷See Ps. 97:3.

⁸Ps. 35:3.

⁹See Ps. 27:16.

you!” Her tears were still overflowing her cheeks, with all the marks of misery as before. And this at above seventy years old might affect a heart of stone, that had not my hope for her. About 6:00 at night they brought me word she was seized with a cold shivering fit, and was in cold sweats as in the agonies of death, and had sent to take her leave of all her children. This was her last plunge into the deep. Her soul and body was in hell. Four men [were] not sufficient to hold her in her bed, so great was Satan’s power over her.

After these hours of this suffering the heavenly child was born. The poor people were surprised on a sudden to find her lying quite still. And thus she continued twelve hours, feeding on the fatted calf. She told them she had not slept, but had been partaking all night of the joys of heaven. When I came at the noon to see her, she said, “O my lady, my dear lady, what great things the Lord hath done for me! I have no fear or doubt. He has given me that peace that the world can neither give or take from me.” Her whole looks were altered. She lay with such sweetness and complacency in her looks that my soul delighted to behold her. “*You* have saved my soul. You know this blessedness I have laying this night, comforted by such flashes of the divine love that it is not to be expressed. O what a thing it is to have the heart flaming up always to the Lord.” She bore me much on her heart and this prayer that God would give me many days, for the sake of many. I would have prevented her doing this by saying the Lord’s time is best. But she continued, remarking anew upon my first attendance of her in her sickness. She seemed exceeding grateful for all endeavours for her bodily ease. But upon my dressing her blisters last, she opened not her mouth to thank me for this end any longer. A very poor man (her son), extreme drunken, with all her other children, God has smote to the ground. She has since that hour felt neither pains of body or mind, but exhorteth all that comes in her way. She has forgot all the knowledge and experience of seventy years, and is become a little child. I have sent many to see her. And one of her own daughters is seeking, in the bitterness of her heart, *that* Lord who hath so comforted her mother.

The first time I saw her after this change in her, many poor and ignorant people, and those of the most corrupt sort, were by her. I turned to them and said, “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish. This is the work of God, that you will not believe, though a man declare it unto you to the effect of these words.” I talked long to them—some had ears, and others had none. She possesses her soul in patience, but is starved with hunger. She finds she cannot live without the company of those who are sharers with her in like precious faith with herself. And cannot rise, she says, if she does not come up to me (even thus weak and old) every day.

[July] 29, Thursday. Spend much of my time every day in bringing on souls very earnest in search of our Lord. I have much difficulty in keeping them from clinging to me—such wondrous love they bear me (and this I know must be for my Lord’s sake, for in *me* dwelleth no good thing).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
August 16, 1742

I was extreme[ly] sorry my friend should not have received my last, which I sent to London to his brother first and begged he would forthwith send it to Bristol,¹ which will convince him I write as often as I can.

God shows forth his love and power every moment among us, and we find many added to the believers. My poor old woman is quite recovered.² She has become a gazing stock to the heathen, but she is very faithful to that which is committed unto her. She mourns for the hardness of their hearts and in meekness and love pities and prays for them. I have laboured much among the unawakened. Let none pass by of any rank but I remind them of the fountain that is open for sin and for uncleanness. God blesses my labours for their bodily health so much that they come many miles to me on that account. And many God sends home a-seeking him. It would amaze anyone to see how he blessed my endeavours in this way. But I can always see his farther love to me, in that so poor and vile as I am he chooses me as an instrument for farther good to them. And on this I wait with them, and our Lord carries me through with wonderful labour of body and spirit.

I am brought by reading, singing, and talking to them almost past opening my mouth; when he often presents me with a fresh call and then lifts me up and gives me new strength to labour for him. And I long to spend and be spent for my Lord. The good that is done upon earth, he does it himself. I remain still the vile lump of clay by which his love for others is reflected through. And it is well God gives me to see this so deeply, for I find so strong an attachment to the instrument from them that this occasions me more impatient labour than all I do or say. I often could burst into tears to think my Lord should have any of the glory taken from him. Oh this is grievous to me! It hurts me more than I can express. But out of this the Lord will deliver me, for I see it is little less than blasphemy and I think gives me the nearest suffering to it.

August the 5th. We had this day much worldly company, company of our politest neighborhood, to dine with us. I asked one if I should not help him to some fish. He civilly refused me, and added that he should have made but a bad Romanist, for it was the only thing he thought of eatable [which] he disliked. Another who has been all his life bad in life and principles, but has sense and at times has had many calls by fear, answered “No I could never have done for the Church of Rome, for I could neither eat fish or pray ten times a day.” And it struck all at table that this was meant to me by his look. But in that instant he spoke it, his servant that was at his back waiting at dinner was struck down dead—as we all thought. He fell that instant like a stone, and stretched out under him (upon casting his eyes to the ground) as if he had been laid out to have been put into his coffin. A general damp seized all, as if they had been seized likewise. I found no surprise but what was owing to the hearing the fall and not having observed him, and which indeed shook the whole room. I got up instantly and made two servants take him up and bring him down without any seeming life in him. I found no pulse and [he was] in the cold sweats of death. But in about an hour God blessed the means so far as to restore him.

We asked him the day following, was he sick before. He said no, he found neither pain nor sickness, but said the stroke was instant. And I have therefore believed it to be a call from God to his master and lady, who were present.

August 8th. I was told of a poor creature in our parish who was a dying (near seventy) of a decay. The person who told was a poor tailor (but my well beloved for the Lord’s sake). He pressed me to go to her, hoping God might open her eyes as he had done his. She is, he said, quite dead and has been all her

¹See LH to JW, August 4, 1742 (above).

²The woman in the account that accompanied the letter of Aug. 4.

life remarkable for her stubbornness of will and temper. That there is none cares for her and she is kept by the parish. I went, but almost without hope, and under a pretense of her bodily interest. But before we parted the Lord made her heart like melting wax. She wept much, and from that time our Lord has broken her by love. She was quite ignorant, but the Lord has taught her. I went yesterday and said, “Well, Catherine, what say you now?” She smiled and said “Always better to see you.” “Well, what is your hope?” “My heart,” she said, “has hope the Lord will finish his work. And since you last was here I have had such comfort from the Lord I know not whether I had a body or not. I am weary of the world. I am weary of their folly. I think of nothing but my Lord Jesus. When this joy leaves me for any space, I then feel deeply my earthly misery.” But she waits full of hope of the Comforter’s abiding in her for ever.

Many of the poor, having talk[ed] to her, are broke to pieces. They are seeking. I have never been with her but three times, all which times more has been added, and a little flock of witnesses are rising everyday among the very poorest. Catherine says she shall declare aloud, if she is permitted before she dies, to all the moment she is put into possession of her promised inheritance. Oh who can declare the loving kindness of the Lord or show forth all his praise!

My time is so short I can only say you have always my prayers, and live assured if you do not hear often from me I continue in heart and mind the same and shall ever do while the Lord gives me any measure of grace. Speak from your heart! Don’t you mean me to be joined with you and Mr. [John] in the trust of our dear friend’s children?³ If you should not, I would have [you] speak in great plainness. She will have—and has this moment—my prayers for her direction. I will write soon. She has not asked counsel. Must I offer it? You know I would do it, but often unoffered it⁴ is of no use. Personal regard rather puts us under difficulties when it is easy to be rejected in many cases. But I am inclined to do anything in which my advice would be useful. May the Lord bless, preserve, and keep you in all truth and guide your feet in the way of peace everlasting.

Address: “For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the New School / in Bristol.”

Frank: “Free Huntingdon.”

Annotation: CW’s shorthand summary of reply (also in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 27c).

Postmark: “16/AV.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/84.⁵

³Mary [Forrest] Jones, of Fonman Castle, recently widowed.

⁴Orig., “if it.”

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 66–67.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. August 25, 1742]

My Dear Friend,

What blessed effects does the love of God produce in the heart of those who abide in him! And how solid is the peace, and how divine the joy, that springs from an assurance that we are united to the Saviour by a living faith! Blessed be his name, I have an abiding sense of his presence with me, notwithstanding all the weakness and unworthiness I feel; and an intense desire that he may be glorified in the salvation of souls, especially those who lay nearest my heart and affections. But how vile and worthless are my best services! After the poor labours of the day are over, my heart still cries, “God be merciful to me a sinner!”¹ I am deeply sensible that I daily, hourly, and momentarily stand in need of the sprinkling of my Saviour’s blood. Thanks be to God, the fountain is always open. There I may daily wash, and be cleansed from every spot and every stain. Oh what an anchor is this to the soul!

The poor woman whom I mentioned to you lately has left us, and has joined the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.² About a week before her triumphant exit she was in great pain all the day; and in the evening Lady Anne,³ Lady Frances,⁴ and I went to prayer with her. When prayer was ended, she broke forth in praise to God, and continued for a long time, crying, “All glory! Glory! Glory to the Lamb!” During the night she broke out again in an holy ecstasy of joy and praise.

She endured constant, often violent pain. We esteemed it a privilege to visit her. Never did I see the power of faith more remarkably exemplified. She drank deep of the cup of suffering but, through divine grace and the supporting hand of the great Author of her eternal salvation, was made more than conqueror. I prevailed on my Lord [Theophilus] Huntingdon to visit her. He was surprised and affected even to tears. She was supposed to be dying. As soon as she saw him, she cried aloud, “Glory be to God, that Jesus Christ came to seek and to save the lost! How great is his love for poor sinners! If we are saved, it is because he has died, and poured out his precious blood to wash our guilty souls. God be praised for that Scripture, ‘He that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.’”⁵ Sometimes her voice was loud, and then so low that we supposed her dying. The whole of the next day she continued in a state of extreme weakness, waiting with calm resignation for the appearance of her Lord. In the evening she desired us to sing, after which (and prayer) she was much exhausted. The following day many symptoms of approaching dissolution appeared. I visited her again, with Lady Anne and Lady Frances, and found her exceedingly weak. Lady Frances said, “Your sufferings will soon be over.” She put forth her hand and bid us farewell. A little before her departure she said, “The fear of death is gone. Oh the name of Jesus, how sweet it is! All glory to the Lamb!” She attempted to proceed, but was unable; but sighs, looks, and broken accents explained the happiness she enjoyed. Just before she breathed her last she gave us a parting smile, and her happy spirit entered into rest.

There were many witnesses around her dying bed, to whom I spoke with much fervour and fidelity, The impression will I trust be lasting. Vast numbers, from respect as well as from curiosity, attended her funeral.

I had a visit from Mr. [Charles] Graves lately. He seems much alive to God, and much in earnest for the salvation of souls. Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham and Lady Margaret intend coming to Donington next

¹Luke 18:13.

²The woman near 70 years old described in the August 8th entry of LH to CW, Aug. 16, 1742.

³Anne Hastings (1691–1755), sister-in law of LH.

⁴Frances Wheler (1729–71), niece of LH, now living in Donington Park.

⁵John 6:37.

week.⁶ I wish you or your brother could give us a little of your time to meet them here.
May every blessing attend you, prays
Your most faithful friend,

S. Huntingdon

Source: Aaron Crossley Hobart Seymour, *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*
(London: W. E. Painter, 1839), 1:56–57.

⁶Lady Margaret Hastings (1700–68), sister-in-law to LH, married Benjamin Ingham in 1741.

From Howell Harris¹

On road to London
August 28, 1742

My Dear, Dear Brother,

I think I am enlightened more and more to see Satan's devices, how he keeps us, of both sides, so far asunder, and makes each afraid of the other by representing us to you as preaching election and perseverance in such a manner as to give licence to sin and to feed pride and presumption and carnal security, which indeed is far from us; and so you to us as setting the creature to build on himself, the sand, and on his own faithfulness and holiness to stand in the face [of judgment] and not Christ's righteousness. And so was it within our duty to oppose such often. But I trust that these [devices] are near broken.

Today on the road I read your sweet *Elegy* to dear Mr. Jones.² And indeed I cannot express what food my Lord Jesus did cause it to be to my soul. I was melted down with love and solid thankfulness to our dear Lord for the gifts given you, enabled earnestly to beseech for you that your hands may be strengthened and that the whole mind of God may be in you. I see still we are agreed and near to one another. But oh, who am I to be numbered among my Lord's servants? Indeed I loathe(?) myself all the fool. I continually deny my Lord out of love to this odious idol self in me. And this continually leads me from God. O when shall I be all nothing and God be all? I am ever not like Christ, he [is] all in all in me and for me. It is a hell to me to find any self-wisdom, self-will and self-love in me, and any other mind and temper in me but of that selfless, loving, humble, gentle, kindly, compassionate, generous mind that was in my dear Lord. I feel I hate everything in my self that comes not from him.

As to disputes among ourselves, I trust it is all over. I feel my whole heart (as far as I know that befoulable abyss of pride and hypocrisy) set against it, secretly and earnestly longing for a better union in heart [and] in mind, not among some but among all the dear lovers of our dear Jesus's name. Although this is impossible with even you, I see a way it is possible by. I find the most likely way to bring it is to pray more, converse, and employ especially the heart work more frequent[ly] by action and tongue, to join more in actually doing all common good that we all agree in. Examining more narrowly our souls to weed out every appearance of self and pride, or by-ends of party, or secret desire of having the honour of being in the right. And bearing with each other and discouraging all disputes among the lambs, And endeavouring by might, and may,³ though at some expressions we may seem(?) to be at an infinite distance from each other and to make(?) irreconcilable cross to each other; but when love and humility will come in to make us explain ourselves and [try] to come as near as we can to each other, I feel we are very near.

Satan and self I repel(?) ever by oft searchingly (avoiding as much as possible⁴ all expressions that may offend of either side) to set all to work for life till they have it, and from life which they had. To preach the law to unbelievers as a highness(?) faith enacts, as an followable goal, in order to send them to Christ; and to believers as a rule to walk in and to show their love to him. To set all to press on (?) these new attainments, these new discoveries of God in them, and new degrees of faith, love, humility, meekness, confidence, zeal, and all manner of outward fruits and conformity to Jesus. And in all this we can already most heartily give [the] right hand of fellowship to each other.

Our Church has lost its light and life gradually, and so I believe, by what we may conjecture by

¹A draft of mixed legibility and several cross-outs, which rendered the transcription more tenuous, as noted in several places.

²Charles Wesley, *Elegy on the Death of Robert Jones, Esq. of Fonmon Castle in Glamorganshire, South Wales* (Bristol: Farley, 1742).

³The remainder of this paragraph is written horizontally in the left margin of page 1.

⁴Orig., "possibly."

his leadership of us hitherto, it is by little and little God is going to reform it. It rejoiced me to read some turns in the *Elegy* that gave my weakened confidence some more room to hope that he is going indeed to rebuild it and rise the ruins. And I feel strong will in my soul, set by him in me, for it. And at the same time such a deadness to the nature of it as a branch that my desires for its recovering its ancient glory did not confine my desires for her only, nor make me bitter toward all other Reformed churches abroad and such as differs from us in some things here. But secretly longing we may of love and near union and fellowship together here on earth all of the sects, etc.

And this opened my soul to read, to the setting of my soul on fire with praise, the account of the work at Cambuslang lately in Scotland, or that in America, and also to look with love and delight on the labours (?) loving dissenters I know that love the Lord in sincerity and I believe will shine in glory. And for their sakes I had a tender fear lest your saying,

With pious Jones, and royal Charles may I
A martyr for the Church of England die!⁵

may offend some (and make them suspect you of a little bigotry) that are really to partake of the same glory forever. And yet I saw at the same time that the Lord would bless it much to bigots of our Church. But tenderness would make me go to the utmost on all sides to endeavour to snatch poor souls from the devil, our common enemy,⁶ pain, and real (?) I find (and will the Church may find too) when we are dead. In reading the account of the work of God in Scotland and America I think it is a duty on all of us to be more (?) in cooperating [final words worn away].

O my dear brother, I never saw so much need of endeavour to bring poor sinners to the knowledge of the Son! And as he is all in all, without and within us, so the devil would fain turn us aside anyway from preaching him. But oh, methinks I sometime feel that all the moments of time I spend, every penny of money I spend, and every word I speak and action I take that don't tend to bring poor sinners to submit to him, to be taught and ruled and loved by him, and to turn their eyes from all things to him is lost. O what a friend is the Lord! What has he done for us! And what in us! What will he yet do for and in us! How has he kept all the law for us, as well as died under all its curse that we may be free from [it] as a covenant and find him as the way to the Father? How has he purchased all peace and glory for us! How has he undertaken to bring us ecstasy(?)! O methinks this carries me already there.

O dear, dear brother Charles, what glory shall we soon enjoy when the veil is taken away! And even now the light more and more displays the depth of and the height of the love and tenderness and fellowship and riches and faithfulness and power, as well as the righteousness of Christ are all sin-killing, faith-reviving, love-kindling and soul-leading. I feel they that say Jesus is theirs and can cleave themselves in any sin or be satisfied with present attainments, and don't ceaselessly pant for a full and complete conformity to him, and an uninterrupted fellowship with him, have never knew him; and so deceive themselves or all are now asleep with the foolish virgins.

When I did read your faithfulness to Christ in speaking the truth of the blind guides, who I believe in all respects are the greatest enemies now among us and the greatest hindrance of his work and oppose his cause most. But still let us mourn for them, as for such as say they know Christ and do not and so rob Jesus in their sins. O it is sweet to mourn! All Christians feel for the dishonour that is done to him by us all. O that we knew more of the fullness that is in him, and how fully he fills all the names he calls to himself in his word.⁷ And so I have sent you the light things appear to me in, in the following sheet, which may—I think should—frighten all from their own wills [about a line and half here are obscured].

⁵CW, *Elegy*, ll. 422–23.

⁶The remainder of this paragraph appears horizontally in the left column of page 2.

⁷The remainder of this paragraph appears horizontally in the left column of page 3.

He is all in all for us in heaven. In his active and passive obedience [he] appeased as our head, when justice and purity says “I am satisfied.” He is all in all in us, working in us to will, to do, to believe, to love, to mourn, etc. When we fall, he raises. When we are wounded, he heals. O that we were as clay every moment, passive under his hands! Then would we be more like him, in the inward and outward man. This by the flesh is turned to be poison; but oh it is sweet food for faith and the new creature.

And I am now, since I came to Bristol, more and more convinced than ever before of the need of helping all to see what effect every truth has upon them, if it works holy watchfulness, humility, closer looking to Christ, and less pride and confidence in the flesh; otherwise it is not food for them in their state. To tell of the unconditionalness of God’s love, and of our salvation being on Christ’s faithfulness and his labours done all for us, and (?) to do all in us, and to keep us faithful, and as the fruit is in him to draw us to look to him in order the receive fruit from him; [all this] the flesh abuses and lulls himself asleep. He must have the lash of the law and threats to frighten him to Christ by fear continually. But it cherishes(?) faith and feeds love in the new creature, and endears Christ to him and conforms him more and more to God.

[One short sentence is unclear.] Who is sufficient for these things? That we may light the flesh and light (?) its fruits—carnal security, pridefulness, drowsiness, and presumption—by the law; and at the same time so preach Christ and what he is for us and promises to do in us to lead(?) all the graces of the Spirit.

My dear brother, methinks I have truly on surveilling(?) all my simple challenges. Blessed be God, he helps me to write in love and simplicity as a child—I think without guile. Thereby little and little our Lord will bring us together. We have been perhaps, in your eyes, too far leaning towards reprobation, though never meant it in the least as set man’s damnation in God’s decretive willing it unconditionally, which you feared as being the consequence. [five obscured words] in order to avoid free will and to advance God’s glory in our salvation, because we were sure our salvation lay in and resided in God. And perhaps you, to secure the glory of his justice by hell! Man’s damnation is his own will—or alas! The evil word, too unguarded, of the other side, too near resting his salvation in his own will; and we, against charity, charging you with holding fee will, and so having all the salvation to (?) in his own prudence(?). [six obscured words].⁸ By which vain thought solemn(?) leaves all the world secure and (?); which we saw very evil and dreaded as a consequence on the doctrine, as you set reprobation as a consequence on us. But both share the (?), and it is hard to find the way to loose the knot. It is a mystery.

Source: Harris’s first draft, kept for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #613.⁹

⁸The remainder of this paragraph appears horizontally in the left column of page 4.

⁹Extracts and an added ending appear in *WHS* 17 (1929): 66.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. September 1742¹]

[[Sure I am the Lord loves you, and therefore he corrects you. This great love might be a reason why this s[ickness] should be unto death, but that same love he bears will as well preserve you long to bring many more souls to him and much increase to your g[lory], of which I am sure every day you continue here will be a means. And me he will likewise show unto evil and abase me that I may not have sorrow but s[incerity?], but he will suffer you to see me safe landed through this s[eason of] t[esting?] ere he calls you hence.

[[I wonder not at your joy accomp[anying?]. This will increase when you decrease more and more. I doubt not but you will have felt the power of our prayers before this reaches you.

[[Surely I shall soon have done wondering at anything of ingratitude I see in myself, either to God or man; for if I loved either right, my love would be like his, permanent and lasting through all events the same.

[[I am writing to m[- of?] k[-], and may his strength be ever with you that as your day, so your strength may be.² My petitions to God are that every wish of your soul for his glory may find its full completion, and that we may meet at his right hand in eternity.

[[Farewell, my friend, my faithful friend.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 12c.³

¹Connecting the mention of CW's illness in this letter to his use of amanuenses for his letters in Sept. 1742.

²See Deut. 33:25.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 131.

From John Whitelamb

Wroote
September 2, 1742

Dear Brother,

I must make bold to give you that title [of “brother”]. I was informed that you have entertained so hard an opinion of me as scarcely to hear me named with patience. This made me fear the sight of me would not be agreeable. However I have venture to write, lest I should confirm that opinion by a behaviour that seems to show neglect and ingratitude.

It is probably not in my power to alter your sentiments of me. However, there is a day which you and I expect, when it will appear that John Whitelamb was never either ungrateful, or vicious; though, by the heat of youthful blood and want of experience in the world, he was betrayed into very great follies.

I had the happiness and honour (for indeed I account it both) of seeing and conversing with my brother John [Wesley] when he was last over. He behaved to me truly like himself. I found in him what I have always experienced heretofore: the gentleman, the friend, the brother, the Christian.

Dear sir, command me anything whereby I can show my regard to you or the family; provided conscience be not concerned. Alas, that I have been forced to distinguish Mr. Wesley from the preacher! My brother John demanded my pulpit. But the authority of a tutor, and one to whom I have so great obligations, he has the disposal of whatever is mine. However I find, by the outcry it caused, that it gives very great offence. I know not what measures may be taken against me this triennial Visitation [by the bishop]. Nor am I so solicitous about it as I am uneasy, that the interest of religion and the public peace should, in the least, suffer by my means.

For, to be frank, I cannot but look upon your doctrine as of ill consequence. Consequence, I say; for take them nakedly, in themselves and nothing seems more innocent; nay, good and holy. Suppose we grant that in you and the rest of the leaders, who are men of sense and discernment, what is called the seal and testimony of the Spirit is something real; yet I have great reason to think that, in the generality of your followers, it is merely the effect of a heated fancy.¹

So much for dispute; and I beg you will forgive me it. O that we could so have met as that there should have been no contention, but in loving one another!

I promised my tutor to write to him.² Since then I have had a dangerous illness. I am scarce well recovered; and besides it has left behind such a drowsy disposition as I have not yet had resolution to conquer. I hope to fulfill my promise shortly. I have endeavoured to lay myself quite open to truth; and this (with shame I ought to say it) has cost me some pains. I doubt not but I shall receive satisfaction from him. My dear mother [Susanna] Wesley, and poor sister Kezzy [Keziah Wesley] are gone. God of the spirits of all flesh grant us all to meet in a happy eternity!

Dear brother, are you in earnest in what you teach? I cannot persuade any of my friends that you are. If you be, give me your prayers. If not, do not, as you have formerly done, ridicule me for being too religious. You little thought, when you laughed at me for being shocked at your gay discourse, that you yourself should come to maintain the very notions that I had then. I am,

Your obliged and most affectionate brother,

John Whitelamb

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1781): 184–86.

¹JW added a note in *AM*: “No wonder he should think so. For at that time, and for some years after, he did not believe the Christian revelation.”

²The only known surviving letter of Whitelamb to JW is dated June 11, 1742, *AM* 1 (1778): 183–84.

From Thomas Maxfield

Bristol
September 15, 1742

Dear and Reverend Sir,

This with my love and service to you, hoping the Lord doth still bless your going out and your coming in. Which I have no reason at all to doubt,¹ for I have found much power of late both in public and private to pray for you, and I know that the Lord will answer his own prayer. Blessed be the Lord God, he shows much of his power amongst us. And I am sure that you are partaker of the same, for you are brought sometimes so suddenly to my mind that I leave what I am about to pray for you, and then I feel such wonderful love to you that it is more than I am able to express. O what is love! I feel such love to you now that I believe I could lay down my life for your good. I am sure, sir, that instead of my heart's being divided from you, it is more close knit to you than ever. The more I write, the more I feel. And I bless the \langle Lord² \rangle my God for this that he has given me. And I find the way \langle to \rangle have more is to be faithful to that I have already received. And I heartily beg your prayers that the Lord may increase my faith more and more all the days of my life.

I am willing to let you know that I have much pestered this night in a dream concerning you (though it hath not troubled me since I awoke). That was that you was turned predestinarian and did much persuade me to the same opinion, and told me that it was the Lord that showed it to you. And you wondered where your eyes had been all this time, that you had not seen it before. And you did not doubt but God would soon show it to me, if I would not shut my eyes against the light. But I trust that God will keep both you and me from this, and all that is not according to his holy will, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Mrs. Purdy was buried on Friday night last,³ and I hear that he is going to administer the sacrament once a month to his society in Westerleigh.⁴ I think this seems to me the worst step that he has taken yet. But to his own master he must stand or fall, and I pray God that what I see amiss in him I may not fall into myself.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sept. 15. 1742 / T. Maxfield – ready to lay / down his life for me!"

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/6.

¹A sample of Maxfield's spelling: "This with my love and servess too you, hooping the Lord doth still bless your going out and your coming in, which I have no reason at all to dought."

²A small portion is torn away at a fold, but the missing text is evident.

³John Purdy (c. 1717–55), born in Ryton, County Durham, was in London by 1738 working as a tailor and active in the Fetter Lane society. Purdy accompanied JW to Bristol in 1739 and remained there, assisting JW for a time until he decided to marry. Purdy was active as a local preacher in communities just north of Bristol and settled in Stapleton. His first wife (name unknown) had just died. Purdy married again in 1746, to Mary (Highman) Reynolds (c. 1703–57).

⁴Orig., "Westerly."

From John Okeley¹

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
September 26, 1742

Dear and Respected Mr. John and Charles Wesley,

I doubt not but you know by this time that the Lord has brought me, with my dear brethren, safe in this land.

I think of you very often, and fetch many a sigh out of the depth of my heart for you to my Saviour. I love you both tenderly, and that sweet fellowship and unity which we once had together comes often in my mind. I do not, neither ever shall, forget, with the utmost gratitude of heart, that you have been instruments of the Lord for my good, and those many benefits I have received at your hands—of which my being now in the Lamb's blood-bought, blood-besprinkled train is not one of the least.

O my dear brethren, the Lamb's blood is now my chiefest good. From thence comes all my happiness in time and in eternity. Thanks be to him that he has opened my eyes and enabled me to see into the mystery of his cross and sufferings, and to find life, peace, rest, pardon, and salvation to my poor soul. You know what I have been—a poor, reasoning, unhappy man, and could not believe on the Lamb of God; neither had rest night nor day, because I was ignorant of the righteousness of faith; went about to establish my own, and did not submit myself to the righteousness of God. *One thing* has brought me through, it was thy being slaughtered so. I can now believe on him, and know it is eternal life. He has been made an offering for my sins, and made reconciliation to God not only for mine but also for the sins of the whole world. Christ's blood and righteousness, mine finery, is my wedding dress, wherewith before my God I will stand when I approach the heavenly land. Of this I will witness to my poor fellow creatures as long as I live, and bring as many as I can to the knowledge of their crucified redeemer, which is freedom from condemnation and eternal life. The Lamb will by me stand!

My dear souls, I wish you in every respect well. May my dear Lamb overstream your hearts with his grace, and keep you therein unto eternal life! I should be glad to hear from you. Brother [James] Hutton can convey them to

Your unworthy poor brother in Christ,

J. Okely

P.S. Salute all I know.

Source: manuscript copy for Okeley's records; London, Moravian Library and Archives.

¹John Okeley, or Okely (1721–92), brother of Francis and native of Bedford, was raised in a Moravian congregation that his mother Ann helped organize. He was part of a major immigration of Moravians to Pennsylvania in 1742, and became an important Moravian itinerant throughout the Philadelphia region.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
October 21, 1742

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

The last lines comforted me.¹ But I was prevented answering it so soon as I intended. My hands have been fully employed and I believe for good. I meet with but little difficulty as yet in the care of the family.² The maid I hope will learn she is very ignorant, but seems willing to be taught. I believe we shall be blessed together. My present situation is much to my satisfaction. O that I had but a heart to give all the praises to God. I believe nothing will ever be able to separate me from him or his children. I find a want of a constant inward waiting upon him. I have not such an intense thirst after his righteousness as I had, nevertheless I cannot fear I know I shall be kept and made perfect in his love. My dear friend, my heart rejoices in hope of the blessings we shall receive. We shall hold out unto the end for the goodness of the Lord endures forever.

I can say from experience all friendship is vain but that which we seek the glory of God in. And so far as my corrupt nature would admit, this and this only has been my aim from the first of my acquaintance to this hour. Verily the Lord has regarded my prayer and I trust I shall always have a will to serve you. I am too sensible of my own weakness to despise others. I know the hand of the Lord is with thee. He will satisfy thy soul with his likeness. Stay thy mind upon him. How lovely how gracious are his looks. All happiness is contained in him and we my friend shall enjoy him. O do not once think of misery, for thy portion will be joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I hope providence will order it for thee to spend some time with us this winter. We are now like a private family and I believe it would seem more like a home than ever. And I am fully persuaded if we watch unto prayer it would be a very great blessing to my soul, and I hope to thine, for thee to be with us. For I can find none of the preachers so quickening to me as thy brother and thee. Though I can truly say I love them all.

Sally Cart I believe will be kept from us.³ O that I would describe the desire and faith I find for thee. Fear no evil, for the everlasting gates of the New Jerusalem are open to receive thee. Thou hast but a few steps of rugged path to pass over, and his staff will keep thy feet from slipping and his right hand support thee. Remember to pray for me and let us hear soon. With duty and affection I remain

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Sister [Susannah] Designe's and Sally Cols[t]on's duty is to thee.

Endorsement: by CW, "Oct. 21. 1742 Sarah Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/11.

¹CW's letter is not known to survive.

²Perrin was apparently staying at the New Room in Bristol; in Feb. 1744 JW would appoint her the head of the household there.

³She was likely a Quaker relative of Elizabeth (Smith) Cart.

Lady Huntingdon to Mary Jones (on CW)

[Castle Donington]
October 27, 1742

My dearest Mrs. Jones' letter reached me while our good friend Mr. Charles Wesley was with me. He said he would soon write to you. He is very much blessed by God in all his undertakings. I long for just such a heart and that single eye we shall ever find he has to God and his glory. This joined with his humble spirit is of great price. I think him the most grown in grace I have ever seen one. In the time we enjoyed we took sweet council and I trust shall always walk in the house of God as such forever. You failed not to make a part of our joy. We called all our absent friends together. God has given him another daughter in the room of dear Miss Fanny [Cowper], a fine Lady of this world, but to use his own words, a very Lydia in heart. Your are to do with me what you please. Consider only how I can serve you or yours. I long to hear from you, and that all your ends are to be alone directed for the glory of the Lord. Send me word when you leave Fonmon, or whether at all, and then where you intend to make your abode. This leave likewise to the Lord of life, with his direction, and fear not, doubt not, if you are not in haste, it will be made for his glory and for your own everlasting happiness. May the Lord be thy guide. I shall rejoice to hear from you, though I have [not], nor can have, any hope a correspondence of so little value as mine can be the like temptation. But when you think I can serve you in any way, know you assuredly have one that wishes to do so either in spirituals or temporals, and that I live,

Your affectionate friend for Christ's sake,

S. Huntingdon

I must trouble you to deliver the enclosed as possible, as I know not when Mr. [John] Hodges leaves, and tell him I can near believe but he is angry with me unless I soon hear from him.

Address: "For / Mrs. Jones at Fonmon Castle / Glamorganshire."

Postage: "Free Huntingdon" "29 / OC."

Source: holograph; Glamorgan Archives, DF/F/51.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon¹

[Donington Park]
[c. October 30, 1742]

I gave you some slight hint that I would give you some farther account of that person whose extreme[ly] odd case was represented in a letter I gave you the night before you left this place.² I own it amazes me, but its effects much more. God appointed it for this end, even for her deliverance. By what she has since experienced, she finds, *perfect peace*, no will, absolute resignation even in that she proposed to your consideration. She thinks she then found and still does [find] that she was as a little child opening her heart to a parent who would judge with her. And that she is now free from all things, that there stands now nothing between God and her soul. And that God, who knows her great simplicity in it, will pardon the error of the understanding since the eye was single to God in its tenderness of his glory and honour. Right and base distrust of herself was the motive, the only motive, she would now assert for her so doing.

I know not in the opinions of men but their judgment might condemn her. But it is alone for this reason that their eye is evil. She seems, I know, deeply affected at the trouble it gave you, and on her knees entreats your pardon. And that you will cease to remember the whole of this affair—wherein it causeth you to be troubled—but not to do so by [forgetting?] her wondrous effects, as they may be useful to many. She farther desires that it may rest in you alone, not even you brother. Unless it would be any satisfaction to you to have your heart quite empty; and then you are commissioned from her to do by her in the affair as you are most inclined; for as God knows it, she is now quite at ease, for she constantly rejoices in her infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon her. And this alone will her days be matter [of] the great means of her continual dependence. And when it ever is other than an evident mark of the Lord's love to her by any painfulness, she will hope and firmly hope, by beseeching the Lord that his strength will be sufficient for her, and that he never will fail them that seek him.

I would now say something of myself, meaning to say all things in gratitude to you for the wondrous trouble you must have had on my account by your own confession. But your doing it as unto the Lord and not as unto men, I know your heart finds upon every example of this kind. I fear you say and do not show this in a very extraordinary instance. Watch over your soul in this particular, it will lead you to great darkness. Real simplicity is what we all want. But dwells there on earth such blessedness, and I not seek it as one of those precious stones of which the building is composed? I have a faint persuasion the Lord ere long will visit you with sickness or some affliction, but I rather think it will be the former. But “as your day is so will your strength be.”³ But “ye will overcome and be more than conqueror.”⁴ But in this rejoice, not but that your name is wrote in heaven. It is more sure to me than anything I see. I found your prayers, they are always answered and that instantly.

By the enclosed you will find your brother thinks you not a plain dealer enough for the depth of mine inquiry.⁵ He wants me to be more a poor sinner and that in the right sense of it. And indeed, when I think of myself at all, I feel it as a sore burden too heavy for me to bear. But I would as carefully avoid

¹The last three pages of this letter were detached from the prior pages, and somehow became associated with a letter of May 23 (MA 1977/504/1/82, at end). CW's shorthand extract shows that they belong to a single letter.

²From the preceding letter of LH to Mary Jones we know that CW was at Donington Park in late Oct. 1742. The letter LH gave to CW at that time is not known to survive.

³Deut. 33:25.

⁴See Rom. 8:37

⁵The enclosure, apparently a letter of JW to LH, is not known to survive.

such as declaration if I did not feel it as any other untruth. But I think God and man is sufficient to fill my thoughts, and if I don't always think myself a sinner it is because I don't think of myself as an being but as nothing in the sight of the Lord. Your fear of mysticism for me is one of my own fears for myself. The natural warmth⁶ of my imaginations, though after nothing, may have me. I am still nothing in the Lord's hands. And I feel as if I should not like to be anything but what his words promise me to be, and that upon the narrowest examination in his divine presence they find me to be. To say that I am without even a will in this thing is strange. But this I am sure [of]: I look for a new creation of soul that, though I have tasted of, I am not in possession of. And thus much more, that when it is once formed it will as surely be after his word as after his image. This I trust he will do for his holy namesake. Or where must thy portion be, oh wretch? Be in eternity? My ears are stunned at times, as is my sense, with that declaration of their inheritance as is now to be mine: "Cast ye that unprofitable servant into outward darkness."⁷ Pray now for my little household of faith. If any is to be made instrumental for my avoiding this sentence it must be that one ask him anything for me and it shall be given you. To your prayers I find will all my blessings be given. This I am sure of. May the Lord bless and keep, now and forever. I trust you have found our petitions since you left us. I leave Mrs. [Mary (Forrest)] Jones's affair to our Lord.

My prayers and all love attend Mr. [Charles] Graves and Mr. [Edward] Ellis.⁸

Admire with me the particular affection of your brother's letter. How grateful I feel, heaven alone knows.

Direct your letter to Mrs. Motte.⁹ She will give it to me with that direction.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/91,¹⁰ and last three pages in MA 1977/504/1/82. See also CW's extract of several sections in shorthand in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 24b.¹¹

⁶Here is where the material displaced in 1/82 begins.

⁷Cf. Matt. 25:30.

⁸CW was preaching in Markfield before proceeding to London.

⁹Martha Motte was a servant of LH.

¹⁰Cf. the previous transcription of this first part in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 55–56.

¹¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 155–56.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[c. November 5, 1742¹]

[[It is not to be expressed how God has blessed your words in this place. It is a matter of rejoicing to me every hour. I begged of our Lord while you was here, to seal your ministry by some witness, and oh who can d[eny] his l[ove]. The night you was last at Markfield one of that little flock sickened in the word and died last evening truly in the faith.

[[I am amazed that I have not wearied out both you and your brother's care of my soul, and often look up and see devils[?] there on earth, such ch[allenges?] as this, and commend your souls in the l[itleness?] of my faith to him who alone is able to pay the mighty debt for me. I find no doubt but the Lord prospers all who fear him.

[[God will bless you forever. He hath chosen you to bear his name amongst the heathen. You are a vessel unto honour fit for the Master's use.²]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 16a.³

¹The first surviving evidence of CW preaching in Markfield is his *MS Journal* account for Oct. 19, 1743. But LH was then in London, not at Donington Park (near Markfield). So this likely refers to CW's visit described by LH in her letter to Mary Jones dated Oct. 27, 1742.

²See 2 Tim. 2:21.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 138–39.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[[November]] 11, [17]42

[[God brought us all safe here on Friday¹ and I was much comforted by yours.² How does the Lord correct all he loves! I must thank him for it. I am sure neither of your sickness[es] will be unto death for he will first heal all your infirmity.

[[I have heard overmuch about the still ones. The work they mock is God's. They behave like Moravians[?], stop all going to church, and all means [of grace]; and go now so much further as to hinder all church, going to school, learning the catechism, etc. They spare none of the flock. I am sure they will soon prove whose instruments they are.

[[I have no wish about anything. A c[lean] h[ear]t and to be b[ond]ed in love is all my soul labours after. I am amazed hourly at God' goodness, how he can let so worthless a worm live by him a single moment. I am sure of your prayers, from which I am still kept from the utmost sufferings in b[ody] and] l[-]. I dare not so much as think what I shall be tomorrow, though I feel my soul united to God alone. I feel no joy in anything but him. All the language of my heart is nothing but "Save Lord, or I perish." There is life in this, but no consolation.

[[If you are with any who die in the faith, put them upon praying for me, that I may endure to the end. I can now pity you in your conflicts of faith. Let me know how you are in health and what amounts of your b[rother] and d[epend] upon the ardent prayers of your most faithful friend.

[[Since I wrote this I have been called upon to resign my youngest son.³ I f[ai]thfully gave him up, and felt without a single wish concerning him. God has b[orne] him out of his fits to the yonder vale. It is hard for a mother to forget her sucking child,⁴ but this I do not find when God calls. All he does is both easy and pleasant to me.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 2b.⁵

¹Likely Nov. 5. Lord and Lady Huntingdon would have come to their home in Enfield Chase, just outside London, prior to the start of Parliament on November 16, 1742.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³The name of this son is unknown; he would have been born at least a year after Henry (born Dec. 1739; died Sept. 1758). LH would lose two more sons to smallpox within a year: Fernando (1732–Apr. 23, 1743), and George (1730–Dec. 24, 1743).

⁴See Isa. 49:15.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 111–12.

From William Briggs¹

Monday morning November 22, 1742

Sir,

I have had the happiness of conversing with your brother [JW] and likewise with Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield, from whom, through the grace of God, I have received wonderful enlightenings in my once dark soul by hearing them preach and by private advice.

I was one of those happy souls that received the word of God from your mouth last night and you cannot be insensible to the raptures and ecstasies which we felt. The comfort being great, our praises w[ere] wonderful—our hearts being full of joy—insomuch that they (then) overflowed with the love of God. Especially mine did then, and never before in such a manner.

My desire is to be always full of such love. But as human infirmities abound (at present) I cannot enjoy so great a blessing long together, and the only reason I can assign for it is I converse with none but worldly-minded people. I have a great desire to serve God always and in all places. But alas, in some places I am interrupted by the vain talking of my worldly friends so called! Their kindnesses are great snares; their gifts, pleasures (called moans), and friendly speeches are slow poisons to my soul. Why, because the love of God is not so firmly fixed in my heart as to withstand the shock of leaving all—which I must do sooner or latter—but being young and unexperienced, I thought is not fit till I consulted those more experienced than myself. I have no acquaintance amongst the true followers of Christ that I might speak freely to, that I might receive their advice freely, which makes me trouble you with these lines, knowing for Christ's sake you will not think it any trouble at all. The grace of God grows more and more in me every day [but] not without backslidings. My desire is to be acquainted in what manner I must proceed to be admitted into closer fellowship with the faithful; i.e. into a society or band, that I may hear the word of God expounded and learn to be continually singing forth the praise of my God and Saviour.

As these desires are from one who desires to glorify God in all his actions, as he is my witness I lie not, so I hope you will not reject me [or] my desire of assisting in those solemn assemblies with my heart and voice, in singing forth the praise of the great God to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

I rejoice in the Lord to see you in health and I pray God to continue it for the honour of him and the health of our souls. I am,

Your friend and servant for Christ's sake,

W[illia]m Briggs

Direct for me at Mr. Gladman's, Trunkmaker, in Leaden Hall Street.

Endorsement: by CW, "Nov. 22. 1742 W. Briggs desirous of admission into the Society."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/17.

¹This is the first surviving communication between CW and William Briggs (c. 1722–88). Briggs worked at the custom house (and later the Ordnance Office) in London. He was granted the membership requested in this letter, and his natural abilities quickly raised him to positions of still more responsibility. He was named a steward of the Foundry School in 1746 and attended the Conference of 1748 in that capacity. He served as a Book Steward 1753–59. On Jan. 28, 1749 CW presided at the marriage of Briggs to Elizabeth Perronet (1728–1807).

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
November 26, 1742

I think we have our work now before us. To awaken any more would be mere lost labour—that is, till God shows his time is come, by giving us more builders. The societies of London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle I can undertake (God being my helper) by the instruments he has already given us, to settle and keep in order. I have visited already two and forty of the classes in or near this town. But to undertake more as yet, I am afraid, would be to overthrow all.

I wonder you do not discern yet that the people of London are, in the main, just like other people. But they are elder than the rest. Therefore they stand in the thickest of the battle. The place where there is the hottest service next to this is Bristol, for they are our next eldest children. But in other places, particularly here, they are but newborn babes. Without doubt it is far more pleasant to be among such. But this I trust is not the spring of our motions. Therefore let us take our turns in every place. Let us do our Lord's work as we may. Let us pluck what souls we can out of the lion's teeth. And if at last we ourselves perish, we perish. But the devil shall ask God's leave before he get us out of his hand.

You are exceeding apt to take things too deeply. I know the evil and the good that is at London. Some are wrong. What then? Do not lump them all together. Do not condemn or sharply reprove all. By no means! Do not break the bruised reed. Many such there are among them. John Cheyne indeed is not such. But neither is he such as brother [Thomas] Maxfield supposes, who judges much amiss concerning him, and *si non insanis satis, instigat*.¹ Soft and fair.

All you say of [[brother [Westley] Hall]] is true. He is inimitably wrong-headed. I wish you could talk with him and calmly withstand him to the face. He must positively be driven away. Be Marcellus in this, not Fabius,² and I know God will be with you. Adieu.

P.S. Pray desire Charles Graves to write to me. I want to hear from him. Let brother Rice be readmitted, on condition he go no more to the Tabernacle.³ Do not forget to thank sister [Anne] Lambert and Sweet Lewin for their letters to me.⁴ And be sure to give my love to brother Hobbins (and his wife), and desire him to write to me as oft as he can.⁵

We had a strange night at the society last night. My journal by and by will tell you more.⁶

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [10–12].⁷

¹Cf. Terence, *Woman of Andros*, 692, '*si hic non insanit satis ..., instiga*'; 'if he is out of his mind, goad him on'.

²Comparing Marcus Claudius Marcellus (c. 270–208 BCE), the general known as the 'Sword of Rome' with Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus (c. 280–203 BCE), a general known for his defensive strategy of delay, used against Hannibal.

³Samuel Rice is present in a band for single men on the Foundery Band Lists for Nov. 1742, but his name was struck out in the Mar. 1743 listing.

⁴Sweet Lewin was a prominent member of the Foundery society—serving from Aug. 1742 as leader of multiple bands for married women, of 'trial bands', and as part of the Select Society.

⁵Robert and Elizabeth Hobbins appear as members of bands for married men and women in the Foundery Band Lists (with Robert serving as a band leader) through 1744, then disappear.

⁶See JW, *Journal*, Nov. 25, 1742, *Works*, 19:303.

⁷Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:307–09.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
November 27, 1742

I suppose you have before this time received the letters that passed between Mr. [John] Robson and me. You will then be able to form a judgment of this strange affair. I do not yet see how I could have acted otherwise than I did.¹

It would be every way more convenient for me if I had an assistant who was even in deacon's orders. Such a one I should prefer before any other, who had only equal talents from God. But I know none such who is willing to cast in his lot with us. And I scarce except I shall, because I know how fast they are rivetted in the service of the world and the devil before they leave the university.²

I am sometimes inclined to doubt whether you do not approve of in your children³ what you abhor yourself; and whether there are not many things in Mr. Law's *Serious Call* which deserve a deeper consideration than you have yet given them.⁴

Every time that I have expounded here the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles I have had the strongest conviction that believers cannot expect to retain the gifts of God unless they take the whole Word of God for their rule, without either mending or dropping any part of it. The returns therefore of unbelief, and all the deadness, coldness—nay, and actual sins—consequent thereon I think may be easily accounted for (if by no other) by this plain way: 'These believers did not take the Word of God for their rule. They had not all things in common.'⁵ Sure I am this is not too hard a saying for any who are in their first love. I am much in doubt whether I should not immediately begin to put them to the proof of it. Methinks I cannot tell how to unite any in bands who are otherwise minded. Many cautions will indeed be needful, but those our Lord will teach. I should be glad if you would weigh the thing well and let me have your thoughts upon it. (I speak only of such believers as are wholly independent.)

May you be very little, for our Lord's sake.

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [12–13].⁶

¹No letters between JW and John Robson are known to survive. JW had apparently been trying to persuade Robson to receive ordination on completing his MA in 1742. Instead Robson returned to run the family estate in Willington, and died ten years later.

²The last two sentences of this paragraph were published in Hampson, *Memoirs*, 2:7–8 (and replicated from there in *Works*, 26:93, with the suggested date of Dec. 10, 1742).

³I.e., CW's converts.

⁴William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life; adapted to the State and Condition of all Orders of Christians* (London: William Innys, 1729).

⁵See Acts 2:44–45.

⁶Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:310–11.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
November 30, 1742

[[Dear Brother,]]

You must absolutely send nothing by land carriage. Eighteen shillings I paid for the last box (six extraordinary because it was directed to a gentleman, not a tradesman). Some half-pence and a crooked six pence are now my whole remaining substance.

Hitherto we see no prospect of any house at all. We can get no ground for love or money. I like this well, it is a good sign. If the devil can hinder us, he shall. I have sent brother [Thomas] Williams this morning to try again if we can have a place in Pilgrim Street. I understand the owner asks only three hundred pounds. And what is that, you know, to us?

I hope to send some more journal by the next post.¹ I have settled no bands yet. I can't see how believers can continue such if they are not willing (at least) to have all things in common.²

Should not sister Jackson settle here?³ If so, why does she delay? What nonsense is it, to lose an hour? I will not *bid* her come. But the sooner she comes, the better. She will meet with a welcome reception. Books of every sort might come in the next ship.

Why does not Thomas Butts send me the accounts weekly? I want to know what I have to do.

Love to all. Be patient.

Adieu!

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [18–19].⁴

¹I.e., portions of JW's manuscript journal, which would be edited and published later.

²See Acts 2:44–45.

³Likely Margaret Jackson, a single woman who appears regularly on the Foundery Band Lists between 1742 and 1745. She did sail to Newcastle with a load of books in Dec. 1742 (see CW to JW, Dec. 16, 1742), but apparently did not remain there long.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:314–15.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[Newcastle upon Tyne]

[December 8, 1742]

[[Brother,]]

Mr. Spears'[s] note came in good time, for we expected to have about four pounds to pay tomorrow, for carriage of the boxes.¹ The sending such a quantity of things by land was an egregious blunder. But I have given Thomas Butts a fresh order: To send nothing at all, absolutely nothing, by land carriage. A hundred three-shilling hymn books should be sent without fail by sister [Margaret?] Jackson.² It is intolerable stupidity to have delayed it till now.

I see it is a mere jest to talk of my acting by any rules of *common prudence*. 'O' (say the wise people of London), 'be sure if you build at Newcastle that you contract no new debt. Have the money in your hand first.' It seemed exceeding right. But how is it when we come to the point? Why, after long seeking one to no purpose, a gentleman comes and offers an exceeding convenient piece of ground. 'But sir, I have not the money as yet.' 'O sir', says the owner, 'I am not in haste. If you give it [to] me a week or two hence, it is all one.' Very well, here is seventy pounds debt at the first step.³ So far, so good. But there is no building without timber and brick and mortar. 'Sir' (says the steward of the bricklayer's company), 'we will furnish you with 150,000 of the best bricks at 10 shillings per thousand, and with ten thousand bowls of the very best lime at six pence per bowl.' I tell him too, 'But I want them now, and I have not the money by me.' 'Sir' (says the man), 'we will give you six months credit. Be pleased only to sign this article of agreement.' The same answer the timber merchant gives, so here a debt of two hundred pounds more. And all this is absolutely unavoidable, unless the whole work is to stand still. Over and above this, the workmen's wages are five pounds a week. And how to procure even this as yet I see not. One thing must be that is plain—I must borrow a hundred pounds forthwith, else the work will be at a full stop before Christmas. Let some man of spirit among you bestir himself.⁴ It is *dignus vindice nodus*.⁵

[[You are most unreasonably]] prejudiced both [[against George Whitefield]] and the people of London. [[But where? It is your weak side]], as little as you suspect it. [[I am offended at you. Will you never be wiser? Not while you think it wisdom to suspect everyone, regardless of right or wrong.]]

I doubt I shall not get away hence before Christmas. In me *domus inclinata recumbit*.⁶ We begin building our wall tomorrow, before the court yard and the house (with God's leave) on Monday.⁷

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [22–24].⁸

¹Spears was assisting with a financial transaction in London; see CW to JW, Dec. 16, 1742.

²*HSP* (1742) had been published mid-year, and sold for 3 shillings.

³£70 is the combined amount JW paid to Mr. Riddell and John Stephenson for the land on which the Orphan House would be built.

⁴Joseph Pimm of the London society answered this call with a gift of £100; see CW to JW, Dec. 16, 1742.

⁵Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 191; 'a knot worthy of a deliverer'.

⁶Virgil, *Aeneid*, xii.59; 'rests our emerging house'.

⁷I.e., Dec. 13, 1742; Weather and other delays meant that the first stone was not laid until Dec. 20; see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19:306.

⁸Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:316–17.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[Newcastle upon Tyne]

[December 9, 1742]

After abundance of difficulties we yesterday took possession of our ground and set the men to work in digging the foundation of our house.¹ I design to build it about the size of that in Kingswood, only a little wider. Today we hope to run up a wall to divide us from the street. About twenty men will be continually on the work, and God has provided for me an overseer after my own heart, a master carpenter who knows in whom he has believed;² who provides all, superintends all, and works like a common man for four shillings a week.

I have great desire that all our brethren who are scattered abroad should join with us in observing Christmas Eve as a day of fasting and prayer, for the furtherance of the gospel both here and in other parts. I see many things we shall have to struggle with here. But we have a strong helper. And we shall all declare, 'They that know thy name shall put their trust in thee! For thou has never failed them that seek thee!'³

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [26–27].⁴

¹Cf. JW, *Journal*, Dec. 8, 1742, *Works*, 19:305.

²See 2 Tim. 1:12.

³Cf. Ps. 9:10 (BCP).

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:317–18.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[Newcastle upon Tyne]
[c. December 12, 1742]

We are likely to be at a full stop. The timber merchants here insist on ready money. So that if it be possible to procure a hundred pounds, or even fifty, though at five percent interest, should be sent down immediately.¹ But perhaps it is sent already.

I cannot stir hence till after Christmas, so it is time enough to fix the day.

On Christmas Eve I would desire all our brethren at London and Bristol and elsewhere to join with us in prayer and fasting. I wish you or Thomas Butts [to write] to those at a distance (at Bristol, Yorkshire, Evesham, Painswick, etc.), that we may have all the simple ones united together in this labour of love.

Like or disliking is nothing to the purpose. We must both take our turns at every place. I know indeed those that are strongest in faith are at London, for they have borne the burden and heat of the day.² But there are also the weakest and the most ungovernable, and so it ought to be.

Hasten sister [Margaret] Jackson (with at least 100 three-shilling hymn books, 100 more *Psalms and Hymns*,³ and what other books you please. Expect [my] journal (poor sheaf) next post.

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [30–31].⁴

¹CW sent the money with a letter of Dec. 16, 1742.

²See Matt. 20:12.

³I.e., *HSP* (1742) and *CPH* (1741).

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:321–22.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
December 14, 1742

I cannot possibly doubt of our brother Hodges' coming back.¹ He is only a reed shaken by the wind. I shall give Mr. [Westley] Hall the meeting in good time. I can't tell which to think, whether he is with or without design a tool of the Moravians; and it matters not much, for there is neither counsel nor strength against the Lord.

If you have read over the bill of family expenses for the last week,² I thank you heartily. *Macte tuâ virtute!*³ To it again. Read over the account of the present week's expenses, and be sure to lay your finger upon every article that will admit of retrenchment. The standing articles are tea, sugar, milk, bread, butter, and cheese; shall less of each be used? Or shall we strike off one or two entirely. Agreed. Set the example then at London, as I do at Newcastle. I (and consequently all my family) have left off breakfasting upon tea. We now use milk, and have our health full as well. Shall it pass in the upper house? It will save more than thirty pounds a year at Newcastle, London, and Bristol.

I do not keep two maids at London, no more than two footmen here. Enquire again. Molly Oatley puts us to no expense.⁴ If she helps at any time, it is for love. I have room enough in this house for sister [Margaret?] Jackson; of whom I have said over and over let her forthwith. (And once for all) let her bring with her 100 more large hymnbooks,⁵ 100 of each *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love*,⁶ 300 *Nature and Design of Christianity*,⁷ 100 *Salvation by Faith*,⁸ 50 *Almost Christian*,⁹ 50 last Oxford sermon,¹⁰ and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

What you propose concerning the next hymn book is easily done.¹¹ Have a box made with two locks. You keep one key, I another; or, if you will, keep you both. Put all that is received into it. Open it once or twice a quarter and do with the money as need shall require.

Adieu!

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [31–32].¹²

¹Joseph Hodges (1710–78), a smith, was one of the members of the Fetter Lane society who briefly joined the Wesley brothers at the Foundery. Partly through the influence of Westley Hall, he had recently sided with the Moravians; cf. Benham, *Hutton*, 93, 411.

²JW used “family” for the small cohorts of helpers staying at the Foundery, New Room, etc.

³“Well done!”

⁴Mary Oatley appears between Apr. 1742 and Mar. 1743 as part of a band for single women in the Foundery Band Lists.

⁵*HSP* (1742).

⁶The volumes of this title by CW published in 1741 and 1742.

⁷JW's abridgement of William Law's work with the title.

⁸JW's 1738 sermon.

⁹JW's 1741 sermon.

¹⁰CW, *Sermon Preached on Sunday, April 4, 1742*.

¹¹Apparently referring to the short *Collection of Hymns* being published in late 1742 in London by William Strahan.

¹²Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:322–23.

1743

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[January 2, 1743]

I have not set pen to paper since my last to you. But a few lines I wrote since I came to this place to inform those at home of my safe arrival here. The Lord, my friend, has chastened and corrected me, but has not given me over unto death. I praise him for these his mercies, for “He has made the bones which he has broken to rejoice.”¹ I thought these instances of his love would have bound my will to his, but still do I find my soul willing to do everything contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

I found such a rebellion of heart upon every thought of coming to this place, that I have never yet known in any instance. I am without doubt or fear, mourning and that instantly for my deliverance from this bondage of corruption. But though it is suffering, it is a happy one, for we are making our complaint in a time we shall be heard. I often remembered you and begged your reward for all your labours of love to me might go along with you through a blessed eternity, of which I have not a single doubt. I hope to see your brother [JW] soon. I think to write a line to [your] b[rother] today. I rejoice over the little flock I find here.² Our prayers, now a year old, are not forgotten. May the Lord Jesus abide with you and give you an increase of all spiritual blessings.

Address: “For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Foundery / near upper Moorfields / London.”

Postmarks: “2/IA” and “BATH.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon]] Jan. 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/5.³ See also CW abridged shorthand copy of the second paragraph in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 20a.⁴

¹Ps. 51:8.

²In shorthand extract CW adds [[Bath]].

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 61

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 146.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
January 17th, [1743]

Dear and Honored Friend,

The receipt of thine has filled my heart with thankfulness, for my mind was greatly affected.¹ For some days after thee left us there seemed to be a continual cry in my soul for the prosperity of thine.² O may neither height nor depth nor any other creature be able to separate thee from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Surely the Lord will give his strength to his servant and help the son of his handmaid, that they who hate thee may see it and be ashamed. I will praise the Lord for his merciful kindness towards thee. O that thine enemies may never more prevail against thee.

All the desire I feel for myself is that I may be continually exercised in the law of the Lord, suffer with his children, and pray without ceasing for them. I know my affection grows stronger and stronger and purer and purer to you. I am constrained to beg of God, if it is for his glory I should be of the same mind in all things, to bring it to pass. I want nothing but to give up all to God, that I may know his will in all things concerning me. I often find a strong desire to become the most contemptible creature on the face of the earth, so that I may at all times know I am doing the will of my Father. I am so far from desiring comfort I have been ready to pray I may feel none till Jesus Christ has full possession of me. I am afraid of myself in everything. I watch every motion of my affection to his creatures, least I should rob my master, for I know all belongs unto him. I desire no other love, not even to my nearest relations and dearest friends, than that which flows from the foundation of pure love proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. Neither can I, when I am upon my watch, desire the esteem of any person in the world; for I plainly see I deserve it not. I grow more and more helpless. At times I seem as if I should become as a natural fool, and I feel a willingness to be counted such so that I may enjoy Christ. Sometimes I think I have no desire but the salvation of my own soul and others, and other times I fear it is indolence causes me to concern myself so little about temporal things. At times I feel hope I shall not continue long. That thought above all things rejoices my soul. I want to lay hold of it but it soon vanishes away. I feel at times an inexpressible longing in my soul that God would speedily fit me for his kingdom and take me to himself. I think if I was of any use in the world I should be glad to stay in it. But I believe no one is like unto me. I cannot for one moment feel the wrath of God. I see my redeemer full of love to me. But day after day I do nothing to promote his glory. O that I may see the depth of iniquity that is in my heart, for I want to hate self with a perfect hatred. When I hear others talk of the evil they feel, I beg of God to discover to me every lurking mischief every secret sin, that I may not deceive myself. O my dear friend, be earnest with God for me that I may appear viler and viler in my own sight and Christ alone may be exalted. Thou art always brought to my remembrance. I dare not cease to make mention of thee. Not for thy sake am I so zealously affected, but for the sake of the church am I constrained frequently to wrestle with God for a blessing for thee. O may our dear Lord sanctify our affection more and more, that it may increase in strength and surety to eternity.

I was yesterday at Kingswood and present when the sacrament was administered. It did not seem to me so much like receiving the Lord's supper as your love feasts. But what I know not in this and all other things, if necessary, the Lord will reveal it unto me. I had a little of thy brother's company there. I rejoiced to see him, but must confess thy letter filled my heart with more thankfulness. I often think I have not a thought in my heart but I could tell thy brother or thee. If I can be of no service to you here, I hope in the end I shall be your crown of rejoicing. Our friends at Stoke Croft desire kindly to be

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

²CW left Bristol for London on Jan. 11, 1743; see *MS Journal*.

remembered to thee.³ I trust I shall speak fresh to thee when we meet. Our youngest sister went with me to Kingswood. I have been twice to see sister [Joan] Webb and am going again. She thinks she shall recover. Chryssy Smith joins with me in duty. I beg I may hear from thee if we do not see thee soon. C[harles] G[raves] has been to Stoke Croft, but I have had but little time with him. I earnestly desire his heart may be established with grace and the strength of Jesus may be his.

Betty Story gives her duty.⁴ I seldom miss a day of seeing her. She says she should be glad to see thee before she goes hence but believes she has not many days to live. I cannot doubt of her happiness but the work is not yet perfected.

Sister [Susannah] Designe and Chryssy intend to write. Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor sends her duty.

My prayer is thou mayest dwell in the light of the Lamb, be established in the kingdom of righteousness, and excellent majesty be added unto thee.

Adieu,

S. P.

I am now with Betty Story. She desires me to entreat thee to write a line or two to her. She has faith it will be of service and great consolation. I intend to spend as much time with her as I can. May the Lord prosper all thy works. Farewell.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at the / Foundry Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "20/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin]] / Jan. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/12

³Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

⁴Elizabeth Story was originally from London, where her name appears on an April 1742 list of single women in the Foundry Bands Lists (1742–46). Ill health had apparently taken her to Bristol for the Hotwells, where Perrin was looking after her for CW (as she would LH). In 1744 Story was persuaded by Thomas Williams to file a (later withdrawn) accusation of sexual impropriety against CW. The relationship of Perrin with Story forming here helps explain why Perrin was shaken by the later accusation. See Randy L. Maddox, "Untwisting the Tangled Web: Charles Wesley and Elizabeth Story," *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 8 (2016): 175–83; and CW, "An Address to a Friend."

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
January 23 [1743]

Dear and Honored Friend,

I think it my duty to answer thine,¹ although at present I am straitened for time. My spirit continues her exercise for thee and I am sure the Lord's anointed shall prosper. I powerfully feel we are members of the same body. Yea and the Lord will purge us and we shall bring forth fruit to his praise. Surely he will teach us to love as in ancient times. He will be our God and we shall be his people.

I am glad that many are not acquainted with thy griefs. The victorious arm of Israel's God will conquer all thy enemies, and then many will receive benefit from thy manifold temptations. The Lord is teaching thy hands to fight. Thou art listed under his banner, and in his strength and time shalt overcome all that rise up against thee. For a day or two lately I did not watch unto prayer for thee as I ought, and I felt condemnation within myself for it. I am undeniably persuaded our Lord requires this at my hand. It is his work in my soul for his servant, and I trust he will give me (as I can bear it) a part of the burden of every tempted soul. I know some who think they walk in the light themselves have very little compassion for those whom the Lord chasteneth. And those who have not life, only seeking it, might be discouraged to hear of thy trials in the wilderness. But the knowledge of these things are good for me. The Lord humbles my soul by them. He shows me what I am, what I deserve and what his grace has done for me. O my dear friend he will cause our soul to rejoice in his salvation, and in the beauty of holiness we shall worship him.

But let me entreat thee not to suffer a thought of that kind. No my friend, it cannot be with any safety. It is the enemy's work to put our friend on urging such a thing. But his device shall be brought to nought. It appears to me as if G[eorge] W[hitefield], knowing thy zeal to promote what really is the gospel of Christ, wants thee to be warm in vindicating it whilst with all softness and feigned love he would ensnare the hearts of the people. But I am confident our God will lead thee in the right way. He will not deliver thee over unto the will of thine adversaries' false witness that are risen up against thee and such as speak wrong. The Lord who has shewn thee great and sore troubles shall quicken thee again. He shall bring thee up again from the depth of the earth. He shall increase thy greatness and comfort thee on every side.

I was yesterday with thy brother [JW] to visit the sick. Our friends at Stokes Croft met us at sister [Joan] Webb's, where we was present whilst the sacrament was administered. I find a nearer and nearer union to you. O may we become as one soul. Tomorrow, if God permit, I am to go with thy brother to Bath. O may I be thankful for each blessing of these opportunities and receive strength therefrom. Indeed you must pray for me and perhaps the Lord will purge me and make me a branch bearing some fruit.

I saw Betty Story today. She continues much the same and gives her duty.

Our friends at Stokes Croft, Chryssy [Smith], we all join in duty and unfeigned love.

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

I intend to deliver thy message to thy brother tonight. My love to sister Cart and please to tell her I intend to write as soon as I can get time.² Please to give our love [to] brother [Thomas] Maxfield.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Elizabeth Smith (c. 1700–1773) and Joseph Cart (1693–1720), Quakers, were married in London in 1717. Joseph died three years later and Elizabeth remained a widow the remainder of her life. She was drawn to the preaching of Whitefield in the early Methodist revival, but soon sided with the Wesley brothers.

Address: “To / Charles Wesley / at ye Foundry / Moorfield / London.”

Postmarks: “Bristol” and “25/IA.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Sarah Perrin January] 23, 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/13.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[February 7, 1743]

The simplicity of your obedience to our Lord's commands is sufficiently evidenced by the brotherly love you express for my health. I hope nothing will suffer your faith to be removed from this certain truth that all events, however little understood by us, are best. And though the enemy would rob you of your farther confidence in prayer, bid him depart. That all your requests are made known unto God is most sure. He will do all you want and infinitely above all you think. But appoint him, not instruments, for this end. From the stones will he raise up faithful children.

It is now above three years he has sought fruit on this barren fig tree. Then marvel not that to your sight it should wither away. Neither that I would not accept deliverance. Let not this surprise you also. Shall I by faith say the potsherd hath power over his clay, and from the same faith must I not be assured he knows best how to form it? When love and faith are joined under the most severe pains, the Spirit will glory in that the vessel is moulding according to the heavenly will. Is it not an evident mark that nothing but immense unfathomable love could occasion those sufferings? And that most clearly appears from that power that is given the soul of deliverance. It is in words this: "I would not willingly afflict you, sir."¹ "I offer you ease, but pain is better for you." Shall I not take his word and glory in that? Live assured that no state of this side heaven is greater than lying full of faith, and object of divine mercy. Neither health or life dare I ask for. I want nothing but his will to be done in me and by me, and this with all the whole power and faculty of my soul.

I now look upon all my past suffering with tears of gratitude, that I have shared in that whereof all are partakers that are his. As I love him more than all earth and heaven, so will I trust him for all in both. Don't then, my friend, any longer trifle with the littleness of your nature. Let your reflection be this, that you have watched over me as one that was to give account with long suffering. And always remember it is my fault if you don't give up this weak straggler with joy.

I find a wondrous liberty from all sort of created good. My guardian angel, FEAR, has taken possession of her proper post. She watches over for good the mortal body, to humble continually the earthly tabernacle and clear[ly] put me in mind: "You are nothing! You have nothing! And can do nothing." I don't find she ever executes her office at any time but when the eye is off God. And then without pain pu(ts me²) in mind who I am from. She <makes me e>very moment see that vile ness that fai(th ... wai)ls over and is, next [to] the Lord, my comforter, the darling companion of my soul.

It is now seven days since I have had any return [of illness] (your prayers are heard for me), in which time I have gained much strength of body. I am so sensible of the concern you express for me that you must not expect to hear anything for the future about my health unless it be to give thanks, for me.

May your soul prosper, your brother's, and all the faithful, that you may become a holy temple of the Lord. And oh may I make one so called!

Address: "For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Foundery / near upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "7/FE" and "BATH."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon]] Feb. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/6. See also CW's polished and slightly abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 26b–27a.³

¹Cf. Lam. 3:33.

²A portion is torn away by the wax seal but can be partially reconstructed.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 61–62; and expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 159–60.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[c. February 10 1743¹]

I always find a difficulty (which alone proceeds from *my* littleness) in writing upon the things of God. The knowledge of my own wretchedness, from the great sense I feel of it, would force me to think aloud to *you*. But should self or vanity creep in, or should any words I use enlarge the sense to make you think more of the gifts of God than I have received, oh how would my soul be burdened with guilt! That the single sincerity I feel is in the mourning my nothingness, and even here how am I distressed to say no more of this than what I really enjoy, lowliness being the alone gift of God in Christ. That I am impatient beyond all bounds of the weariness and painfulness of this mortal nature is most sure. Neither word, thought, or action, but what abides the constant and universal condemnation of my whole soul. And am I this, my friend, in his sight who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. I neither ever can or ever will forgive myself, though he *has*. He views me now in the robe in which he has adorned me and constrains me to say:

Me for thine own thou lov'st to take,
In time, and in eternity;
Thou never, never wilt forsake
An helpless worm that trusts in thee.²

But oh how ashamed and confounded he surely will regard the low estate of his handmaid. He will bid her lift up her head when her redemption draweth near.

I look upon all his past gifts, and for these I stand amazed with praise, adoration, and love. He kindly meant them to convey some true treasure by. But all his ends I destroy by pride, self, and that whole spring of evil that is in my soul. Oh shocking thought, and this in the broad light of his countenance! I know it is his power to make me anew, but how do I long to give him the glory for this new creation of body, soul, and spirit—a temple of this loving God.

As to my health, I think nothing about it. My vehement desires in God swallow all up. They exceed even my prayers, tears, all. All before me are unsatisfactory. My spirit groans and that instantly. I am crucified unto the world and the world unto me. All events are alike in it but the advancement of God's glory in his saints. My little all has been his [for] long. But when I would make an offering of myself, oh how would I hide this sinful sacrifice from his eyes. How do I make the Son of God, my faithful high priest, grieve by the feeling of my vileness. And not less than this I owe you? Thus should the Lord ever make me a vessel fitted for his own use it is wholly his love to his saints' prayers, for his delight is in them. For there is nothing of him in me, and I feel constantly that I am given to them because they have asked it. *And can words now express what I owe you? All? Double and more than this is due to you, first cause in God's hand for two years of every spiritual blessing I possess.*³

Did not my confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ lift up my heart in continued gratitude and assurance that you would exceed many in glory, I should receive many testimonies of your friendship rather with pain than pleasure, as I could never look for any recompense for you short of that mansion, that where he is there you may be also. I have at times doubted all things, *yet was never suffered to do anything but rejoice in this hope for you.*

¹Dated by reference to CW as "first cause," and comment Feb. 13 of "so long a letter last post."

²CW, "At Lying Down," st. 7, *HSP* (1740), 130.

³Cf. LH to CW, c. Apr. 10, 1741 (MS Shorthand Letters, pt. 2, p. 1a).

Should this be of any comfort to you, who knows the absolute nothingness of all the earthly or heavenly good that is in me; if after the abuse of all gifts and grace you can be prevailed upon to believe me; or if not, only now and then remember I had once said this, and that from the strongest certainty that I ever yet spoke of anything either with respect to myself or any person or thing in the course of my whole life is all I ask. Your expectations are so shortened with any views to spiritual comfort that you may now reject it and imagine it proceeds either from partiality as the instrument in God's hand to my soul or from a general judgment that you have your fruits unto holiness and therefore your end must be everlasting life. *But neither the one or both of these have anything to do in this particular sentiment.*

Beware of your charity, and as the best guard against this receive not hastily an accusation against any man. But above all the opinion of others, from those whose hearts are not established with grace, lest they should make you partaker of their evil spirit of prejudice—bane to all true piety.

As to Mr. W[hitefield], I can say nothing. If I live to see you again, your own positive knowledge of things would be sufficient. But less than this, in my weak thoughts, will soon make you run into party, which (though not meant or even dreamt on by you) will drive all your people to. We have often seen the offers of God brought to naught among the children of men from this cause alone. And I am fully assured the Spirit of our Lord will fail from among us when ever this happens. That you ought neither to pirate each other's flock is plain and clear, for you are called unto different ends. But how in process then the harvest commission by agreement [is] to be divided and the insurance you [give] each other's labours are not made scattered, I am no judge. Though I am certain it ought to be. And this is alone all I mean by an agreement, for none other will be admitted while opinions are not the same. And I see a visible blessing, love, mercy of God is descending to man's weakness in suffering this for a time, things to be so now. And I believe your present attention to the flock wise and good. And as you have been faithful over a few, he will fulfill his promise and make you lord over many nations for *through you or by you will many in all nations be made glad even unto the ends of the earth.*

I have received yours,⁴ and it is just come into my head that if you make a proposal to Mr. Evard(?) that if he would procure a use of this chapel for Mr. [Charles] Graves, you will allow him so much a year for his life. This will be putting the whole thing upon him, by making it his interest, and the commissioners will readily do it for him. But I cannot say I have any hope by any other means. Should this be mentioned to Lord Will—, he would send it to his great friend the Bishop of Oxford, who I doubt would stop it at once. I would have you try this first. I have mentioned if that none do, let me know, I will [do] anything farther you would have me. I want to know what is meant by your “glad tidings” you mention. May the Lord bless you and make you faithful to him. Whereunto he has called you, even to death, and meet with joy that crown of glory that *is* reserved for you.

I ought to be ashamed of this long letter. But so seldom am I able to do this that the power now has carried me beyond common bounds. When you can't write, make Graves [write], that I may hear of the prospering of our Lord's heritage. The affliction and distress my illness occasions at home is inexpressible. My gratitude and tenderness I think I feel more from than my pain, which is ever the consequence of any regard paid to my worthless self that amounts to anything more than outward respect.

And may the Lord of all earth and heaven repay them a thousand fold who can but mean *me* well.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/87. See also CW's polished and slightly abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 25b–26a.⁵

⁴This letter is not known to survive.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 157–59.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
February 11, 1743

My Dear Friend,

As it has pleased the Almighty to lay his hand upon me, and not knowing how it may please him to deal with me in great love, I am constrained to write a few lines for I have found thee present in spirit. O this love which flows from the pure foundation, how sweet, how savoury to the soul. Even when we are at the chambers of death it cleaves close unto us and has no bitterness attend it. As long as I am in the body I believe I shall love and pray for thee. O that God would speedily change our nature into his. I feel inexpressible longing to be dissolved and be with Christ. I see it would be far better for me. I feel no condemnation for those desires, nor no impatience, because I have one desire which is stronger and that is that God may fulfill his own will in me.

O Lord what am I [that] thou should thus favour me? O I long, I long to lose this life, to lay it down at the feet of Jesus. O my God I ask nothing for the body but it remain weak. Let it remain in pain, or as thou wilt. It is good. But my one request answer thou: make me wholly thine, whether in life or in death. O may I be enabled to keep covenant with the Lord, that all that I have, all that I am may be his forever and ever.

I know the nature of my disorder is such, unless it pleases God to heal me, it will soon deprive me of all my strength. Therefore, I ought not defer writing. Do not desire my life, for hitherto I have been altogether unprofitable. And this is the only burden I feel. But God can make me meet for the master's use—and will, I believe, if he restores my strength. I shall not always live in vain. I think I never felt more love to thee, and our dear friend [Thomas] Richards was present in spirit with us this day. O what is life without God, and what is pain if we enjoy him? Yesterday I was taken so weak at sister [Susannah] Designe's [I] was obliged to have a coach home. I think it was something of an inward convulsion. I am very weak today, but the Lord more than makes it up to me. O that his will may be perfected in me, for I know it is good.

May the Lord my God, who is now present with me, bless thee and sanctify and make thee complete in all things. My kind love to brother Richards.

Farewell,

Our friends at Stokes Croft with duty and much affection remember to thee.

I remain thy friend,

S. P.

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin - Feb. 11. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/14.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[February 13, 1743]

Pray send the horse to Enfield [Chase]. I rejoice in the love and mercy of God towards his people, but trust we shall see greater things than these. We need never doubt his faithfulness, that he will do above all we can ask or think. So highly as I esteem you for your great love towards God, as well as your unspeakable diligence in his service, I have been thankful for your absence—as I well know how much to his glory your whole time has been employed, and for the happiness of so many, that I find this consideration alone would make me joyfully give up all desires of seeing you. Even for this life, could I suppose in the whole course of it but one soul might receive profit by it. The humble hope of some distant view hereafter of the share you will have in the church triumphant will more than recompense any spiritual comfort I might now receive by your counsel. And while the Lord suffers you to be an instrument for the enlargement of his kingdom here, I look upon that honour done you as sufficient matter of praise to all those whose esteem can be worthy of you. All single or private advantage from your conversation ought thankfully to yield to this.

I find great peace and joy from the great deliverance of self that first must be, before we can in sincerity desire nothing but simply the love of God in our souls. And then follows that unlimited love of man which is unfeigned to the brethren, without partiality. For while we want to be loved or esteemed, we are not sufficiently ready for God's love. This sort of self in me has caused more cares, more sorrows and misery to my soul from the necessary dependent fears (lest I should not wholly cleave to God alone), than I am able to express. I looked for love from others as it was a mark in myself of something that was good. But this while my eyes was on God, the only Author of it. But in this have I seen the cloven one's¹ foot and I trust the Lord will hew in (pieces) all the snares of the evil one.

May the Lord be your whole portion in time and in eternity, and guide you in all things to make his glory the single desire of your soul. And this will he do by filling you with love unspeakable.

[Thomas] Max[field] has occasioned you this trouble, which after so long a letter last post, you must naturally shrink [from]. I wish they would weary you but one tenth part in the reading them as they do me in the writing of them, and I should cease from this cross soon.

Address: "For / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Foundery / near upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "13/FE" and "BATH."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon]] Feb. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/7.²

¹Two lines have words obscured by the wax seal.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 62.

From Sarah Perrin

Hot Wells
March 22 [1743]

My Honoured Friend,

According to thy desire I write a few lines to acquaint thee how our good friend continueth.¹ She whom Jesus loveth, Jesus strengtheneth. Yesterday I think I received more faith that God would add to her days and heal her. But in the evening before I came, I heard she had been very ill all day and was to take a vomit. My heart was in heaviness all the way to the Hot Wells. My spirit grieved and prayed. I was made truly sensible if it should please God to remove her to glory and though [I] should suffer for the loss, I even I also shall drink of the cup with thee. When I came to her Ladyship I found her a little revived, and she went through the operation better that could be expected. She lives by faith, and all the hope we can have of her recovery is that he who has all power in heaven and earth is able and willing (if most for his glory) to heal her. But she continues as to her bodily strength just the same as when thee left her.² Her soul rejoices more and more. May our dear Lord grant thee according to thine own heart and fulfill all thy desire. May he give thee a resigned will even in this thing, for I believe nothing sooner moves the Almighty to spare us any blessing than a willingness to leave the matter wholly unto him. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we remember the name of the Lord our God. We will rejoice in his salvation. In the name of our God we will set up our banner. The Lord fulfill all thy petitions. I know that he saveth his anointed. He will hear thee from his holy heaven. With the saving strength of his right hand he will uphold thee. Let not thy soul be troubled, for the fullness of God shall be thine. Fear not, yet a little more trial of thy faith and thou shalt awake up in his likeness and be satisfied.

I feel a stronger sense of my obligation to thee for this favour of bringing me acquainted with the friend of God than I can express. I feel such an unworthiness in myself. I am ashamed to say my heart cleaves close to her. O my friend, pray for me that I may worthily receive these gracious opportunities with the children of my Father. Such friends as you are have I often longed to find, and I greatly rejoice that my eye beholds them. I now feel as strong a desire to become a servant to his servants in the way he knoweth. I desire to be wholly given up to God. But oh, this unbelief, this deceitful heart of mine, keeps me out of this blessed privilege. May the Spirit of our Lord Jesus abide with thee. Our friends at Stokes Croft and Mrs. Carr salute thee.³

In duty and unfeigned love I remain
Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Endorsement: CW , “March 22. 1743 - Sar. Perrin / of L[ady]. H[untingdo]n. sick.”
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/26.

¹Lady Huntington was now at the Hotwells spa, near Bristol.

²CW had made a quick trip to Bath and Bristol in late February.

³CW met Mrs. Carr during his recent trip to Bath; see *MS Journal*, Feb. 24, 1743.

From Sarah Perrin

Hotwell
Thursday night [March 24, 1743]

My Dear Friend,

Least thou should be detained longer than intended, I write our good friend [LH] this morning had a return of the cholic. Her pain was great, but in the midst of it [she] remembered her father in Christ. Her heart was filled with love and supplication for thee, nothing doubting. We was a few moments alone together as her pain abated and she broke forth into prayer for thee in full assurance of faith. O my dearest friend, let not thy heart fail thee. Be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome the world, and as he was so shall thou be. I behold his hand full of blessings to thee. I see he will become all in all, for in him all fullness dwells. If he should withdraw this comfort and take his blessing from thee, has he not all power in heaven and earth, can he not make it up to thee by sending the Comforter to abide with thee?

I have hope she will continue with us. I know if it is best our Lord will answer our petitions. But my dear friend give her into the hands of God to do as seemeth him good. He will bless thee for thy labour of love unto her and ye shall rest in a blessed eternity together.

My heart has been exceeding sorrowful. O that I may be counted worthy to suffer with my Father's children. O that God would cast thy burden upon me, that I might feel what the members of Christ suffer. All comfort and divine refreshment seems not desirable at all to me. I find out of the depth of my soul a cry: My God, my God, baptize me with the baptism thou wast baptized with, and enable me to drink of the cup thou drank of. For what reason this cry is, I see not. But my unprofitableness is intolerable to me. If I could any way lift up the hands of Moses,¹ if I could pray without ceasing for the people of God, I should be happy. But alas, I only am fit to be trodden underfoot and be cast in the fire. O the ingratitude I feel to God and his servants I cannot express. I know your burden would be lightened, your hands would be strengthened, was it not for our unfaithfulness. Was we, as we ought, constantly wrestling with God for those that watch over us, he would soon bless you and us with purity and love.

Our good friend is pretty easy at present. I believe the fit is gone off. If this should reach thee, don't delay coming. The Lord surely will prosper thy journey, and whenever the days of thy pilgrimage are over a crown of glory in the heaven of heaven shall be thy portion forever.

My love to all friends.

The Lord be with thee and make thy heart glad with his love.

Farewell,

S. P.

God has renewed our friend's strength and she is easy. Mrs. Carr desires to be remembered to thee, as do our friends at Stoke Croft. I spend my time at the Hotwells.

Address: "Charles Wesley at the / Foundry / Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "26/MR" and "Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin]] Mar. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/15.

¹See Ex. 17:11.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bradford¹]

Second day [Monday, April 4(?), 1743]

My Dear Friend,

I think it my duty to make use of every opportunity to let thee hear from me. Whither it suits thee to write again or not, I have felt a strong desire to know how our good friend does. But since it has not pleased God to put it into the heart of anybody to send me word, it is my duty patiently to wait his time. I hope I shall not cease to make mention of you, for I can truly say your happiness both here and hereafter is very desirable to me. God knows I do see myself unworthy of the favours I have already received from you, and I dare not desire a continuance thereof. That Jesus loves me and gave himself for me I cannot doubt of, and when any of his friends shows any kindness to me I esteem it as much his free grace as I do his pardoning love, because I have no more to return for the one than the other.

I find myself at times so insensible of good that I am tempted to think whether I shall ever more feel life. But this is but a temptation, for blessed be God I have power given me even at those times to say: Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines and the labour of the olive fail, yet I will rejoice in the Lord.² I will joy in the God of my salvation. I steadfastly believe all things will work together for good. O that we may put our whole trust in God, for in Jehovah there is strength. We can meet with no disappointment, no loss whilst our happiness and whole dependence is on God. I think I may say comfort and expectation from all things beside is taken from me. If I dared to make any choice I would gladly put off this body of clay. But I hope I shall be preserved from desiring anything but to part with my evil nature that I may enjoy God and do his will.

My duty and affection is to thee and thy good friend. Earnestly desiring your joy may be full, I remain

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

My love is to Lady Betty,³ our friend [Mrs.] Carr, Mrs. [Martha] Motte, and Mrs. Cradock⁴ and Howell.

My aunt is dangerously ill.⁵ The angel of the Lord attends her and we have been comforted together. Farewell, the Lord be with thee and keep thy soul in perfect peace.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - April]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/18.

¹With CW in Bristol to watch over LH, Sarah had gone to Bradford to assist an ill aunt (see next).

²See Hab. 3:17.

³Likely Elizabeth Hastings (1731–1808), LH's daughter.

⁴CW refers to "my very good old friend Mrs. Cradock," in Bristol, in *MS Journal*, May 28, 1751.

⁵After her parents died Sarah and her sister Mary lived in Bradford with an aunt (sister of her mother) and uncle: John Bailward (d. 1742) and Constant (Groom) Bailward (1686–1744).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bristol / Hotwells?]
[c. April 10, 1743]

Surely the Lord will hear the prayer of the poor. If I either loved him or feared him as I ought, he would neither deny me the desires of my heart nor the request of my lips. Hope nothing then from my petitions for they can avail nothing. Had I the smallest degree of the Spirit, that would make intercession for you according to the will of God, and must have been answered long before. Rest satisfied with the empty thanks of an evil heart for the blessings following your ministry here.¹ I have been much strengthened by you. I give God the glory, and I must call you happy. Let not Satan delude you to doubt of that love that is reflected by you. Oh it is with you and shall abide with you forever!

You left me yesterday labouring in Spirit beyond what I can express for Mrs. C[raddock?]. The only instance of my life that resembled it was when Miss Frances [Cowper] was in her last agonies. I bore all her burden. I went in the evening, and when I came in she told me this text was given her: “Now is your salvation nearer than when you first believed.”² Restless I returned home. Your burden was then joined with it, and I could never separate you one moment. I continued in prayers and tears the whole night. Between 3:00 and 4:00 I tried to find rest, but there was none to be found. By the time Milton’s “sleep of soft oppression”³ seized me, my spirit broke out again to ask deliverance for her in great pain. And [I] joined with this that eager request that you might taste that love that would bring sure salvation with it, and that you might never doubt more, and with strong cries and tears entreated my Lord that it might once be given to you at that time that he had heard my prayer for you. I was soon struck with these words and with such a ray of divine light with them I could but just bear the power. “Blessed is she that believeth, for there *shall* be a performance of those things.” When I went to plead again it was followed with “Verily, verily I say unto thee.” I could not then help wondering at the extreme oddness of having you given so strongly with her and to ask why this should be so. But it ended in nothing but a reflection that probably God might call me and that I was then asking for a friend to be substituted in my room to you, and one who should be given to you by my prayer. Whether this be of God I know not. But this I know, it was wondrous consolation. For I am sure she will come out laden and dressed with the richest robes of grace and a mother of an Herrnhut for you to rejoice with.

How far, my friend, do I look for your happiness; even here. But your soul will always want (and that by the appointment of our Lord) a channel to convey grace by. And for lack of this I am sure you yet mourn. I know you would fain imagine I have been thus useful to you. No, my friend, there is nothing on earth can *ever* convince me of this. God has appointed my having received his blessings by the hand of one he means to repay himself. I find the cause will soon be removed out of my hands. I have *very* much peace. But oh fill me, my Lord, with that love that never faileth, ere I go hence and be no more here!

Farewell my friend.

My love to Kingswood flock, and [Thomas] Max[field] in particular. I had took this to have sent yesterday but could not find a conveyance for it. Were I not sure God should support you in your undertakings tomorrow I should lament but [...⁴].

Endorsement: by CW, “L. H. / praying for me / helped by my ministry / Apr. 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/10.⁵

¹CW had been in Bristol for about a week in early April.

²Rom. 11:13.

³See Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii.287–88.

⁴The address side is missing.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 63.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford

Fourthday [i.e., Wednesday, April 13 (?), 1743]

It seems long to me since I heard from thee. I am present in spirit, and cease not to make mention of thee. For my heart's desire is we may be made perfect in one. I find much of the presence of God even in this place, in the multitude of my thoughts. His comforts delight my soul when I commune in my chamber and am still. Heavenly refreshment I receive from him, yet this does not seem a resting place for me. I rather think I must follow my Lord without the camp and suffer reproach with his people. This perhaps is a time of preparation to me, for good is the Lord may I now say, and blessed are they that trust in him. And shall we not declare of his loving kindness and tell of his gracious dealings with us. Surely this secret way of serving him is not all which he require of me. I will give my self unto prayer and he will direct me. I know my desire is to give up my whole heart unto him. The gift of eternal life, the white stone, and the new name written is the precious promise I labour after. I find nothing gives me any delight but the enjoyment of my beloved. My soul pants and struggles for a closer union with him. He seems almost always near me. But oh, this is as nothing. I feel an inexpressible longing for him to dwell in me and rule over me, that I may evermore rejoice in his presence.

I received a letter yesterday from thy brother.¹ My spirit was greatly affected with prayer and praise. The Lord will bless his chosen ones and make up every loss to you, and through God you shall do valiantly.

The thoughts of spending the winter at Bristol is often attended with much sweetness. It seems to me as if good was designed for me there. Thy brother seems confident that I shall be joined outwardly as well as inwardly to you. God only knoweth. If for his glory and our good he can bring it to pass. Let us leave it to him.

Thy friend has sent a kind letter to me.² She mentioned the point we differ in and in the simplicity of my heart I answered her.

I still find an increase of love to you, and I cannot but acknowledge it a wonderful blessing. The things we differ in give me no uneasiness. I rest satisfied if it is the will of the Lord he will manifest it to me. And "His will be done," saith my soul.

O what sweet consolation does my soul at this time find. Surely the Lord will strengthen our hands and build us up together. Fervent desires indeed does he raise up in my heart for you and shall he not fulfill them. O my dear friend, remember me in thy prayers. We are children of the same Father. He has given us to love each other for his sake, and I trust it will endure forever.

Farewell in haste,

Let me hear from thee.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/34.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Likely referring to LH.

From Thomas Butts¹

London
April 14, 1743

Dearest Sir,

On Tuesday ten prisoners were executed.² I got, with some difficulty, to go with three in the first cart.³ Two of these seemed truly penitent (one unknown to you; the other the person that laid with Mr. Robinson, who gladly heard you from the beginning), deeply sensible of their lost condition, and strongly imploring the mercy of God for the alone sake of Jesus Christ. I read your letter to them in our passage to Tyburn,⁴ which seemed much to affect and comfort them. I examined these two, whether they would choose to die or die. The declared they chose to die, strongly believing the Lord would have mercy upon their souls; and that, though they were sensible there must be a great change wrought in them. Yet they also knew the Lord was able to effect it in a short time. I had not much opportunity of speaking to any of the rest, but by what I could observe, they were all very penitent (especially the two papists) except two, who I greatly fear were hardened to the last (O may I err in my judgement herein!). One of these persons was a sprightly young gentleman, whom I believe you never spoke with. The other was the man that kept company with the woman in Newgate. She is reprieved.

I called yesterday to see Mr. Robinson, who is got pretty well again. He says he wrote to you on Tuesday.⁵

Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield wrote pretty largely to you yesterday, so [I] have not to add, but [I] remain

Your unworthy servant,

T. Butts

Endorsement: by CW, “April 14. 1743 Butts / Ten dying Malefactors.”
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/30.⁶

¹Thomas Butts (1719–78) was a native of Stepney, Middlesex. As early as 1742 he was looking after book-keeping at the Foundery in London, when he appears in a “trial band” there for single men (see Foundery Band Lists).

²The names of the ten executed are listed in the *London Evening Post* (Apr. 9–12, 1743), p. 2.

³The cart took the prisoners from the jail to the Tyburn, for execution.

⁴CW’s letter to the prisoners is not known to survive.

⁵Neither Robinson’s or Maxfield’s letters to CW are known to survive.

⁶For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Rachel Hawthorne¹

London
c. April 15, 1743

Reverend Sir,

With sorrow I write to acquaint you that my brother [William] departed this life the twelfth of this instant.

He was taken on Good Friday [Apr. 1] with a shivering and a pain in his side. His pain was sharp and continued. He bore it with great patience, and said if God were to cast him into hell it were no more than what he deserved. On Wednesday brother Baddiley came to see him and prayed with him.² He expressed great satisfaction and admired the wonderful love of God to him. On Thursday brother [Thomas] Maxwell and brother Baddiley came together. He told them he had had some doubts, but the Lord had taken them away. His pain increased greatly, yet he did not murmur, but would often say “Oh what did Christ endure for me! This is nothing to what my Saviour suffered for me. Oh the length and breath and depth and height of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! Oh give me more of this love!”

On Saturday sister Baddiley came to see him.³ He asked her how you did. He said he should be glad to have seen you. He said, “He is my dear father,” and lifting up his hands he prayed that God would still carry on the work, that God would strengthen you more and more, and said, “Oh how am I bound to bless the day that he was born. Oh blessed be God in sending forth such faithful ministers.” He prayed that God would still make you the spiritual father of thousands. He told Mrs. Baddiley and Mrs. Jones⁴ that he was glad to see them, and that the least of God’s children was welcome to him.

When the physician said he could do no more for him, he said, “The will of the Lord be done. For,” said he, “I know that the Lion of the tribe of Judea is on my side.” He desired to receive the blessed sacrament, which he did the day before he died with great joy. He told me, “Old thing were done away and all things were become new.”⁵ He continued in praying and rejoicing all the night, and never once closed his eyes. In the morning Satan began to assault him. He cried out, “I fear, I fear to be out of Christ. Oh terrible, terrible.” I asked him what made him fear. He said, “Because my Lord is so long in coming. Why, why tarrieth my Lord? Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.” And so [he] departed crying, “Our Lord Jesus, make me partaker of thy divine nature.”

His last conflict has caused great uneasiness in me that he that bore all his pain with that patient resignation should be so assaulted. I greatly fear myself—losing my sister so lately,⁶ and now my brother, which is my all. I can hardly support under it. Sir, if you would be pleased to favour me with a line or two, [it] would be of great comfort to

Your afflicted and dutiful servant,

Rachel Hawthorne

¹Rachel Hawthorne (d. 1757) and her sister Ann (d. 1741) assisted their brother William (d. 1743) and his wife running a boarding school in London. CW had tea with them Apr. 8, 1740; see *MS Journal*.

²Hawthorne spells “Badley.” This would be George Baddiley (b. 1725), of London (see JW, *Journal*, Sept. 19, 1747, *Works*, 20:194). He assisted CW in January 1743 (see *MS Journal*).

³George’s parents were George and Elizabeth (Collins) Baddiley. Both parents and the son appear on Foundery Band Lists (1742–46) at the time.

⁴Possibly Elizabeth Jones, a married woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46).

⁵Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

⁶JW records Ann Hawthorne’s death in his *Journal*, May 7, 1741, *Works*, 19:194.

Endorsement: by CW, “Hawthorn’s Death in Xt / April 1743” and “S[ister] Hawthorn’s / B[rother]’s Death / April 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/84.⁷

⁷For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. April 22, 1743]

My little desire I have of any good for myself may convince my dear friend that to his prayers do I owe a truly comfortable night. As my wants can be nothing but the love and knowledge of God, so with respect to the outward man I am just what I wish. I know I grudge myself your friendship from these principles alone! That it is first a happiness to me, and next a painful dread that it is possible while I continue what I am. That I may forget even what no one ever *could* forget before—a love unreserved to my soul and yet unparalleled to any. But not knowing what to do with this care, I must commit it to my gracious Lord. And my comfort is, if I should forget it, he never will. Great is my consolation from this thought. For my heart's desire is that God may prosper and bless you above many; and that you may, when you have overcome, sit down with the Lord on his throne, as he also is sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. My whole heart says "Amen."

Nature says often "Oh my son, my son!"¹ Very pleasant hast thou been." But all the happiness that yet remains in the other five² I have surely offered rather than one single thought should arise in my heart in the course of this trial contrary to the will of God. And I have yet confidence in this selfsame thing, that so I shall be kept.

Let heaven and earth praise such a Saviour!

Endorsements: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon April]] 1743" and "L. H. / April 1743 / humble, friendly / her son taken!"

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/9.³

¹LH's son Ferdinando (b. 1732) had died, being buried April 21, 1743.

²Her surviving children included Francis (b. 1729), George (b. 1730), Elizabeth (b. 1731), Selina (b. 1737), and Henry (b. 1739).

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 62–63.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
April 22, 1743

To Friend Wesley,

Surely I have felt the effect of my good friend's prayers for me, and deeply has my spirit been exercised since we parted. I long and pray for your redemption as my own; nay, I have thought God has given me greater fervency because yours is of greater consequence.

I have renewed occasion to praise my God. He gives me bread in the wilderness. I eat of the crumbs and taste of the streams which makes glad the heritage of God. I believe he will not let me perish for lack. He hears your prayers and he sees my alone as well as the great congregation. He knoweth I desire to love him. O how happy are those who are wholly resigned to his will and know all his ways are right and good.

I know not whether you remembered me last second day [Monday], but I found such power given me to pray for you and the flock that I almost thought it was letter day with you.¹ Yesterday I was earnestly engaged in prayer touching the thing we differ in. I never felt such an ease in considering of it as I do of late. I committed the matter in the hand of God, fervently beseeching he would make the thing clear to me and answer your petition for me. I find I can ask counsel with earnest supplication to know his will. I can never think you have any desire to proselyte me to a mere opinion. But if thou hast any regard to the happiness of my soul, would thee not choose I should walk in the way thou judges most conducive? By our speaking freely perhaps all my objections may vanish. The greatest of all seems the forsaking my own meeting and going to Church.² This appears a great mountain and I dare not meditate upon it.

I am continually led to pray if ever my Lord should count me worthy to be a helper in his church I may be given to you. As I was reading yesterday morning these words "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul ..." ³I received the spirit of supplication for the little flock of Christians, that they might be separate from sinners and live and love as in ancient days. And I felt that I prayed in faith that we in all things might be reminded whether the time is near for me to join wholly with you. I see not. But this I know, I more than ever believe the time will come when I shall labour with you and follow you even as you follow Christ.

My dear friend, let me hear from thee soon. I know the Lord is with thee and he will strengthen your hand by adding many to you of such as shall be saved. I pray that I may be one, though the least of all. I am sure it is my earnest request I may prove obedient to the ministers of God. I think to write to thy brother when I hear he is in Bristol. I have erred in not writing so long. Duty and love is to you.

Adieu.

My love to Mrs. [Martha] Motte and Mrs. Cradock.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin - April 22. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/16.

¹Referring to CW's common practice of reading letters in society meetings.

²I.e., converting from the Society of Friends to the Church of England.

³Acts 4:32.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bradford]
April 25, 1743

My Dear Friend,

How shall I write the anguish that my spirit has felt this evening? It is impossible for those that have gifts to edify to conceive the barrenness of my soul. It is a waste place indeed. It is a soil that bears no fruit. O unhappy me. Out of the deep do I cry unto my God, "Purge me or take me away. For what good doth my life do me unless I could give my self under thee?" Even the sense of my saviour's love increases my pains. O the height of his love to me, who can reach it; and the depth of my ingratitude to him, who can fathom it.

Lord I ask not comfort. Let thy stronger children enjoy it, but let me have fellowship with thy sufferings. I ask not to sit at thy right hand in glory, but I thirst for the cup thou drank of. I long to be baptized with thy baptism, that I may be made partaker of thy nature and be perfected through sufferings.

O let me not continue in this wretched unprofitable state, for I am neither hot nor cold. How just would it be in my Lord to spit me out of his mouth. O that I may feel my burden increase more and more. May the weight of my sinful nature become yet more intolerable to me, until my deliverance comes. I believe the vilest person on earth never loathed themselves more than I do for my unprofitableness. My God, my God, thou knowest my desire is to give up myself unto thee. O take away everything which keeps me from being wholly devoted to thy service.

I felt my friend's prayers for me between 11:00 and 12:00. I retired to my chamber to give myself unto prayer until the time of our going to meeting. I found power given me to wrestle earnestly with God that your petitions might be answered for me, and I believe the very moment you filled up your hearts for me I was made sensible of it by receiving the spirit of supplication with great fervency for you. All desires for myself was taken away and all my exercise was you. I was touched with gratitude and love, and above all things I longed for your soul's prosperity. I doubt not but your prayers will prevail; and as the Father and Son are one, so shall we be made perfect in one. I find I am entirely yours for his sake, and when he sees it most expedient for me to join in outward fellowship, through your prayers it will be made clear to me.

In the evening I went to a farmer's, to carry some of your books which they gladly received. I could speak but little unto them, but my soul was greatly burdened and I prayed that God would open their eyes to understand what they read. After I came home I wrote the first part of my letter, for I felt the misery of saying and doing so little to promote my master's glory.

My dear friend, I have this morning received thine dated the 21st.¹ God gave me immediately power to pray earnestly for the youth, with submission to his will.² My heart was melted. I feel Jesus loves him but I dare not say whither it is his will to restore him. Let me hear if it is the eldest son, and if he is still living, that my prayers as the Lord shall enable me may continue for him.

My aunt continues weak.³ I can't leave her to return against to Bristol, but I hope we shall meet at London in less than a month and rejoice in spirit together. You should always speak of what you think is wrong of the Quakers before me as if I was of the same mind, until I am. For be assured my affection will secure me from taking any offence at hearing the truth from thee or thy brother. [letter torn off here]

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²CW had informed her of Ferdinando Hastings's illness; he died the same day.

³Constant (Groom) Bailward; see Perrin's earlier letter of Apr. 4, 1743.

Address: “To / Charles Wesley / at the / School Room in ye / Horse fair / Bristol.”

Postmark: “Bradford.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[[April Sarah Perrin]]” and “1743 Sarah Perrin April.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/17.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
April 30, 1743

If my good friend did but know how much I have desired to hear how you do, I believe I should have heard. If in trouble, I can share with you. My heart seems fit for nothing but sorrow. I behold nothing but what calls aloud for lamentation. O Lord where are those that do not bow their knee to Baal? Thou seest them; bring them forth and let the heathen no longer triumph over us.

My heart has been deeply engaged for thee this day, and I receive faith daily for thee. I know the Lord thy God will strengthen thee. O be resigned in all things to his will, for he will be thy health and thy portion forever. I long to know how the youth is;¹ whether you have been afflicted or no. I am sure I bear a part with some of the members that suffer. Thee write me word thou wast to pass through a fiery trial, and not hearing anything from thee has depressed my spirits. Yet God has given me this assurance, that wherever thou are, whatever baptism thou has passed through, he is with thee and will sustain thee. Never fear, for he will take away every delight but in himself, and become all in all unto thee. A new heaven and a new earth thine eye will behold shortly.

Farewell,

S. P.

Please to pay my due respect to our good friend [LH]. I believe I should hardly forbear writing if I was sure she continued at the Hotwells.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin / April]] 1743" (and again in longhand).

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/19.

¹Ferdinando Hastings, who had died and was buried Apr. 22, 1743.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
May 1, 1743

My Dear Friend,

Last night and this morning my mind has been greatly affected, and I have earnestly besought the Lord for thee. How near and dear you all are to me I cannot express. Surely you pray for me and the Lord hears. He seems near me, but I so deeply feel the want of his dwelling in me that my state appears more and more wretched. I see myself all deformity, my beloved fairer than ten thousand; and I cannot be satisfied until I awake up in his likeness.

Yesterday I heard of our beloved friend's loss.¹ I was much affected and could find no ease till I had sought a place to weep and pour out my soul to God. Indeed, I think thou should have writ to me again. But thou dost not know how much I am moved when I think my friends are afflicted. At 11:00 last night bitter anguish of spirit came suddenly upon me. But I find faith increase and hope revive that my Lord is preparing me for his use and I shall live to praise him.

My good friend, do not forget me, for great is my love toward thee and earnest my prayers that thy soul may prosper.

Farewell,

S. P.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin]] (added later in longhand) / 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/20.

¹The death of LH's son Ferdinando.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bradford]
May 6, 1743

My good friend's lines I received,¹ and should have rejoiced to have met him; but many things concurred to hinder me and I was obliged to give it up. A little of thy gospel news would be very acceptable to me before I go hence, for I am sure I have need of something to quicken me. London will be a place of trial to me, for these few days past I seem fallen asleep. I find no good in me. But I perceive my old adversary very busy seeking to devour the seed sown in my heart, and striving many ways to ensnare me. In vain do people fly to solitude to shun the serpent. He lurks in the shade and wounds us most when we the least expect him. Our Lord knew this when he gave us command to watch. I have been off my watch. I am tempted to give off prayer. Yet I perceive the Lord is willing to revive his work if I would seek him. O my God, enable me to call on thee, for the state I am now in my soul abhors. Nothing but thy self I can take any delight in. Pity me and do not suffer me to rest short of thee.

I should not have writ[ten] if I did not find a desire to hear from thee and to know when you think you shall be in London. Wherever thou are, the angel of the Lord I know will be with thee and prosper thy ways.

Farewell,

S. P.

Pray remember me to our good friend [LH]. My duty is to thy brother and thee.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "May 6 / 1743 Sar. Perrin."²

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/21.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²[[Sarah Perrin]] was first written in shorthand; then crossed out.

From Sarah Perrin

[c. May 10, 1743¹]

My dear friend's letter gives me farther hopes that in due season we shall speak and think the same things.² I much approve of our seeking counsel of God by prayer. He has wrought in me a resignation to do his will in this, and I trust he will fully persuade me if he requires it of me, that I may be able to stop the mouths of gainsayers and in great confidence receive power to say I know my Lord commands me. This my dear friend is the token I want. I dare not comply [while] doubting whether it is his will or no. Neither shall I dare to refrain any longer when it is confirmed unto me.

I know our Lord has joined me unto you, and if I was to be taken out of this world tomorrow, I should have this testimony to leave, that he has wrought more good to my soul by your ministry and conversation than by any other instrument in all the days of my pilgrimage.

Why should my good friend choose any other [person] should be the instrument to convince me of any truth? Who so fit as the person God would call to perform this ordinance for me? Whenever I comply, my eye will be single to his glory in it, and I believe he will not convince me without giving me faith I shall receive a blessing from it. Do not be straitened in thy mind, but count me one of thy children whom God has sent you forth to teach. And if it be for thy glory Lord, grant to baptize in thy name also. Great is my faith for thee. Thou shalt forget thy misery and remember it as waters that pass away. Thou shalt lay down and none shall make thee afraid. Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.

Thy brother has been brought to my mind of late with great affection. I doubt not but God will give a gracious answer to your prayer for me, for I believe my heart will say, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."³ The week before Whitsuntide I hope to be in London,⁴ where I hope to meet you and to hear you speak of this matter without any reserve. What I think a little strange is I never found your speaking of the sacraments in public ever tended in the least to convince me. It always seemed to make no impression on me. But when I am from you I see more plainly the error of neglecting other means, which has often put me upon thinking whether this also might not be wrong. Lord, I am willing to receive my light; discover thy truth unto me.

Please to let me hear what answer you receive. With duty to thy brother and self; above all things desiring your joy may be full, I conclude

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

If either of you should go to Bath, I should be glad to have timely notice. Farewell.
I have writ[ten] twice to thee this week, but believe they have stayed by the way.

Endorsements: by CW, "[[Sarah deliberating about baptism]]" and "Sarah Perrin, deliberating / about Baptism – 1773 [sic]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/58.

¹CW's annotation mistakenly identifies as "1773." Perrin was baptized in Oct. 1743.

²CW's brief excerpt of reply to Perrin's letter of May 6: "[[Brother at London through May 18]]."

³1 Sam. 3:10.

⁴Whitsunday was May 22 in 1743.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
May 23, 1743

My Dear and Honored Friend,

Pity and pray for me, the thing I feared is come upon me. I am unstable as water for I see not the Lord's will concerning me. Clouds of objections rise in my mind against being baptized into your church, and the thought of forsaking you and cleaving close to my own people pierces me through with many sorrows. I see nothing but trouble waiting for me. I shall surely drink of the cup my Lord drank of, and I believe he will enable me. Our friend¹ saying I should shortly join wholly with you or go quite from you makes me earnest in supplication that God would direct me, for either way will be the cutting of a right hand or plucking out a right eye. Unless I was convinced my Lord absolutely commanded me to forsake those I love as my own soul, I think it is impossible I should ever turn away from you and the lambs of your fold. And how to remove the many scruples which rise in my mind against wholly joining with you I know not. For when the doctrine and practices of the Church of England is brought to my view I think it is impossible God should require me to join in fellowship with such ministers, for what spiritual communion can I expect with those who deny the faith. Surely I cannot be called to this. This, my dear friend, makes the thing irreconcilable.

My saviour does not leave me in this hour of temptation. I never had greater confidence in God in my whole life, nor never felt greater resignation to his will. I sometimes think surely this is what I am to be tried in. I must renounce all and suffer with the Lord's people. This is my desire, if I know anything of my heart. This would not prevent me one moment, for I see no way for me to enter the kingdom of God without tribulation. But is it thy will, O Lord, I should follow thy minister's example in all things even to the joining with those in worship who are of quite a different faith? Lord I know not; do thou teach me.

I feel such a giving up myself into the hand of God that I think I never knew before. And at the time you was meeting, the night before we left Bristol, great was my faith for thee. I was, I know I was endowed with power from on high to make supplication for thee. Great was my love to the Church and strong my confidence in God, that whatever was his will concerning me he would be with me and I should not be confounded. I believe thy friend concludes you will have no longer fellowship with me unless I am of the same mind in all things. But notwithstanding it is become the rule of your society to suffer none to continue with you but those who receive the Lord's supper, as he that sees my heart knows I seek to know his will, he will bless me even though I should have no friend left. He will finish his work in me, and I shall live and not die. I shall continue to hear the gospel preached and I believe my love will never lessen to you. For as long as I have any life I cannot cease to make mention of you, whatever happens to me. Surely it is impossible the union I feel to you should ever be dissolved. God will not suffer my affection (to grow²) cold, if for the trial of my faith and patience. (I should be) separated from you, if this is his will. I never thought of it until our friend spoke of it, but I have since thought God has hitherto seen meet in his wisdom to take from me everything I sought any happiness in besides himself, and he knows me better than I know myself. Perhaps you are too near and dear to me. O may his will be done in all things. He has many times made hard things easy and bitter things sweet. He has never failed me in times of trial. I will trust in him.

I hope to be in London tomorrow week. Perhaps I may receive comfort from thy brother's ministry. I wish I may be enabled to open my heart to him for I know he will pity me and perhaps bear longer with me.

My sister has been very free and open since she has been with me and has given me a very clear and full account of her justification. She says she was convinced through your means and has seen the

¹Likely LH.

²A small part of the letter to missing, affecting two lines; reconstructed as likely text.

corruptions of her heart more since than ever. She thinks I might be of some service at Leominster.³ O that God may dispose of me where I might spend my time most to his glory. As our good friend justly observed, I know it can be nothing to you whither I join with you or not. I am very very sensible I have no gifts that can profit anybody. But my own happiness depends upon knowing my master's will. Therefore will I seek all ways to know it.

Farewell my dear friend. Though I have sorrow, yet am I glad God has given thee a friend in every respect agreeable to thy mind. And my earnest desire is you may be blessed in time and in eternity with that love which will never change. I am

Thy friend, though an unworthy one,

S. P.

Pray remember me kindly to our brother [Thomas] Richards. Our Lord I know will ⟨bless⁴⟩ and prosper you. My desire is strong to speak and think the same things, but of myself I can ⟨not.⟩ Adieu.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at / Newcastle upon Tyne / v[ia] London."

Postmark: "25/MA."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / May 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/22.

³Mary (Perrin) Southall lived in Leominster.

⁴Two more lines are affected by the missing part of the page.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bristol]
Thursday noon [May 27, 1743]

Your packet this morning revived my fainting spirits.¹ The journal that is so particular upon your parting at Wednesbury (and those words of your own upon the occasion, “And I found I have them in my heart to live and die with them”²) filled me with inexpressible comfort. I could not help saying with Milton:

But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works.³

I found myself much ashamed, though secretly honoured by your vouchsafing my account of our behaviour in your journal. Had I longer continued over those particulars of Staffordshire it would have saved me much pain which, by reading the hymn enclosed in it,⁴ was impossible for me to escape. In these instances my prayers are often heard in that I fear we have been just calling our absent friends together and praying for the ministers in particular.

I find myself weary of all things I do, as it is all too little for God. Nothing satisfies me. I am labouring in my mind after greater enlargement. I am apt to be active at first in undertakings, but when I find myself no nearer my end I purposed by it then I am timid and idle, and generally an imperfect servant after a time.

When your time will let you, a few more hymns of the same kind of primitive Christianity would suit me extremely. And some for directions in all these works God has given you this your last journey. Tell Mr. [Charles] G[raves] he has my prayers. I fear his carnal friends for him! This darkness has been owing to them. I want to know how to direct [letters] to him, but if I address to him at the Foundery he will be soon in town. I by no means approve the woman preacher.⁵ I hope you will write to stop this fine talk for the still ones, who will rejoice in this above all things.

I wish not to make you think better of yourself than you do, but to remember the light you have had. They are so many pledges of God’s love. And let this patience work experience, and then your hope will abide sure. But I write as one quite in the dark about your state. All I know of it is that, should I see the same in anyone else, I should say what would highly offend you to hear—that I think you so uncommonly blessed that I know *none* besides like unto you. I know you have not that constant light that God is always before you. But this I should doubt also from your fruits, for I know you stumble not. And thus I am to judge, and will do so, that you walk in the light.

¹While undated, LH is responding to a journal letter by CW covering May 19 (when he silenced a woman preacher) and his visit to Wednesbury May 20–23, 1743; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 144–52.

²While this sentence does not appear in the surviving copy of a journal letter for CW’s 1743 visit at Wednesbury, he used it often; cf. his visit to Tavistock on June 23, 1746; Dublin, Sept. 17, 1747; and Ewood, Sept. 16, 1751 (all in *Journal Letters*).

³Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii.512–16.

⁴Almost certainly the hymn on the persecution at Wednesbury found in MS Thirty, 214; later published in *Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution* (1744), 32.

⁵See CW, May 19, 1743, *Journal Letters*, 145; the woman is not named.

Saturday Morning

We spent yesterday most happily. We remembered our absent friends every hour in the day. We entreated God's peculiar favour for all those lately called and the fullness of his grace for all. I had a letter from Mr. Pointon.⁶ His house [and] church are as your own. He is desirous to have a society in his own house, which I shall [help] forward. He was told he would by this way of proceeding disoblige all the clergy and all his friends. He said he loved them well, but indeed if he thought he could please almighty God by anything he could do, he cared not who he offended. He writes to enforce, and rather with fear, lest I should faint in my mind and become slack in the services of this, God's work. This caution, above all things from him, delights me most. And this I know, he cannot fear it half so much for me as I do for myself. And often to escape this fear I would be glad to yield up my breath, for in me is nothing but the evil of a second Judas.

Great are the good dispositions of Mr. Falkner of Ruddington.⁷ His church is likewise yours and I believe means well. Mr. [Edward] Ellis I find has a universal reformation wrought in his family. He is come to college hours and his labours are without end.⁸ These accounts I thought would be matter of praise to you. And they would be matter of joy to me, were I not the most ungrateful of all creatures for present happiness. I am hardly in possession of any comfort, but mine eye carries me so far beyond to so much greater things that all is as nothing. How immense is the capacity of a human soul bent heavenward. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. We see the necessary consequence of our losing our relation to earthly things. It soon grows too little for us and all we meet with here serves but to increase the thirst after immortality. I desire earth no longer then till I become less upon it. And then let my Lord do with me as seemeth him good, I desire no future ideas of happiness. I would fain not follow him for the loaves, but [...]⁹

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/89.¹⁰ See also CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, pp. 21c–22a.¹¹

⁶Apparently Rev. Thomas Poynton (d. 1765), vicar of Bunny with Bradmore, Nottinghamshire; about 10 miles from Castle Donington.

⁷Rev. Job Falkner (d. 1753) was vicar of Ruddington, Nottinghamshire; about 15 miles from Castle Donington.

⁸I.e., he rises early and does not stay up late at night.

⁹The remainder of the letter is missing.

¹⁰Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 69–70.

¹¹An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 150–51.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
[c. May 30, 1743]

Oh my friend, how could you add to the affection of your servant for Christ's sake? Make me not ashamed! Can your heart receive a sense of gratitude from things that the very naming them seems rather a reproach? For what I have not done for this cause am I made sorrowful by your thanks. Your letter occasioned not this suffering only!¹ The state of your own mind seems my constant burden. You have forgot that you were once fed, and that then you knew this was over and above of what you had rather less. Your thoughts of yourself rather comfort me, though for a time you are in heaviness by them. Your wants and knowledge of your wants is the earnest of your future abundance. I have always thought this to be absolutely necessary in your situation.

Your knowledge and success might puff you up. And this I take to be the sole reason of your conflicts, to show you what is in man is first made manifest to you that you may testify of these things. Assure yourself all are alike and it is pride and want of spiritual sight that will not let all think the same of themselves. Your impatience at the discovery of this in your heart bears down all views of hope. But this is no proof your deliverance is not at hand. Oh that you could but trust him! As he has so often assured you, none shall be able to pluck you out of his hand. And this persuasion for you has come of him that hath called me. But alas, well may you reject this shadow of comfort, when I sink beneath the burden of my own corruptions.

And therefore to offer even that seems to come from one of those who should declare "Lord I have done many unclean things in thy name." And yet shall his justice bid *me* depart from him. I can never have any future to suppose comfort can come from me, so blind to all good. And yet I would mourn with you and beg God for you, and employ my strength to your service, if my evil heart does not deceive me. But above all creatures you have ever yet met with, depend on me the least. So shall you not be disappointed. My continual knowledge of my unfaithfulness to God convinces [me] that next to myself he is weakest who depends upon one word I say. Every action of my life [is] but one scene(?²) of ungratefulness to God and man. And if any one bears any other appearance, it is ignorance alone that makes the false representation. And yet for my constant shame I am satisfied with any consolation that [are] of a vain [nature] or advance self in me, till by prayers and tears I confess my baseness and call aloud for strength to bruise this under my heel.

Since I began to write this I have reread your letter from Evesham.³ Oh may the Lord deliver you out of all your distress. I feel disappointed that those of Quinton won.⁴ We have, since your absence, been planning out your time till Michaelmas⁵ for the sounding an alarm. Let us set our single eye towards God and work for him. And if need be, die for him. Oh he is a gracious master to serve! And stand in faith by his promises that he that trusts to him shall not be ashamed. The cross is great and heavy, but we have not long to carry it. A short time and our toil shall end in glory. I feel its weight just now to a high degree by many concurring circumstances agreeing together. The affair of Bath is like to set all the world upon the

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²CW renders this difficult-to-read word "sense" in his shorthand extract.

³I.e., the journal letter covering May 17–25; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 144–52.

⁴CW preached at Christ Church in Quinton on May 19.

⁵I.e., through late September.

people of God.⁶ But one shall chase a thousand!⁷ I find their utmost rage begins to extend to me. But I think I fear not him who can kill the body. Great must be the troubles of the righteous, but out of all shall the Lord deliver them.

I was at the society last night, and upon reading the rules over,⁸ what was done by your brother [...]⁹

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/92. See also CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 19c.¹⁰

⁶CW was in Bath on Feb. 24, 1743.

⁷See Deut. 32:30.

⁸JW & CW had published in early May *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, Works*, 9:69–75.

⁹The manuscript is incomplete.

¹⁰An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 145–46.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

En[field Chase]
June 4, 1743

The Lord in his great love hath given his angels charge over us,¹ and brought us to this place in perfect safety. I want to feel more thankful for all these instances of his mercy. This is a privilege I wait for, to have my heart overflow with gratitude for a cup of cold water. Nothing short of this can be a renewed(?) goal. The continued presence of God, whose hand we see reached out in all these things, is alone able to bring these mighty things to pass.

The day before I left Bristol I had a long conversation with Arthurs.² I am fully assured it is nothing but your not knowing him [that] can prejudice you against him. I may well doubt of him when I consider it is me that is thus speaking, but so far as I can discover the issues of my heart, I think he has the most true, sincere faith of any I have yet conversed with. I told him the two rocks he was in danger of—viz., stillness and predestination. In the latter I think he is exactly right, and the first I don't think he is in any danger of. He seems so bound to the express words of God in all things and I am sure from all I can find in him. I think him to be a great light raised up among the people and I believe his principles of faith have been one means of keeping them so much more awake at Kingswood than they are at Bristol. His present state of soul I take to be exactly the state mentioned in the eight[h chapter] of the Romans, and less than this he thinks is not justification. And with me [he] agrees [that] from this state falling is what the apostle means when he says it is impossible for those who have been ever enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they shall fall away, to renew them again. I take this in the full sense, as this plainly proves a possibility of falling in themselves, but it must be both willful and positive, or there is the seed in them which will save them from any act of disobedience, if they will submit to the teaching of the Spirit. His love to you and your brother will ever make him (as well as the living principles by which he acts) both faithful and obedient to you both. But I beg you to be tender of him. He certainly has more knowledge of God than all the "perfect ones" put together. They say he is spiritually proud, what for declaring his testimony of the experience of his faith. Assure yourself, they understand him not who condemn him to you. It is true that he allows no work of any value but what is immediately the effect of this faith of the heart; and those good works (as so called) done without their being a continual exercise of that faith darken the faith, and become things of course rather than acts of obedience. I told them had I a band, I should never once ask what good works they had done, but what exercise of their faith they had made. And by this I should soon find the measure of unbelief [that] was in them, and strike always at that root. He told me for this very thing had many of the "new creatures" spoke hardly of him and to him. But at this the axe must be laid or they will all become one degree worse pharisees than any now of the world. He put this plain question to them: "Why are not I perfect as well as you?" They seemed not ready with an answer! He then told them "Because of unbelief," and told them that while one spark of unbelief remained in them they were not without sin. But when their unbelief was removed, then sin ceased of course, for they would believe all things, endure all things, hope all things, etc. And I am sure that this perfection of a Christian is only possible to him that thus believes.

Miss Perrot, that set by, said she had never known how to speak her heart, but that we had fully described all she had felt.³ And what she called the "second gift" I believe she found to be no more than

¹See Lk. 4:10.

²Charles Arthurs (1714–83) of Stapleton; see JW, diary, Dec. 20, 1740, *Works*, 19:445.

³Ann Perrot (1707–88) of Bristol, mentioned in letters of Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright in 1744–45; and by JW to CW, Mar. 2, 1788, *Works*, 30:652–53.

what we meant by the first, for she expressed the highest satisfaction upon all that was said. And this is a most certain confirmation to me that all those that are new creatures are but in the light of the first gift.

But in some of these even, Arthurs doubts their want of faith,⁴ which is the abiding principle of the first gift. But risings of anger and pride we know they have, as Mr. [Felix] Farley can witness. They deceive both you and themselves, I fear, and would beat down by *their* testimony all others who should find them out.

You may naturally judge from my opinion of Arthurs that an agreement of sentiments may make me partial in my account for him; but to what end but your further light can it be? Should I never see him, or any of them more, it must be the same to me. The law of God wrote on our hearts and put into the mind is materially the one only thing a creature can want, and we know that the opinions of no one can do this for us. That all my labours are (God knoweth) wholly with a view to you and your brother's comfort and advantage. For I will look at no man while God vouchsafes me a sight of himself. Mine eyes shall behold thee and not another.⁵ So shall I learn thy judgements.

I much fear I have tired my friend with this long account, but could not be [at] ease till I had thus delivered myself. I know I owe you all my littleness of faith or love knows. And I speak as a child in all things. But the Lord can only put away the childish things from me, and when I shall understand as a man I trust you shall share in this likewise. And though I now only receive of yours, yet then may we be helped by the mutual faith of each other.

I doubt a letter [I] wrote to Wednesbury never reached you, neither that place, but I fancy was stopped at Bristol. May thy Lord bless your labour of love here and crown it with glory hereafter. I found my Lord's family⁶ in perfect health, which has revived perfect and unspeakable gratitude in my soul.

Address: "For / The Rev'd Mr Charles / Wesley at the New-School / at Newcastle / upon Tine."

Frank: "Free Huntingdon."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon June]] 1743 / [[of Arthurs]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/12.⁷

⁴That is, he thinks they lack (want) faith.

⁵See Job 19:27.

⁶That is, her husband's family.

⁷Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 63–64.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[London]
[June 5, 1743]

[[You cannot guess the joy to me which our opening the [Reformed chapel¹] caused. I cannot help hoping there was another hand directed ours in the doing it.

[[I had a letter from that holy and good man Mr. Piers,² whom I love in simplicity and godly s[incerity]. His letter is the p[roof] of him.

[[You have filled my heart with great gratitude to you for the hymns. We feel need daily to commend you to that very love which is able to keep, and will I trust keep and present you spotless before the presence of his glory forever. Which is the f[ervent] petition of

[[Your unworthy sister in the Lord Jesus.]]

Source: CW shorthand extract; MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 13e.³

¹The shorthand reads only “rc.” In May 1743 JW arranged to rent a former Huguenot (French Reformed) chapel on West Street in London. The first service in the chapel was May 28 (see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19:326; and Martin, *Wesley’s Chapels*, 47–49). The first Sunday that LH was in town and could attend would have been June 5. The Wesley brothers soon reserved a seat for her when she was in London.

²Henry Piers (1695–1770), grandson of an Irish baron, 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, then his concentration narrowed to his own parish.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 133–34.

From John Robson

[Bristol]
c. June 8, 1743

Dear Sir,

I cannot direct this of my Lady [Huntingdon]'s to you without sending a line along with it.¹ I suppose she acquaints you with my disgrace at Kingswood. I began to preach but was not able to finish. You see I am fit for nothing in the world, nor ever shall be. Everybody now seems to give me up as indeed unqualified for anything. And my good Lady (who has more faith than other people) proposed the question whether I might not still be able to visit sometimes a sick person. Your brother told me too, to my comfort, that Mr. [Thomas] Richards was much duller than I at Oxford, and that notwithstanding he was become a very useful preacher. The people say "Poor, dear gentleman. He is extremely weak. It is a wonder how he has done to take up his degrees."² And last night, when I was asking Mr. [Charles] Graves if he never had any scruples on his mind with regard to this way, brother [Felix] Farley answered, "Oh, then I find it is not altogether for want of capacity that you decline the work." Such a stream of compliments have been paid me since you left us! So that I may now go and preach before the University when I will, being judged on all hands unfit for Kingswood, and therefore I propose setting out for Oxford very soon.³

But to be more serious, it is next to impossible for me to be a Christian. I am unsteadfast, apt to distrust my judgment in everything, and easily repulsed by another's opposition, or even opinion. If I know any person in the work to think differently from myself, I immediately doubt whether he may not be in the right, and consequently cannot abide by an notion of my own. And I believe the case would be the same if I was to feel religion. I should soon doubt whether I felt it or not. And a man, by only doubting my experiences, might throw me into a thousand scruples about them. Happy they, say I, who are wise in their own eyes, who are fully possessed of the present notion and can act up to it with vigour. Self-sufficiency is to me a virtue, and though you may perhaps think I have it in perfection, yet I have nothing in so small a degree. Doubtfulness is the rack that ever torments me, and if the Lord does not deliver me from it, I cannot expect even to live much longer.

If you will write soon, I will stay here till your letter comes. Forget me not, because I am miserable and wretched, and blind and naked. Cease not to love me, because I am unamiable. The world does so, but you are not of the world. But God has chosen you out of the world and therefore the world hateth you.

J. Robson

Endorsement: by CW, "self-mistrusting / Robson / June 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/9.

¹Robson is forwarding a letter LH sent to CW in Bristol, assuming he might have arrived there. He did not reach Bristol until mid-July.

²Robson received the BA from Lincoln College, Oxford in 1735; and the MA from New Inn Hall in 1742.

³See CW's reflections on Robson's continuing struggles in Oxford in *MS Journal*, June 27, 1743. Robson soon turned his back on the Methodists (see CW, *MS Journal*, Aug. 26, 1743) and went to run his family estate in Willington, County Durham.

From Sarah Perrin

At Richard Craftons in the Maze, Southwark
June 9, 1743

My Dear Friend,

Thine I received last night from friend [Elizabeth] Cart.¹ It was by accident I had it, for the person thee sent it to did not know I was in town. I much desired to hear from thee, for although thy lines mostly bring an exercise upon my spirit, yet are they always profitable unto me because they provoke me to prayer in the midst of my trouble. I was full of faith for thee. The enemy would have suggested to me what if these ministers should fail and this work come to nothing; but this decree was too weak to enter for a moment. “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and feed, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace, the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into signing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”² “Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears for thy work shall be recorded with the Lord.”³

Whatever is his will concerning me, I know you are his chosen servants and shall receive from his hand the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord which he speaks unto thee. It shall be well unto thee. Thy soul shall live and the tabernacle of God shall dwell with thee. No good thing will he withhold from thee. Never shalt thou want a friend to bear thy burden. And thy children shall [have] cause to rejoice in the latter day. Gladly would I bear thy sorrows, and in any way I am capable of should I rejoice to serve thee. For this reason do I the more desire to think and speak the same things. Cannot our Lord remove all my doubts? I will continue to ask it of him. My trouble is lessened since I spoke to thy brother, for I had let it unto my mind from the rules you published that I was to be excluded the society.⁴ But he tells me we that do not think the same way may be of the united society; and so far as you will admit me, so far will I join with you. And [I] doubt not but he that knoweth my heart will in his time remove the seals from off my eyes; and if it is his will I should join in all things, he will make the way plain before me. I strove to come to a full resolution to be baptized when we met again. But alas it was in my own strength and such a flood of reasoning broke in upon me [that] I seemed farther off than ever. The Lord I know can make the way clear in a moment. To him we will leave it. And if thee think I can at any time be of any service to thee in the way I am now in, tell me, for I would gladly bear any part of thy burden.

The Lord I know is with thee. He will bring thee to his holy mountain and make thee joyful in his house of prayer. The kindness of the Lord shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed. My dear friend, seek in all things to know his will; and when the small still voice has spoke unto thee, reason not with flesh and blood. Be clay in the potter’s hand and the divine image will the Lord thy God stamp on thee. Great things does he design to do by thee. Thy soul shall be as a well watered garden and bring forth fruit abundantly. We shall yet live to praise him. And though we sorrow for a season, our joy shall be everlasting. I can have no doubt in the deepest distress. I behold light under the clouds. The Lord is bringing forth his church out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved. He has raised you up for this end, to strip the pharisees of all they trusted in and to declare glad tidings to the

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Isa. 55:10–12.

³Jer. 31:16.

⁴JW & CW had published in early May *The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, Works*, 9:69–75.

publican—that we may have nothing to lean on but the Lord our righteousness. And though as yet you have been employed in hewing of stones, the Lord will raise up a building fair and beautiful. Your eyes shall behold it and praise the Lord without ceasing.

My dear friend, let me hear sometime from thee, and always speak my faults freely to me. Let me know if I may expect to see thee in London. May the angel of the Lord encamp about thee, and may thousands and ten thousands be converted by thee. Israel's God will never leave thee.

Friend [Elizabeth] Cart and sister [Elizabeth] Baddiley sends their duty. My love is to brother [Thomas] Richards. May all thy works prosper and the God of glory be thy portion forever.

Farewell.

Address: “To / Charles Wesley / at the Orphan House / in Newcastle upon Tyne.”

Postmark: “9/IV.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[[Sarah Perrin June]] 9. 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/23.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bone Gate¹
June 9, 1743

I had the pleasure of my friend's letters this morning,² as your brother had appointed to meet me at dear Miss [Anne] Cowper's, where we have often sought a blessing by praying for you. Things go extreme[ly] well at London. And he seems quite to agree to all proposals made for Bristol, which the execution are only deferred till he reaches that place. I think the plan will soon see you both above all your people and the (?³) many units. Your brother cannot leave London till the latter end of next week, and will meet at Nottingham midsummer day.⁴ Don't be anxious about this. It is absolutely necessary, this his longer stay, and I know you will think it quite reasonable.

Our friend whom I am with desires much love to you. I cannot think our Lord will call her.⁵ She is too useful a servant for her master, and I think (as Martha) he will love her for she will be diligent in busyness as well as fervent in spirit. All things work together for good, but be patient and hope to the end. The causes are plainly found out for the stop(?) of this work of God. I am sure they will prosper. Neither doubt nor fear, and may the Lord increase you more and more, till you come to the measure of the fullness of Christ.

Forgive this hurry, but it will be too late if not sent now.

I charge you, don't be anxious with your brother.

Address: "For / The Rev'd Mr Charles / Wesley at the New School / at Newcastle-upon- / Tine."

Postmark: "10/IV."

Source: holograph; Auckland, New Zealand, College of St. John the Evangelist, Archives.

¹The location of the Cowper family home in East Barnet, Hertfordshire, 3 miles southwest of LH's home in Enfield Chase.

²These letters are not known to survive.

³1–2 words can not be deciphered.

⁴June 24.

⁵Anne Cowper was herself now sick.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
June 22, 1743

My Dear Friend,

Though I seem as a stranger, not knowing where thou art nor how thy soul prospers, yet as often as I find life I feel it flows to thee. I cannot cease to desire thy consolation may abound; yea, and thy friends also. This morning my heart has been engaged in supplication for you, unworthy as I am to look up to God or to expect any blessing from him. I know it is my duty to ask, and for his own sake he will give unto you the gifts his own Spirit intercedes for.

I have been greatly burdened of late, not for myself only. But I trust all things will work together for good, and I shall know of a truth the Lord to be my God. In him all fullness dwells. O that I never may desire anything besides him, not even the friendship of the best person upon earth. For in that I might be disappointed; in God I cannot [be]. I feel a labour in my soul to part with every individual thing that separates me from him, but I can do nothing to the removing it out of the way. But the Lord in his time I trust will clear his temple and come and make his abode in it.

Thy brother spoke to me to go to Bristol as soon as possible. I intend to go next second day week [i.e., a week from Monday]. If it is in my power to serve you any way, I shall rejoice to do it. It was the providence of God that called me so soon from London and disappointed me of meeting thee there. The times and seasons are in his hand. I steadfastly believe it is as impossible for me to grow cold in my affection, or even to turn away from you now as if I was wholly joined to you. Whilst I have any love for Sion or desire for the prosperity of Jerusalem, so long shall I earnestly desire your welfare. And as thy brother was saying he wanted such a woman as would not speak of things out of the society, and mentioned to me upon what occasion, if I can serve the church with the assistance of his Holy Spirit I will endeavor by fasting and prayer to wait upon God to fit me for his work. And that I may be more at liberty I intend to get a place quite to myself.

I should esteem it a favour to hear whether I may be admitted into the bands. I don't mean into the last separation. I know I am not to expect it. Thy brother only told me of being the united society. And just so far as you shall judge expedient to admit me a member of your body, so far I shall think it my duty to join—until it pleases God to show me it is his will I should be of the same mind in all things. I am more convinced my affection to you has no dependence upon your friendship for me. I am undeniably assured it is the duty of everyone that desires to be a Christian to love you. For your work's sake God has fixed this love in my heart, and so long as you labour for the good of souls and I have any desire to be saved, so long my heart will be knit to you. Great is the love I feel to you. Gladly would I suffer that you might rejoice. If I can serve you, show me wherein. It is my bounden duty I should, and above all things I desire to be helpful. O that God would discover unto us how I might and fit me for it.

Due respect attends thy good friend. The very God of grace sanctify you wholly and fill your soul with gifts, in that love which changes not. My dear friend,

Farewell,

S. Perrin

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / June 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/24.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
c. July 5, 1743

My Dear Friend,

You visited me in the time of my distress.¹ But you nor no soul can conceive the darkness, perplexity, [and] misery I have constantly surround[ing] me. It is what I have never felt since I was known of God. I have the world and the things of it, but I am so ruffled by outward things, so confounded by a variety of events, that to tell you one quarter of what I feel would fill sheets. Upon the whole I am and have been this five days so ill in body I am scarcely able [to] move about. And my mind [is] so distracted that I know not what to do, all owing to the justice and love of our Lord.

My despair on Miss [Anne] Cowper's account has robbed me of all peace and left me I know not how. Pray for me, my friend, if you have any love for me. This I know, that if you have one grain of charity for me, it must be because you excel all other in this grace. And that because you *will not* know how worthless a worm she is, who knows herself more obliged to you than any creature living. I would pray for you if I could. But I cannot for anything, but that God would have mercy upon me, the chief of sinners.

Mr. [Westley] Hall is here. I hope he *is* as happy as he seems. If so he is highly favoured indeed. May you increase in all the joy of our Lord.

Join [in prayer] with one or two of your more faithful souls for me—Sarah Clavel in particular.² I long for her prayers. Send me word if she *can* pray in faith for me.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[My Friend July]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/13.³ See also CW's shorthand extracts from the opening and third paragraph in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 19b.⁴

¹CW was briefly in London July 3–10, 1743.

²Sarah Clavel (bap. 1705), of Deptford/Greenwich, was a band leader for single women at the Foundery as early as 1742 (see Foundery Band Lists (1742–46); and JW, *Journal*, Sept. 6, 1742, *Works*, 19:295). By 1744 she was also serving as the lead housekeeper for the Foundery; see *WHS* 14 (1923): 27.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 64.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 145.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. July 08, 1743¹]

Surely the Lord shall come! Oh my friend, how unbelieving is my heart! From this have I suffered more than I am able to express. Dear Miss [Anne] Cowper lies in the same way. I know you remember us. My spirit in my sleep rejoiced in God and gave him praise, but I found no gladness of heart. “Praise him for his mighty acts. Praise him according to his excellent greatness.”² These words were so strong and powerful that [they] waked me. This comforted me, as they proved to me it is the Spirit that makes the intercession according to the will of God. For my heart was a stone. My unfaithfulness, I doubt not, but shocked you. But indeed my suffering are great. I go through the fire with her and Satan’s darts I repel by the power of faith the Lord giveth me, or I should sink beneath it.

Send me a direction. And may the Lord by your defense by day and night, and remember in your prayers she who wishes to be

Your friend

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon July] 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/11. See also CW’s polished shorthand extract of the first paragraph in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 18d.³

¹Written before CW left London on July 10.

²Ps. 150:2.

³An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 144.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
c. July 13, 1743

My Dear Friend,

I find it impressed upon my heart to mention my thoughts on thy recommending the 8th [chapter] of the Romans to be the state of a justified person. I greatly fear those who are weak in judgment and inclined to final perseverance will mistake what part of the chapter thee meant. For surely some verses speak of a state we cannot fall from, and which those who believe in final perseverance bring to prove. I earnestly desire thou wilt explain it a little more, for the sake of those who seek occasion, if thee think it expedient. I know the Lord was with thee, I felt his power.¹ My fear is perhaps groundless, but I thought it my duty to write lest afterward I should have trouble.

The Lord of hosts be with thee and may his strength be thine. I know he will conquer all thine enemies and thou shalt in his name ride on prosperously.

Forgive this freedom, and be assured I would rather suffer anything rather than grieve or offend thee. In the love of our dear Lord,

Farewell,

In haste, I beg to hear from thee soon, for I shall be in fear whether I have done right. But the Lord knows it is in his love I write, for it powerfully flows to thee. Adieu.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "S. Perrin / July 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/26.

¹CW was in Bristol on July 12, preaching twice, before heading into Cornwall; see *MS Journal*.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]

July 16, 1743

I am most sensibly obliged by your short account from B[ristol].¹ My distress of mind has left me without one base for deliverance. I know you must be sorry for my littleness of faith, but with the psalmist I say, “Thou hast vexed me with all thy storms”;² great have been my variety of trials.

Since I saw you such a scene has been opened that I start from the very mention of it. I tremble to think that as a fellow creature, and as the daughter of Adam, I could or can ever be subject to what I *now* see belongs to that nature. You have witnessed my many tears and much sorrow for one whom a late sickness has given me to see every day for this six weeks past.³ My *too* much carefulness about, both in soul and body. What shall I say if this whole should prove all a mere mask? I am ready to sink beneath the terrors of such hypocrisy. For so it is. But too plainly the goodness of the Lord has preserved my charity in this affair. It has been severe hurt by evil surmising, but the worst hinted at from her own apothecary. I have left her with such an abhorrence to her guide, but an earnest desire still to serve her to the end. Her life is in no danger and I believe her senses in as little. Oh that I could say this of her soul! When I think of this last fortnight past, neither rest nor peace do I find. How do I wonder and admire the patience and long suffering of our all gracious Lord, and am overwhelmed with ever much sorrow.

A little strength I had given me yesterday, and I soon found for what end. Mr. [Thomas] Richards has received such a shock by this poor miserable soul that I had much to do to comfort him. And I am not without fears it should stick too close by him. I stand amazed I have outlived it. Pray now that the Lord would pardon her iniquities, and *that* without ceasing. We think some slight disorder attended her nerves, and *that* partly from indulgences. And this has abandoned her to evil tempers in the most unaccountable manner. Those who take care of her are sensible of it, and the person who should best know says little ails her but that she is a fool and sullen.

I beg you to write to Mr. Richards. I have desired he will come and stay a night or two with me, a broken reed. But he seems shy to speak to any but me the real truth, and he has promised, upon Mr. [Charles] Grave’s return, so to do. Your brother [Westley] Hall continues just what he was—dark in universal salvation. But I believe his great desire, without knowing why, is to have a meeting. And I own I think, could it be of all, it would be a noble thing. And so desired the (?⁴) printing your intentions and sending them to the bishops, and also the heads of doctrine wherein you all agree. You will then put them under a necessity of either rejecting the great truths or confirming them, and the sincere will have an opportunity of giving their consent to the faith of the gospel. And [you will be] showing (as you are surely bound) by your offer that respect to them as your superiors—which, if they neglect to receive with that course on their parts, you will be *still* more at liberty in your own minds, by having done all you believed to be right towards them. And I believe it will be found in all cases the acting up in all points to order is the surest means to have all the works of our hands prosper, as you will prove by this you only desire to be fellow helpers with them in God’s heritage.

I fear your brother in agreeing to this. But I will still think this unreasonable in myself, if I can. I have had a letter still supporting in a great degree that poor woman.⁵ I am not careful about it. He will

¹CW was in Bristol briefly on July 12, 1743. His letter to LH about this is not known to survive.

²Ps. 88:6 (BCP).

³Anne Cowper.

⁴The word looks something like “harvats.”

⁵JW’s letter is not known to survive. He was likely commending Sarah Perrin’s full participation in the society at Bristol, even though she was a Quaker. LH opposed this, believing that the Wesley

receive no farther trouble upon it from me. But this I shall constantly affirm, I can never bow down to *no* man in an evident untruth, let him think it what he will. In what I know not, I trust I shall prefer everyone's judgement before my own, if I have any grace. And should I have none, I am secure God will never suffer me to become an arbitrator in any point. And as such I consider myself when I cease to think more about this affair.

I beg you will let me know your opinion on this proposal of meeting. And I pray God to prosper your earnest love which you show forth by your labours for the poor sinners. Mr. [George] W[hitefield], Mr. Chap[man],⁶ Mr. Har[tley],⁷ Mr. T[h]om[as]⁶ are all joined for the public work. ⟨All⁷⟩ seem to agree in the time of this co⟨...⟩. But I know nothing but this, that if it is most for the glory of God, it will happen; and if he see it will not, may it come to nought. Such is the conclusion of her who wishes good luck in his name to you, and desires all personal blessing of the Spirit [of] God for you.

Address: "For / The Reverand Mr / Charles Wesley at the Society / Room at St. Ives's / Cornwall."

Postmark: "16/IY."

Frank: "Free Huntingdon."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon July]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/17.⁸

brothers should restrict full participation to those who were communicants of the Church of England, a belief she conveyed directly to Sarah Perrin; see Perrin to CW, Sept. 8, 1743 below.

⁶Rev. Walter Chapman (1711–91), one of the Oxford Methodists; ordained an elder in 1735, he served currently as Master of St. John's Hospital in Bath.

⁷Rev. Thomas Hartley (1708/9–84), a native of London, rector of Winwick, Cambridgeshire.

⁶Likely Rev. Philip Thomas (1710–81), currently serving with John Hodges at Wenvoe, later received the living at Michaelston-le-Pit, and a supporter of the evangelical cause.

⁷Two lines are covered by the wax seal. This text for the first line is probable.

⁸Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 65.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
July 16, 1743

I doubt, I do not fully understand, what the thing proposed is. But I hope to talk with you concerning it before the 13th of August.²

It seems to me the matter as yet is not well digested. I will just mention a few things that now occur.

1. Will it not be necessary, before we can join at all, to explain (at least) our sentiments to each other—that we may allow each other what we can allow; that we may know what the precise points of differences are; and how far all preaching and talking concerning them may be set aside by general consent?

2. Should we not appoint Friday, August 12, to be a day of solemn fasting and prayer in all the societies?

3. Should we not then ask that God would ‘give us all one way’?³ Is this too hard for him?

4. How far should we use the ordinary means for this end—i.e., reasoning together on the points in question?

5. Have we sufficient proof that Mr. [Walter] Chapman, Thompson,⁴ [John] Robson, or [George] Stonehouse is in earnest to save souls? Do they not love the present world?

6. Is Mr. Taylor awakened?⁵ Or Mr. Wilkins (I know him not) justified?

7. Will Mr. [William] Law or Mr. [James] Hervey be concerned with us?

8. If one or more of the bishops should ask, ‘What would you have me do for you?’, what should we answer?

9. Are the bishops, or any one of them, convinced of the truth of our fundamental principle: ‘That the hope of the gospel is present, inward salvation, springing from the remission of sins, witnessed to us by the Holy Ghost’? If not

[10.] Lastly, what good can we expect from an address to them?

I have not had time to weigh any of these things. I propose them, that others may. May our Lord direct you in all your ways and guide you in all your thoughts!

Source: amanuensis copy; JW Letter-book (1742–47), [64–65].⁶

¹The letter that drew this reply is not known to survive. CW had clearly suggested gathering some Church of England clergy who might be sympathetic to the revival, to explore greater cooperation. This eventuated in JW convening the first annual ‘Conference’ in late June 1744 in London. Significantly, the opening session of this first Conference was limited to JW, CW, and four other Church of England clergy; who then voted to allow four of JW’s lay-preachers to join them (see *Works*, 10:123–24).

²CW returned to London from his current preaching tour of Cornwall on Aug. 13, 1743; JW was already there.

³Quoting CW’s Hymn on Isa. 28:16, Pt. III, st. 1, in *HSP* (1742), 273.

⁴Surely Rev. George Thomson (1698–1782), vicar of St. Gennys, whom CW had met during his preaching tour in Cornwall.

⁵Rev. Samuel Taylor (1711–72), vicar at Quinton, who invited CW to read prayers in his church on May 19, 1743 (see CW, *MS Journal*). Taylor was one of the four Church of England elders who joined JW and CW at the 1744 Conference.

⁶Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 31:344–45.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
July 21, 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

My heart's desire is all thy works may prosper, and I doubt not but the great Jehovah will be thy strength and portion forever. From a conversation I had yesterday with one whom I esteemed a pillar amongst you, I was put upon a strict examination and I cannot express the nearness I felt to you. Much closer is the union I feel to you than those I have been with all my days, and wherefore is it but because the Lord has wrought some good to my soul through your ministry. And I know of none other which gives such full proof of their ministry as you do. Which makes it appear strange to me that those who have been educated in the same church as you, and have been brought to Christ through you, and have grown in grace and know the ways of God, should not endeavor more earnestly to strengthen your hands. I think sometimes if we was with sincerity to beseech the Lord to take from us all prejudice of education, only resolve to follow the rules of the gospel, you and your hearers would soon be of one heart and one mind. But whilst we each of us cleave to a dead body, how can we grow strong in the Lord. O may he give you a right judgment in all things. I can truly say I desire no particular way for him to carry on his work. But it grieves me to observe some ready to join with one people and some with another because they judge more of the power of God is to be found in other congregations than the Church [of England]. O may the Lord show us the way we ought to take.

I have examined strictly whether my experience will answer the eighth [chapter] of the Romans. The greatest part of the chapter it doth, but I cannot say Christ dwelleth in me. He is with me, and I trust shall be in me, and when my calling and election is made sure who then shall say anything to my charge? But how I often transgress the law of my God through unwatchfulness! But I feel an immediate reproof for it and have power to repent the same moment. But for every such offence I do not feel the wrath of God abiding on me as before. I know he was gracious because I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, whose blood I trust will in due time cleanse me from all unrighteousness. And his Holy Spirit dwells in me. I am fully persuaded some souls feel a far greater change wrought in them at the time of their justification than others; but as it is a state we can so very easily fall from, I canst tell how to think we are in a very high state of grace until sanctification is added to our sins forgiven—unless we make the word “justification” (as our friends do) to mean both gifts. For how can Christ dwell in an unholy heart?

I received a few lines from thy brother yesterday, much to my satisfaction, for the power of the highest is with them.¹ I should be glad to hear how our Lord deals with thee in thy travels. My hope doesn't at all lessen we shall be of the same judgment. I have had strong proof that you will not urge me to anything I feel a check in my mind to, so I believe our Lord will make his ways plain to me and I shall acknowledge him therein. I am fully persuaded my coming to Bristol the last time for those few days was from the Lord, and surely he will answer all the petitions his own Spirit made intercession for. I also believe thy backwardness in speaking to me of the ordinances is from him, for I believe our Lord will take from me every appearance of a desire to comply to please you in it, and will give me a single eye to perform it to his glory, that I may find his blessing therein. This seems at present what I am waiting for. I cannot say I grow in grace, but I daily find my God has not forsaken me. I go constantly with Sally Colston to visit the sick, and I hope I shall be made more fit for this service.

Mrs. Kerr² left us with some reluctance last fourth day.³ I think Nelly is seeking Christ. Friend

¹This letter from JW is not known to survive

²This is apparently the same woman whose name is spelled “Carr” previously.

³I.e., Wednesday.

Vigor and sisters desire to be remembered kindly to you.⁴ With duty and earnest desires for thy happiness here and forever. I remain,

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

I should take it as a favour from thee to hear how her Ladyship does and her friend Miss [Anne] Cowper.

Address: “To the Revd / Mr Charles Wesley.”

Endorsements: by CW, “S. Perrin / 1743. July” and “[All of ru? society surviving / just Mary Richards with her mother].”⁵

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/25.

⁴Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

⁵This may be just a comment by CW (with the “ru” perhaps referring to Redruth, where he had recently preached); or it may be an extract from his reply to Perrin, though it does not address anything she mentions in her letter.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
July 22 [1743]

My Dear Friend,

O the miraculous goodness of Almighty God, how can the tongue of man declare it? My heart is filled with love and grief inexpressible. My soul feels a burden for thee. Rather would I bear this grief to eternity than thou should yield to one temptation of the enemy. I see how much he longs to destroy thee. I have prayed as for one whom he has sometimes had advantage over. But is not he that is for us greater than he that is against us? O that God would bow down my soul as in the dust and give me power to wrestle continually with the angel of his presence. For his ministers and people no comfort upon earth do I desire. No joy do I wish to feel, but to be deeply baptized for the backslidings of my own soul and the sins of the people. O that I could weep night and day until everlasting life is brought into thy soul and Satan can have no more power over thee.

O Lord how does my longing soul desire, if it be consistent with thy will, to suffer even me to drink the deepest cup of affliction, that this thy servant may know thy truth to make him free, that his soul may be at liberty evermore to rejoice in thy presence. I bless thee, I thank thee O my God, that these my desires are with a single eye to thy glory. How wonderful, how good has been thy care over me to this day. Lord, for thy mercy's sake add this to thy blessing. Purge away every thought which is not obedient to thee and make me of some service to thy people. The few days I have to continue, give me power to spend them to thy glory.

O the mystery of iniquity, the depth of Satan's devices. But is not the mystery of godliness greater, and a redeemer's love still deeper? Lord thou knowest it seems to me that I could suffer in the flames. I could freely give my life that Israel might dwell in safety. O my God, my God, humble all that are seeking after thee. What have we to boast? Are we not miserable sinners? O stretch forth thine almighty arm and save us unto the utmost. Show me every accursed thing that lurks within us, that we may be stripped of all and possess the beauty of thy holiness which we make profession of. Shall we not of all mankind be most miserable unless we part with all and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth? O may we fix our eyes steadfast upon thee yet. The deepest wound of the serpent may be perfectly healed.

I feel a strong desire to depart hence Don't thee think it would be pleasing to the will of God to pray that my time might be short? O that I could lay it down for the testimony of Jesus. Dearest Father keep my heart unspotted, suffer no thought to enter me but what is pure in thy sight. What tongue can tell how I long to give up my self unto thee? Yet I still remain unrenewed, unholy.

My dear friend let us strive together for the hope of the glory. Let the evil which is past suffice. Though Satan desires to sift us, our Lord has prayed for us and his prayer shall prevail. O let us be willing to part with every individual thing that steals in between God and our soul, that he may be all in all. May the holy one of Israel keep thy heart unspotted and fill thee with all the riches of his love.

Farewell.

My soul is bowed down. All sin appears exceeding sinful and the thought if any of us who make so high a profession of faith should fall into sin and bring a reproach upon the truth terrifies my soul beyond expression. How dreadful would the consequence be if any of us should fall into the snare of the devil! I think I never have been more earnestly led to pray for thee in my whole life, with power not my own, that God would give thee dominion over all evil and set up his kingdom of righteousness in thy heart. O let us watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation, for Satan would rejoice over one such soul as thine more than a thousand others. Therefore will he strive every way to ensnare thee. But the arm of the Lord will deliver and thy soul shall dwell in safety.

I find my having a place to myself is hitherto blessed. For the friend of sinners is with me. If thou finds freedom, I should be glad to hear from thee. The Lord perfect thy soul, that no evil may ever touch thee.

Adieu.

I cannot describe what I feel at this time. It is with weeping and much trembling I write. The Lord knows the supplication of my heart and will answer. Let others rejoice, my desire is to mourn until Zion is redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness.

Fear not; the arm of the Lord shall uphold thee. But keep thine eye inwardly fixed upon him and as the man of sin has been deeply revealed in thee so shall the son of righteousness come with power.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / in / Cornwall."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - July]] 1743.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/27.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. July 23, 1743]

I have just time to tell you I am what I was—at times a dark unbeliever, and then gleams of divine light break into my soul. I am distressed, perplexed, but not in despair. Our sick friend is just what she was. But her senses, I believe, are now quite gone. If you had my other letters, our fear was there expressed in a strong manner for her. But I will yet hope I was mistaken and that it is yet the enemy that hath done her this wrong. You must expect no letters from me while you are going about.¹ I am in fears lest that directed to the society room at St. Ives is lost;¹ or stopped, which that I find was at Wednesbury.

May the Lord bless your labours. My heart's desire is that the poor tanners may have knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, and that they may be a holy people to the Lord, zealous of good works, serving the Lord. Fervently pray for me. My desire is alone unto God. I reject all happiness that *can* come from the world. Mrs. K— is come to town and I shall (if the Lord permits) see her tomorrow.² May the Lord perform all your petitions to his glory.

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon July] 1743.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/14.³

¹CW was currently on a preaching tour in Cornwall.

¹The letter of July 16, 1743.

²This is surely Mrs. Carr (or Kerr), who is mentioned as at Bath previously, and had just left Bristol; see Sarah Perrin to CW, July 21, 1743.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 65–66.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. July 30, 1743]

I had once resolved not to have wrote again, hoping your return might have prevented me. But I am most extreme[ly] glad you are so hindered; and that your stays, being further protracted, will still advance the work of God and be blessed to thousands. All opposition, I am convinced, (that you can meet with) will be but for the furtherance of the gospel in the end. And under the shadow of his wing he will hide you, that this fierceness of man shall turn to his praise and to the increase of your crown. It is a great promise that when our Lord finds his servant so doing over his household, verily he shall make him ruler over *all* that he hath. Surely you will look for this promise, for you are now giving them their meat in due season. And I trust you can never now think our Lord delayeth his coming.

Our sick friend is like(ly) to be recovered.¹ It has affected me in my health extremely, and so much that I can hardly feel these his mercies to her with any degree of gratitude that I am not rather ashamed of. But this I know, all my desires are to him and to the love of his name. I want nothing in earth or heaven but to walk before him with Enoch's testimony.² But when shall this be, who am lowest and vilest of all the sinful sons of men? Mrs. K—³ set out, as I believe, to the north as yesterday morning.

May the Lord prosper your works.

I can answer nothing about your brother coming. I know he is inexpressibly wanted where he is, but I will write.

Address: "For / The Rev'd Mr Charles / Wesley at the Society / Room in St. Ives's / Cornwall."

Endorsement: by CW, [[Lady Huntingdon July]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/15.⁴ See also CW's polished and much abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 19a.⁵

¹Anne Cowper.

²See Heb. 11:5.

³Mrs. Kerr / Carr.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 66.

⁵An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 144.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[August 1743]

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Before I received thy last I found great faith and sweetness in prayer for thee, with an increase of love.¹ We know God is a God hearing prayer and I think it is impossible the fervent prayer of his own Spirit can prove ineffectual. The very blessing thou desires me ask for thee is the gift I have been wrestling with God for, and he surely will give thee a broken and a contrite heart and the peaceable kingdom of his righteousness shall be set up in thee.

Thy lines has greatly rejoiced my spirit. Write as largely to me as thou canst, for the Lord will surely increase our love and make us perfect in one. I may say with sincerity I never more earnestly sought any blessing for my own soul then I have for thine. I have had, as it were, all the temptations that beset thee set before me: the triumph of our enemy, if thou should be overcome, and the dishonour it could bring to the truth. And I believe this has been suffered from time to time to stir me up to prayer. And I bless God, I know he has heard. I have now a delightful view of our giving ourselves wholly to him, and walking humbly with him. And as we grow in grace our love will increase to each other more and more for his sake.

I think I find my strength renewed by visiting the sick. I hope I shall not always remain barren and unfruitful.

I never was made more sensible of the Lord blessing my soul since my acquaintance with you as of late. I know of a truth it has been good for me; and shall I not pray, shall I not love and hope and believe all things for you. I see all that we ask shall be given unto us. Of late I have had frequently some kind spirit, as it were, asking me what blessing I desire most. What would I have that the Lord should do? And I always find my heart asks for thee, that thou mayst become a man after God's own heart. This seems as if it would rejoice my soul more than anything, and I believe the request pleases the Lord. Go on my friend and brother, from strength to strength, till all thine enemies fall before thee. With duty and tenderest affection I salute thee. We long to see thee. Our friends at Stokes Croft give them kindest love.²

Farewell,

S. P.

I have but just received thine and am obliged to conclude in haste, or should have writ[ten] more largely. The Lord be with thee and comfort [thee].

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - August]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/35.

¹CW's letter is not known to survive.

²Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. September 1, 1743]

I have by a mistake had Mr. [Henry] Pier's case sent me here,¹ which will have occasioned much delay. But I hope it may not be the worse in the end, for I have given it one to consider that I have an opinion of as fair as I can have of any rational preacher. And the messenger shall have it to carry it to Doctor Burton for his farther advice.² But our trust for him is altogether in him who has so loved him as to die for him. And greater love hath no man that this, that he lay down his life for his friend. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. It is a great privilege to become the friend of God, so great that we find but one under the law so termed. And yet here we may all be called.

And I think I know but few that has a better right to this promise than our sick friend, for I think he has obeyed from his heart. I think our prayers have been heard for him, and I am ashamed to find I am ever heard. I find so strong an aversion in myself to everything I do or say, from the persuasion I can but dishonour God in all things, that I believe I shall not only become still but silent. I have had some secret hope you would write to me, for I sit alone as a sparrow upon the house top—weary and faint in my mind, oppressed, perplexed, and disturbed. Oh when shall all these things end? I look with longing for the *shadow* of death, for it is no more to those who sleep in Jesus. I know I am ungrateful for this; nay, base to have one thought contrary to his present will for me. But oh Lord, if thou should be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who shall abide? I find I want often comfort, but I reject all that I cannot positively call that peace that passes my understanding, and which alone he is able to communicate. I know he would never have me satisfied with a little when he assures me I shall partake of his fulness. And while that continue infinite, my share will or may be so for my earthen trial.

Our friend at Bone Gate³ has had an impostume broke in her lungs (which with every other symptom of the last stage of her distemper) must hurry her very soon hence. Her head is just the same. All that can be (?) they (?) within. But hearing of her two days ago sunk me into deep distress. And yet say I, "Best is the will of the Lord."

Since I begun this, the person whom I have contacted tells me he apprehends Mr. Piers a good case, but that if he now is alive the distemper must have taken a turn so favourable that he may recover. He left the case at his own house. He would, he says, have more blisters put on and all nervous medicine given. And he thinks nothing can be done more for his perfect recovery in case the distemper has passed the crisis. I shall send for the case and send it [to] Mrs. [Martha] Motte to carry it to Doctor Burton, and through his opinion joined with this will be, I hope, effectual means as far as they go.

I shall rejoice to find you can still say that out of Egypt the father hath called his son. May he continue daily to bless you with the choicest of his spiritual blessing, that every promise he has ever made to man may find their full completion in you, to your endless joy and comfort. Which I most constantly and fervently pray, whenever the Spirit of prayer or supplication is given to me. Join for me with your faithful people, for a weaker or a more unworthy worm does not breath. I live in one continual sense of wanting more than any creature living.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/98. See also CW's shorthand extracts from the second and fourth paragraphs of this letter in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 20c.⁴

¹Henry Piers had been sick with convulsions in late Aug., but by Sept. 2, 1743 was improving; see CW, *MS Journal*, Aug. 25–Sept. 2, 1743.

²Simon Burton, M.D. (1689–1744) of St. George's Hospital in London.

³Anne Cowper, who would die on Sept. 7, 1743.

⁴An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 147.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. September 7, 1743]

I am sure nothing but your charity could hardly bear to see me, my dear friend, after my seeming carelessness. But may I assure you it was the infirmity of my body, for plainly from the time I rose till I saw your letter I never once thought of it. And yet the last thing before I closed my eyes both the poor man's case and all things relating to him I had settled.¹ I am not surely to be helpful to him or this would not have been permitted—unless to humble me more and more, to show me what a poor vile mortal I am, that I may become more the object of your pity—and, of course, the cause of your prayers.

I took leave of our departed friend.² I own to you I had no comfort. And I am just come from visiting her breathless clay. And I think the greatest marks of peaceful happiness I have ever seen in any face adorns the temple she has left. If you are here early on Saturday morning you may see her,³ for I shall not have her secured up till noon. She often asked the day before her death (which was nothing but agony) if they were sure you prayed for her.

May the Lord bless you. I long that I may live to see you crowned with all the promises of God. And as the poorest worm on earth, depart when mine eyes shall have seen the salvation of the Lord. And in the meanest place, rejoice to see you keep your place of being nearest to him in heaven as you are on earth.

Farewell my best of friends.⁴

If you come by Newington, tell the man, if he will, come any day—or if it should be uneasy for him, I would come to him. Indeed, I will pray to remember, if you will trust me again—or he can.

Endorsement: by CW, [[Lady Huntingdon Miss [Anne] Cowper's Death]].

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/95.

¹Referring to Rev. Henry Piers; see previous letter.

²Anne Cowper.

³CW did attend the funeral on Saturday, Sept. 10, 1743; see *MS Journal*. See also CW's hymns in *MSP* (1744), 3:285–88; and *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 14–15.

⁴A shorthand extract of this letter from “I am just come from visiting ...” through this closing is found in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 30. An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 166

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
September 8, 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Thy last kind lines I received and my heart has been much enlarged in prayer for thee.¹ And I hope whatever may be suffered to happen unto me I shall always pray for thee and faint not, for I find my heart is insensibly drawn by the cords of divine love to breath up pure petitions, and surely God will answer them.

Our friend has writ[ten] her mind fully to me,² and I find your conformity to me in letting me be of your society shocks her as much as if you conformed to a liar or swearer, for she shall shun all outward fellowship with those who do not see their duty as she does and fears your people will all suffer by it.

Now my dear friend, thee and thy brother are judges in this. It would grieve me exceedingly to hurt any sincere soul. And though I know of none in Bristol who are so straightened in their bowels, you may. And I am fully assured God will not suffer my soul to be hurt if you should think proper to put me from amongst you, for his thoughts are not as our thoughts nor his ways as our ways. I know if it was expedient I should comply, he would make it clear to me. For though thy friend does not believe I search after conviction, he that searches the heart knows I have. And whilst I was in London God gave me a clear assurance that he would keep me from doing wrong and show me in his own time his will in all things concerning me, and I have had no perplexed reasoning about it since. I know I am the Lord's and he will do with me as seemeth him good. My heart is enlarged to see my Father's children, and I am so far from thinking of shunning all outward fellowship with those who do not think as I do that I could embrace the whole world. I can call nothing common or unclean [that] the Lord has sanctified, for he that has in any measure the Spirit of Christ is to me as my brother. And I praise God who has given me this blessing.

I intended to have followed thy orders but it darted into my mind, if thee should think as thy friend does of me, it might give thee more satisfaction to see them burnt, and therefore intend not so much as to look over them myself till I see thee. Not one sentence in any of them except the last but one ever raised any thought in me that was hurtful. They have caused me to weep much, to pray much, and to love much, for I always saw so much sincerity in them that it was impossible for me not to partake of thy sufferings. But the enemy strangely represented thy last but one; it was so full of seeming contradiction that I did doubt of thy sincerity. But it soon appeared in another light to me, and my love is now the same as ever. As long as I remain with you I believe you will always find I shall write or speak just as my heart is, for to say one thing and think another from my childhood has appeared to me as gross a sin as drunkenness.

Diverse temptations have been cast in my way of late, but hitherto I have been more than conqueror. I have had great occasion of offense given me by one whom for many years I have had much love to, and I feel such a calm quietude of soul in the midst of all that happens to me that [it] increases my confidence in God greatly, for I know it is grace and not nature that now preserves me.

It seems to me as if my master was preparing me for something I see not as yet. I know he is working in my to will, and I doubt but he will work in me to do according to his own good pleasure. I am as a child and find I can do nothing but he direct, and cry "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."³

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Likely LH, who at this point desired the Wesleys to admit in their societies only communicants in the Church of England.

³1 Sam. 3:10.

A few of us met for an hour together in prayer <this⁴> day and thee wast brought to our remembrance. <The> Lord answered. I am fully persuaded even in thy church there is many who sincerely love thee.

I never saw so much into the goodness of God in everything that befalls me as of late in the affliction I passed through on my knees(?). I know the hand of the Lord was upon me. He has greatly blessed my wrestling with him and has sealed my petitions. This morning my heart was enlarged in supplication for our friend, and though I cannot think as she does I find her last has quickened me to pray for her.

I am confident my Lord and my God will be with me, though all man should cast me out from amongst them. I find no choice, only desire you may be directed most for the glory of God and that my love may remain steadfast to you and my prayers prove effectual.

Our friends at Stokes Croft give their kind love and want to see thee.⁵ Duty and sincere affection attends thee.

Farewell.

The Lord be with thee and his Spirit rest upon thee. My love to all our friends.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley at ye / Foundry upper / Moorfields / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - September]] 8. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/28.

⁴A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, affecting two lines. Possible text is supplied.

⁵Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
September 21, 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I have just now heard thou wouldst have me write. Brother [Felix] Farley did not let me know before. Thee hast been much on my mind, for I don't know that ever I feel any degree of the power of God influencing my soul but thou art brought to my remembrance. The love I bear to thee cannot wax cold so long as I have this power given me to pray for thee. I don't remember I ever felt such a constant settled earnest desire for the happiness of any one soul in my life as I always feel for thine.

Very lately I seemed to have the prospect of my last moments set before [me]. My heart was filled with joy. The view of immortality was glorious. And I thought if my end was near, and God should finish his work shortly, surely my last prayer would be for thee. And so far as I know of myself I find no interested thought in my affection; for if I should be put from amongst you, if I should never see thee more, if the enemy should represent me as a deceiver and thou should grow cold to me, I believe I should still feel the same desire for the prosperity of thy soul. I am persuaded God has fixed it in my heart. It is my duty to love and pray for thee, and I hope as long as our lives it will be continued unto me.

I don't know that I ever heard of so much affection for thee before as the sincere of this church bear to thee now. It grieves them greatly thy being offended with us, and [I] believe those who rise up against thee are but few in comparison of those who entirely love thee. I shall be obliged to go from Bristol for a month soon after thy brother has been here. I should be glad to know when we may expect thee, for I should be very unwilling to be away whilst thou are here, and I hope it will not be a great while before God directs thee unto us.

A few of us spending an hour in prayer with brother [Thomas] Richards sometimes has been greatly blessed, for the Lord has been in the midst of us. Last seventh day¹ we met from 12:00 to 1:00 and he prayed with power that I might be of the same mind in all things. I found my heart join earnestly with him, and after I got home I seemed constrained to ask of God, if it was his will, only to give me a calm persuasion it would be pleasing to him; for without this I see it is impossible for me to conform. It has many times been brought before me I shall be cast out from both people. Whether it will be so or not, I desire to leave. But I find great resignation and confidence if God permits it will be for good.

I am very certain he is fashioning stones for the building a church. His own wisdom will order it, his own hand chase out the stones and place them according to his holy will. And in what manner I believe as yet no one seeth, but I cannot apprehend there will be any form or comeliness for the rich or the wise to desire to be members of it. Very few are willing to lose their life, that they may find it.² Some little breath of praise of wisdom of righteousness we would fain retain. It is hard, but we must wholly die unto ourselves if we would live to Christ Jesus. O that I might witness this death. I long for it. I want to be stripped of all, for I can find no satisfaction in anything longer then I feel the work of new creation carrying on in my soul. I am weary of my own unprofitableness and cannot help beseeching the Lord to purge me, if it be in the furnace of affliction. So livingly sensible I am every bitter cup I have drank of has been blessed to me. I am ready to cry "Lord give me larger draughts." But he knoweth best. I am his and he will deal with me according to his own good pleasure. O the blessedness, the sweet consolation there is found in being wholly resigned to the will of God. No tongue can utter it. My heart is melted under a sense of his love and my fervent desire my dear friend is we may always witness it. O let us give glory to the Lord and declare his praise. Let us love each other for his sake. And however we may differ in sentiments, let us agree to promote his glory and wait upon him until he gives us a right judgement in all things.

¹I.e., Saturday.

²See Matt. 16:25, etc.

Friends at Stokes Croft send their kindest love and respects, and say they greatly desire thy coming. They are of those whose love does not wax cold to thee but highly esteem thee for thy work's sake.

The disengagement I mentioned to thy friend that I felt to all persons and things was not a coldness to my friends. No, my heart is warm with love to all my Father's children. But I find no anxiousness at anything that does or seems likely to befall me. My due respects attends her. Nancy Stafford admits she hears nothing from her God(?). Go on and prosper. May the banner of the Lord spread over thee. Mayst thou conquer in his strength, dwell in his favour, and be made perfect in his love. This do I desire for thee and this do I believe will be granted unto thee.

Farewell.

Brother [Thomas] Richards tells me he hears thee hast not been well. I should be glad to hear of thy health. May our God preserve from all evil. Our love to brother [Thomas] Williams.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at the Foundry / Moorfields / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - September]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/29.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
September 29, 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I believe [you] will be pleased to hear how the Lord deals with me. I am astonished at his goodness. O that I may continually abhor myself before him. I have mourned deeply for the church. I have borne the burden for the Lord. But oh how wonderful has he manifested his love to me. He has given me such a sight and such faith for his people as I never knew before. I have indeed seen the good land and tasted the fruits thereof. O that I may be kept lowly, that I may be humbled as in the dust and all that is wanting in love may he make up in me.

So far I think I may say for myself with great boldness that when I wrote to our good friend I felt no motion in my heart contrary to love. And if I wrote anything that seemed like it, I am sorry for it. I thought I ought to speak my mind freely. But I am sure I had not a disrespectful thought of her, for as her Ladyship, said she had a painful jealousy lest his people should not suffer all falsely. I took that to be the only cause of her writing so. I found great satisfaction that a few hours before I received thy last¹ my heart was so enlarged with love to her. Never but once before I ever felt such power given me to wrestle with God for blessings for her and her house. And in the evening God gave me a very remarkable answer to my morning sacrifice. It was indeed well pleasing in his sight. I was then endowed with power from on high and all things seemed to be brought to my remembrance to ask for. My tongue was set at liberty and I could pray and praise God in full assurance of faith. I saw a multitude of believers. I saw what I cannot utter. May all that is within me praise the Lord. My bowels since has yearned after the clergy. I long, I pray that the masters in Israel may be converted and we may meet together to confess Jesus in the great congregation.

Surely this is a token for good. We shall see greater things than these. O that we had this faith always to ask, our joy would soon be full. The Lord was talking with us. My eyes saw him, my ears heard him, and I felt joy unspeakable and full of glory. I beheld Jesus by faith in the midst of us, as plainly as the disciples did when he appeared unto them, and we drank together of the new vine of the kingdom. All faith was given me in that moment for the church, and I know we never shall be separated. We are of one body. The Lord is our head and he will guide us into all truth. Great faith did I receive for those whom the Lord has made instruments of good to me; yea, and all the preachers of righteousness. My agony of spirit was very great before the Lord thus revealed himself, but I see more and more the cup of sufferings is good for me. I would gladly always bear a burden for the church until I receive this living faith that cannot fail to pray for her.

Thy brother's last visit was blessed to me.² He preached with great enlargement. His love to us and zeal for the ordinances went hand in hand. His words came with great power and I could rejoice with praises to God for sending his messenger unto us. When he returns from Wales I intend to give him thy writing.

I hope there will be no more misunderstanding, and for this reason have I often wished my friends saw my heart as God sees it. For he sees the love he has given me to them. But may I in this and all things be resigned.

I feel a fear lest I should again find deadness. But oh, why should I doubt? Is not all things possible with God? I now feel life and power, and is he not able to keep me always alive to him? O what heart can conceive the blessedness I have felt for these few days passed? Let me suffer, oh my Jesus, that

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²JW was in Bristol briefly, Sept. 24–26, 1743.

I may ⟨dwell³⟩ with thee. Hast thou not taken from me ⟨all⟩ desires of the things of this world? Thou knowest I thirst no more after them. O take away all wandering thoughts. Also that every moment I may feel thy creating Spirit moving in me. Thou hast giving me a sight of glorious things yet behind. O give me patience to wait for the accomplishing of them. Lay thy burden on me. Let me no more slumber but wrestle with thee continuously for thy ministers and people, and let me be counted worthy to suffer for thy sake in the way which is most for thy glory.

With duty and that love which is unchangeable I salute thee and our dear friend at E[n]field Chase].⁴ And I pray God to increase your friendship and bless it more and more unto you.

Please to give our kind love to Nancy Perrot, and tell her, her not writing gives her friend much uneasiness and puts her upon reasoning what should be the occasion.⁵ My love is to friend [Elizabeth] Cart, etc.

Farewell,

S. P.

Our friends at the Croft send their love.

Since I write my letter from 11:00 to 12:00 this day, I found great power to pray for thee. And it seems to me impossible to pray much for any person without loving much. I find I am at a loss to know whither it is according to the will of God to have any desire for any return of love. I have thought not and have strove against it, but I find a desire you should pray for me and that is the same thing.

Address: “To / Charles Wesley / at the / Foundry Moorfields / London.”

Postmarks: “Bristol” and “1/OC.”

Endorsement: by CW,” [[September]] 29, 1743 [[Sarah Perrin]].”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/30.

³A small patch is torn away by the wax seal, affecting two lines; possible wording is restored.

⁴The residence of LH outside London.

⁵Ann Perrot, of Bristol, was apparently in London for a time.

From Thomas Middleton¹

Downing Street, Westminster
October 8, 1743

Dear Reverend Sir,

You are my father, my counsellor, and my guide. The Lord has made you the means to deliver my soul out of trouble. I sometimes stand amazed at myself and am even a mystery how I have been kept as a bush in the midst of a flame and not consumed. As I was walking through the fire, the Lord was with me, or it had not failed that I should have been consumed. For as I was going on frowardly to follow my own heart's lust, his loving Spirit pursued me and hedged me in on every side; so that I could not accomplish my will. I was often constrained to retire to prayer, and there the Lord would show me his will. But I stopped my ears and would not hearken; but when departed, followed on to do my own will, till at length I was ready to take my own will to be the Lord's. So near was I to be given up to my own inventions.

But the Lord in mercy still pursued me. First with blessings, in setting before me the happiness of enjoying him alone, here and hereafter, to all eternity. He also pursued me with judgments, in representing to me the miserable state of those that taste of the love of God and fall away doing despite unto the Spirit of grace, and also of the blackness and darkness forever. And also under the means of grace, I could have no fellowship nor communion but they was a wearisomeness unto me, and a half an hour seemed to me to be an hour. Yet I was not suffered to stay from them. But when I came to preaching or any of the ordinances, I was struck with such a sense of my wretchedness and misery in departing from God that my first expressions were, "God be merciful unto me, God be merciful unto me, God be merciful unto me."

Thus was it with me, and a great deal worse, till it pleased God of his mercy to send me to you. Your sharp reproof and advice, through the blessing of God, brought me to a resolution and to have my eye single to the Lord. But oh the deceitfulness of my heart, and the crafty wiles of Satan; how was I again departing from my own steadfastness. How sorry was I that I had wrote to you my own mind and did, for [I] thought I might have had my own will, and others might not know but that it was the will of God. But God possesseth the heart and the reins. Neither is there anything hid from him with whom we have to do. For whither shall I go from his presence; there is no hiding place as I can find, though I have sought it carefully. But from the second time I was with you I sought to hide myself no more, but wanted to pour out my soul to the Lord and to show him of all my trouble. I wanted to weep my life away at the Saviour's feet, to wash his feet with tears, and to kiss his feet.

But my heart still remained hard till the next day, which was Sunday. I came to the Foundry in the morning and the hymn and the preaching seemed to me, directed immediately to me. They was to my soul as healing medicines. And at the [West Street] chapel, all the service my heart was poured out before the Lord. It was full and ready to break, and particularly at the Lord's table. Just as I came to it, you gave out a hymn which expressed God's mercies and deliverances. It was so suitable to me it reached my very heart. All that day I thought I could desire no greater happiness than to mourn and weep continually.

I experienced your words that my peace would return again if I gave over thinking to oppose the will of God. I find that yet I have an advocate with the Father, who is the propitiation for this, and for all my sins.

Whence to me this waste of love,
Ask my advocate above;
See the cause in Jesu's face,

¹Thomas Middleton appears as a member of a band for single men the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46), and is likely the brother of Sarah Middleton, also on those lists.

Now before the throne of grace.²

The only thing that now besets me is lightness of spirit, a temptation I least of all expected, I being always so opposite unto it. I believe it is my punishment. But I am amazed that I should be so when my heart is in heaviness and I have so much reason to mourn as I have and sometimes do. But I make my prayer unto God, and I look to be delivered from that, and from every evil word and work.

Be pleased to order, to consult who can be set as leaders over the class at Hyde Park Corner and Grosvenor Square No. 133 and 134; they being so far from me that I cannot attend them. As for the classes in Westminster, I do not know but I may be able to look after them.

From your unworthy son,

Tho[ma]s Middleton.

Endorsement: by CW, “Tho. Middleton / Oct. 8, 1743 / Now in the / Harbour.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/111.³

²CW, “After a Relapse into Sin,” st. 8, *HSP* (1740), p. 83.

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
October [c. 16, 1743]¹

Dear and Honoured friend,

I have found great desires to write to thee but knew not where to find thee, hearing from time to time thou wast expected here. And [I] am now afraid shall miss seeing thee, and I think I never more desired it.

Our Lord gave me in an instant to see it was his will I should be of the same judgment. I reasoned not with flesh and blood. I knew the voice of God and longed to fulfill his will. All those scruples about going to [the] Church [of England], etc. passed from me. I found I had nothing to do with it, only to perform what I now believed was commanded. For the very conviction I prayed for I felt in my heart, and I witnessed strong consolation both in baptism and breaking of bread, for I received both not doubting and now look upon Kingswood as my parish church. My own helplessness increases, but my confidence in God does also. I know he will not suffer me to lack any manner of thing that is good. I feel his comforts delight my soul. I see now many reasons why our Lord's time for convincing me was not before he saw my heart, and [he] would not suffer me to do it but with a single eye to his glory.

It was not because I loved you I desired to be of the same judgment, but because I was fully persuaded it was his will. I am satisfied God is indeed bringing a great work to pass and I doubt not that we shall soon witness the closest fellowship that has been known for ages. O may we be faithful unto death. Don't forget me but let me hear from thee. Was I to look at the way I have taken, and not unto God, I should be confounded. I have no gift to edify but I have such power given me at times to ask that I may join with you to promote the kingdom of righteousness that I cannot doubt but in due time our Lord will make me meet for the master's use. And I know already many of my petitions have been granted and will he not fulfill that which is behind? Yea verily if I abide in Christ all things which I ask shall be done unto me, for his word endureth forever. I am going to Bradford for one month and hope to find thee here at my return. With duty and sincere affection, I remain,

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin b[aptize]d]] / 1743 Oct."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/31.

¹CW reached Bristol Oct. 30, so Sarah's baptism took place sometime before then.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Enfield Chase
October 25, 1743

I beg you to get the enclosed [letter] forwarded. You will be careful how you answer that relative to Miss J(?)—, or defer your thoughts upon it till I see you. Our friend I mentioned in speaking to that head has much curiosity in seeing the account of your brother's persecution,¹ [so] that all the letters you send enclosed here I shall care to be opened for that end. I believe I shall be in town next week,² if I am able to go—but the Lord corrects me in mercy, that he may not give me over unto death. Oh I am weak and miserable beyond expression or thought!

It has been a sore trial, your brother's sufferings, but I see the power and glory of Christ rests upon him. I can never pray for either of you but I have you before me as Moses and Elias on the mount, above all and nearest to the Lord.³ You will both feel and know this in its season. I am myself at this time in a state of the most profound stupidity. The cloud would make me fear, did I not see my Lord in it "that this must needs be." Heaviness may endure of a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

[Felix] Farley's account of the Bristol people has kept me alive. Oh that I could praise the Lord! But it is too good a thing for me at present. Tell him I hope to write soon, though I don't promise it for I shall never do it under such an engagement. I guess you have heard Mr. Nash, at Bath, is in the depth of despair.⁴ Our friends there, I hope, will be watchful how the Lord may use them under this circumstance.

I can say no more but that you make the meanest of all those that would love the Lord Jesus ashamed in his presence when you ever say I have for any one moment been made useful to you. The time will come when I shall be created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, but oh the time is not yet come. Pray with me for it.

I have sent Miss [Anne] P[errot] to Mrs. S— for a few days and I hope the Lord will bless it to them both. My love to all who shall have ever once inquired after me or can wish me well. Fear not, the time shall come and is even at hand when all that is Christ's shall be yours. It is in my earnest prayer for you. Direct your account of the persecution here, and as I shall be every week in town, some of your letters there.

Address: "For / The Reverend Mr / Charles Wesley at / The New School in / the Horse Fair / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon]] Oct."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/80.⁵ See also CW's shorthand extract of the second and fourth paragraphs in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 18c.⁶

¹In his shorthand extract CW identifies the sufferings as the persecution at Wednesbury. See JW's account of this persecution in his *Journal*, Oct. 20, 1743, *Works*, 19:343–49.

²I.e., in London proper.

³See Matt. 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36.

⁴Richard ("Beau") Nash (1674–1761) was "master of ceremonies" in Bath and had been a prominent figure in Bath society, though his stature was quickly dissolving. See the account of his earlier resistance to Methodism in JW, *Journal*, June 5, 1739, *Works*, 19:63–64.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 67–68.

⁶An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 143.

From Howell Harris

Breconshire
October 31, 1743

Dear, Dear Brother,

I gladly embrace this opportunity to acknowledge with thankfulness your love and to assure you of mine. Soon I shall see you among the champions that overcome all by the blood of the Lamb. Go on and renew your strength daily and may hell tremble before you. And I am sure it will, the Lord of Hosts is on our side and the God of Jacob indeed is our refuge. Therefore no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper. The work is the Lord's and it shall and will go on in spite of all oppositions. Jesus sits enthroned on high to supply the workmen with all gifts and graces.

Glorious times are come on indeed. The Lord does come to visit his vineyard. Just now I have been wrestling for this desolate city which has but few of her children left to bemoan her desolation. But I believe the Lord will build the walls of his Jerusalem. Nay, he is repairing them apace. In Wales he rides in triumph. All falls before the gospel in Pembrokeshire, Cardiganshire, and Carmarthenshire. He is getting himself the victory every day and continues to make bare his arm and to reveal his glory and might. And many are they that experimentally talk of all his wondrous works and set forth his praises day and night, coming out of the great affliction, having conquered death and hell. In Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire many catch the flame and lay hold of eternal life. Lately brother Rowland gave a visit to Breconshire and indeed the noise of his Master's feet was behind him.¹ Brother Bateman comes on well in Pembrokeshire.² Brother Davies is blessed more and more.³ And so is brother Williams.⁴

We had a sweet association last time.⁵ One made a motion for separation but was opposed by all strenuously. The laymen are blessed and I am in strong hopes to see many of them take another name. In a fortnight's time I visit Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire. Things go on well there. Brother [John] Gambold was down and preached in one of brother Rowland's churches, but was not received by the people at all. I believe stillness will not take here.

I know you are busy, and indeed for my part I reckon myself wholly unworthy of your notice, but when you have freedom, were you to favour me but with a line I should be thankful. May your bow abide in strength, as I am sure it will, for Jesus is a faithful friend and greater than your heart, etc. I need not beg a place in your intercessions. I believe he that knows me lays me before you as a poor, weak, selfish brother that stands in continual need of being taught, strengthened, and supplied with fresh supplies from him who is our all in all. In him, so far as I am sanctified and delivered from my old nature, I am indeed,

Yours most sincerely and affectionately in time and eternity,

H. Harris

Source: Harris's copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #1022.⁶

¹Rev. Daniel Rowland (1711–90), a Welsh clergyman, converted to the evangelical cause by Griffith Jones, who joined forces with Howell Harris and others in leading the revival in Wales by 1737.

²Richard Thomas Bateman (c. 1713–60), rector of Llysy-fran, Pembrokeshire, where he became an evangelical under the influence of his curate Howell Davies.

³Rev. Howell Davies (c. 1716–1770) was a schoolmaster at Talgarth, Breconshire when he was converted by Howell Harris in 1737. He was shortly after ordained deacon and priest, serving churches and itinerating in support of the Calvinist Methodist cause in Wales.

⁴William Williams (1717–91), converted by Howell Harris in 1737, joined the Church of England and was ordained in 1740. He had recently joined forces with Daniel Rowland.

⁵A meeting of clergymen aligned with the revival in Wales.

⁶Abridged transcriptions published in *WHS* 16 (1927): 39–40; and *WHS* 17 (1929): 67.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
[early November 1743]

As clay in the hands of the potter I am (and would still more become), a lump without form and void of all good.¹ But the Lord can speak and it shall be made. He will command and it shall be created. Oh wondrous love! A monument of mercy. A vessel to show forth his praise—and this out of this evil and unthankful soul.² I am lost when I consider that, while it subsists in its present being, why God should suffer it to have any power with him. Neither could I in any degree account for it but from his promises. That he calls those things that shall be as if they were,³ and therefore are the secrets of the Lord made known unto us. Wondrous are thy works, oh my God, and that my soul knoweth right well. His power is known by the visible things he has made, but his wisdom and love are as hid[den] treasure in the soul of man—and till felt *there*, are not known of any. I remember nothing seemed more difficult to be felt and understood by that sensation and yet a *lex*(?) obvious to the common faculties (but I am sure less truly explained than any I have met with).

Our life is hid with Christ in God.⁴ Many think this a dependant state by faith, and thus these weighty words (every one of which has such power and comprehends nothing less than the actual possession of eternity in the soul) are neither, ever can be, understood by outward senses. That a man should live with Christ here on earth and no one know this but God; that he should seem to receive from man, and yet have nothing from him; that he should be thankful to man, loving to man, nay at times happy in man, and yet only so in Christ; [all this] is most mysterious, but most true, and made manifest by the Spirit which alone knoweth these deep things of God.

I can just make an offering of you, and almost continually, but particular requests I know nothing of about you. They all seem too little for you. God undertake all for you now, and you will ere long be lost in his immensity. I hope you will, for his work[’s] sake continue firm in your removals. And upon reckoning up the time you will have in London, it will not amount to more than a fortnight in a quarter of a year. The predestinarians and still ones you will find no farther trouble from, if you no longer consider them as anything. Our Lord will take care of your cause if you will let him. And by your brother I find these make the difficulty so great [that] I think I agree with him clearly that one set over each of you as checks to keep your souls humble will be much better than [a] band for your and him. These may be changed with so much more ease than a band can, and yet of still greater use. And such instruments will the Lord our God give.

I have by this post a delightful letter from Mr. [John] R[obso]n. I shall write your brother word. I am now *sure* his conduct was wrong with respect to him, and I think to try him if he is willing to become weak and to put this to him, “Do you *like* a minister as well as an other man?” I should like a collier God sent, but I should like a minister he had convinced as well. They may not be so obedient at first, but waiting they will have their gifts to profit withal. But no preference to any is best. I am afraid to turn the weak out of the way. Inquire well into this thing that has separated your brother and Mr. R[obso]n, and let us in the love of God be made the instruments of sitting it aright. I have said nothing strong to your brother about it for when he mentioned it I saw how it was. But I chose to wait [to see] if it was still continued in the same light to me. And I more fully and plainly see your brother wanted (?) in the affair.

¹See Jer. 18:6.

²CW adds a few shorthand marks in this paragraph, including suggesting “heart” as an alternative to “soul” here.

³See Rom 4:17.

⁴See Col. 3:3.

I am ashamed of my long and frequent letters, as well as most extremely hard of reading them for you. And what must you then be when you read them? These considerations will ere long make me renounce writing entirely. Mr. [Edward] Ellis has been with me. You have brought him on his way. We joined in thanks to God on your behalf and rejoiced upon every remembrance of you. He has sealed your ministry at Markfield.⁵ Much reproach follows Mr. Ellis, but he seems joyful in it. Our Derby friend grows cool I hear.⁶ I know you will write kindly and often to Mr. Ellis, and this from every good motive in your own breast, that I might spare my saying how happy it would make me also. But may a single eye be your only consideration. May your stay always be in the strength of Lord. And may every desire of your heart be fulfilled. Which, as I have no doubt of, I entreat you not to forget

Your faithful but unworthy friend.

Enclose Ellis's letters as you do mine.

I feel determined never to write more, could I by any other method hear from *you*. For one of yours ever fills me with (?).

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon]] Nov."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/94.⁷ See also CW's polished and abridged shorthand copy of the opening paragraphs in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 21b.⁸

⁵CW extracted this sentence in shorthand in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 17b (an expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 142). He had been at Markfield on Oct. 19, 1743.

⁶Likely John Simpson, in Ockbrook, just outside Derby. See LH to CW, May 5–8, 1742.

⁷Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 68–69.

⁸An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, "Treasure-Trove," 149–50.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
November 14, 1743

My Very Good Friend,

I rejoiced to hear from thee, for I thought it long since thee writ to me. I find great union of spirit, for whenever I witness divine refreshings come from the presence of the Lord, thee are brought to my remembrance and art present with me.

At times I can draw near the throne of grace in full assurance of faith and feel the Comforter is with me. But yet I do not go forward. I am quite unactive. I am sometimes ready to pray that God would give me as great an abhorrence and as great agony of soul for this false stillness which so easily besets me as ever I found for pride and anger when those sins had dominance over me. For surely then I should not rest, night or day, till my spirit was set at liberty. At other times I think surely I am in the way of my duty.

I am with a relation in her illness who is as a mother to me.¹ I do speak freely to her and she told me lately weeping that she sensibly felt that Christ had suffered for her and seemed filled with his love. O Lord direct me. My heart is with thy church. If it be according to thy will I should be with them. Make the way plain before me. I find such a desire to be where I can hear the gospel that I don't know whether I am so resigned in it as I ought to be. O that I may see all the secret evil that is in me and give my self wholly into the hands of God, to do with me at all times and in all places as he pleases. This I long for, but do not strive after. O who shall deliver me from this body of sloth that thus weighs down my spirit to the earth? Indeed I now feel a grief on my own account. O that the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven, may breathe such life into my soul that I may no longer be barren nor unfruitful, but that I may pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks. For alas without this power, this life, I can do nothing. I am become as dry bones.

I have had greater power given to me to ask of God since I began my letter than for some days before. I have not time to enlarge at present, but lest it should look as if I had forgot the duty I owe to thee, am willing to send this. If my aunt does not grow worse, and it please God to permit me, I intend to go to Bristol the latter end of next week, and shall be glad to see thee there as soon as providence sees fit. When I am with the church² I hope I shall have power to write again to our dear friend at En[field Chaise] and thy brother.

With duty and much affection, I remain,
Thy weak, unworthy friend,

S. P.

Farewell in haste. Love to friend [Elizabeth] Cart.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at the / Foundry in Moorfields / London."

Postage: "18 / NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "Nov. 14 [[Sarah Perrin]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/27.

¹Her aunt, Constant (Groom) Bailward (1686–1744).

²I.e., when she is back in the supportive community of Methodists in Bristol.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Covent Garden
c. November 20, 1743¹

About an hour ago I had my friend's letter.² Oh that you would cease to be careful for me! The arrow is often pointed to wound, but to destroy is not yet. I long to be wise and to consider my latter end, but the heart of flesh is not given, and few ambitious desires are there. But love and obedience dwell not with me. I often want to grasp the globe, to make an offering of it. But how vain is this, when the demands of my long-suffering Lord, even of my sins and miseries, I will not yield to? And these flights of vanity are all the grace my boasted might has to give. While with these uncertain riches I would flatter my evil nature, "I am his and his alone!" But with tears of shame, his tender love shows me far other. I am but a looker into the vale, and all my hope is that as his mercy has brought me out of the outward court, the same shall bring me to the holiest, where my great high priest is gone before.

I am made by no one thing more sensible how much evil there is in me than by finding pleasure in the great concern you express for me under my late visitation. I ought only to be glad that you should rejoice in the will of God. But I hope it may be owing in a measure to that thorough contempt I hold myself in, at present, that makes this strong impression of gratitude in my heart. I will only say I do as I am bid and rather more in following all the directions—except refraining from mac(?). But this, if necessary, the Lord would enable me to do. I look for nothing but the disciple's sufferings, and these extremes must make them less lasting. These you would not should continue, I know. I am the most unprofitable of his servants. I start at an other day, and great and weighty have been my trials, lest I should depart from the living God.

I am just come from the [West Street] chapel, where [Charles] G[raves] has performed extremely well. The Lord hath two nights ago as wondrously delivered me out of fire as he did from the robber. And that tremendous fear hung over me three hours, as if I was going to appear before the presence of God, while I lay waiting for mercy. When soon the news at midnight was brought me; two minutes more and I should have entered into rest. For more sufferings am I reserved, though I trust not for lasting ones. I shall rejoice to hear of your prosperity. My love attends all, and may the Lord of life and power bruise Satan under your feet shortly. My whole heart says "Amen."³

G[raves] had not one word of your request of his writing to you before today, so don't be displeased at him.

J[ohn] B[ennet] is here.⁴ He desires his love to you. He and Mrs. En—(?) are not now as they have been. He thinks her puffed up. He will soon see more, I am sure. Wait the Lord's time.

Miss [Anne] P[errot] is your most affectionately.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon November]] 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/8.⁵

¹LH and her husband had come to London before the opening of Parliament on Dec. 1; at a new residence on Downing Street. Her attendance at West Street chapel suggests it was a Sunday.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³CW extracted this paragraph, minus the first sentence, in shorthand, in MARC, MA 1977/567/2.

⁴LH had recently introduced Bennet to the Wesley brothers.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 68.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford
November 21, 1743

My Dear Friend's,

Letter I just now received. My heart is melted into grief that he should think his letters have prejudiced me. No my friend, I never felt greater love to thee in my life; but no marvel if just at the time our Lord saw it was good for me to join in all outward fellowship with you the enemy of souls should raise up all his forces to prevent it. But let us no more think of what passed between us then. My faith never failed for thee. I was and am still confident the Lord is thy portion. He will remove all evil from thee and cloth thee in white linen, the righteousness of the saints. I can never doubt of it. But do not put the day afar off—he is now willing to save, why then should my dear friend say I shall know him no other than a prisoner of hope? I am otherwise persuaded. I shall know him an inheritor of the promises, a possessor of the good land, and a partaker of the divine nature.

I have not the least straitness towards thee, much less any prejudice. It has pleased God to make use of thy brother and thee to convey grace to my soul, to increase my faith, and open the mysteries of his kingdom unto me; and shall I be ungrateful for this either to God or his servants? It is my desire I never may. And if I am faithful, I never shall.

I have been of late in a dry land and have put it closely to myself whether I am now certain it was the will of God I should be baptized, and I always find an answer of peace and a longing desire to communicate. I more and more see into the benefit and blessing of this holy institute, and especially when I consider how few do remember the price that is paid for them. Is it possible we can do too much to stir up ourselves to lay hold on the Son of God? And surely this is one blessed means he himself has appointed. But alas how is it abused by the unfaithful and neglected through ignorance and want of opportunity to receive it from those who believe. O may our Lord add many more to those who do receive it worthily and make himself known unto us.

I long for the time of my going to Bristol. I meet with trials in temporal things, but I know he that hath all things in his hand cannot let me lack any thing needful for me. Was I to be stripped of all worldly goods, it seems to me that I should suffer nothing by it. But our wise provider knows how far is best to try me, and I now find he has given me power to commit all my affairs into his hands. And I doubt not but he will order them aright. I sensibly feel my grief and care is for those who injure and not for being injured. God has given me this blessing, shall we not praise him?

My aunt mends in her health and seems pretty easy to part with me. And I am certain this is not the place for me to abide in. When I get to Bristol thee mayst expect to hear from me. Don't forget me. Write as often as thee canst, and as much as thee canst, for I find God gives me the spirit of prayer when I hear from thee. I greatly desire, though not anxiously, to see thee, for I believe our meeting will be to our comfort and satisfaction. At the time of my distress on thy account many things had been darkly represented to me. But all that is passed, let it be forgotten. We may have confidence in one another, for our friendship shall endure forever.

My duty and love attend our good friend [LH] and thee, and I remain
Thy real, though unworthy, friend,

S. P.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at the / Foundry upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bradford" and "23/NO."

Endorsement: by CW: "[[Sarah Perrin]] Nov. 1743."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/32.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
December 1743

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I was glad to hear from thee,¹ but shall rejoice more to see thee because I hope it will be for good. I think I do not go back in the wilderness but this I am sure of, I advance forward very slowly. I find something wanting in everything I say and do. Yet I see our Lord condescends to forgive and accept of my weak endeavours to serve him, and in due time I hope will endow me with more power to do his will.

I have found much more enjoyment in God since I returned to Bristol, which makes me think it is good for me to be home at times. I think I never felt such happiness in my life. Yet it seems nothing to what I see is laid up in store for me. Sometimes sufferings seem to wait for me, but I know of none that can happen which would be grievous unless my Lord should withhold the light of his countenance from me. I see I have nothing to do with what may come, only to trust God from moment to moment. It is now I find the benefit of hearing the whole counsel of God declared. Whether there is one witness of full sanctification or not, I know our Lord has promised and will fulfill it to as many as seek after it diligently. But whoever attains to it I believe no one knoweth save him that receiveth it. Our friend [Elizabeth] Vigor is still waiting but [has] not receive the promise. Nancy I think grows but is at present very ill.²

Why is it my dear friend goes on his way still mourning? Is not our Lord willing to give rest to all that are weary and heavy laden? Delay not my friend, ask that thy joy may be full. Be willing the axe should be laid to the root of the tree. Lose thy life, that thou mayst find it. I would gladly suffer all things, more than I can express, would that bring thee into the paradise of God. But indeed we must die before we can enter. O may our Lord hasten this death and give thee life eternal, and grant unto thee that glorious faith which governeth all things, and make thee a pillar in the temple of God that shall go no more out.

With duty and sincere affection, I remain
Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Our friends at Stokes Croft desire to be remembered.³ My love to friend [Elizabeth] Cart and friend [Ann] Perrot.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / London."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/33.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Anne Stafford, sister of Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor.

³Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

1744

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
February 18, 1744

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Under a refreshing sense of the love of our Lord Jesus I write unto thee at this time. O how shall I describe the prayer of my heart? The desires of my soul that thine may be filled with this consolation I do but taste of. Words cannot express it, nor the natural mind comprehend, but I believe the same Spirit will speak it unto thee.

I own myself in a fault for neglecting to write to thee for so long. But the reason was this: I was at times under such a deep exercise of spirit, which rendered me almost incapable; at other times I felt an inexpressible helplessness and deadness that caused a backwardness of writing to anyone. But this I can affirm, I have not fainted nor grown weary of asking of God for all things he sees good for thee. My dear friend, he has and does give me power to plead for thee. I feel his love flow to thee and in all things I believe thou shalt be made more than conqueror. And my earnest desire is that God may shortly send thee unto us filled with the blessings of the gospel of peace, and that thy soul with every member of the body of Christ in this place may be edified together.

Before thy brother left Bristol he told me he thought it was the will of God I should be wholly at the house.¹ Fain I sought by prayer to know the mind of the Lord and I had a hope given me it would be blessed both to my self and others. But [I] continued beseeching him, if it was not for his glory, either by sickness or death and any other way he saw good, to prevent it. Last week when I was taken so ill I was ready to think he had answered me. But he saw otherwise and in his infinite goodness has restored my health and comforted my soul greatly. I think it my duty to try for a time, and then both you and I shall be more able to judge whither it will be of any real service. I know my eye is single to God in the matter. I believe it will be attended with many crosses. But if the Lord blessed my soul, which I trust he will, they will be made easy to me.

I have had more of the preachers to talk to me of late than at any time, and have been called upon both to give an answer in conversation and writing for my joining with you. And God has given me great boldness to speak the good I have received by you. O may he make up that which is lacking in me. I was yesterday at Doctor [John] Middleton's. Miss(?) Middleton expressed great love to thee and desires to be remembered by thee.² Sister [Susannah] Designe desires me to let thee know she finds great faith and power in prayer for thee and should rejoice at thy coming, believing God has a work for thee to do amongst us.

At present there is some division in the church concerning our friend Larwood's ministry,³ which I apprehend is owing to his not being well acquainted with the state of the church and not any difference in opinion from you (which some have thought). I believe at his first coming he fell in with the artful, who hold faith without obedience, and he has spoke so much upon faith and so little upon works that some have thought him of the same mind. I do not, but far otherwise.

Our friends at Stokes Croft remember kindly unto thee. Nancy [Stafford] grows in grace. Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor has not yet received the promise. She longs for thy coming. O may our Lord send thee

¹I.e., JW asked Perrin to become the housekeeper / supervisor of the New Room in Bristol.

²Perrin seems to have written "Miss", and then replaced it with "Mrs." This was either John's wife Frances (maiden name unknown), or their daughter Rebecca Middleton (b. 1727).

³Samuel Larwood (d. 1755) appears as a travelling preacher in the 1745 Minutes (see JW, *Works*, 10:159). He left the Wesleyan itinerancy in early 1754, settling as an independent minister in Southwark, where he died Nov. 1, 1755. He was apparently "on trial" as a preacher in Bristol at the time.

with the glad tidings of peace to her soul.

I have many times this week seemed not far from the kingdom. My soul has been struggling as it were into a new nature, but alas I still let the angel depart without the blessing. O may our Lord increase our faith, restore us to his image, and give us to love each other with a pure heart fervently. I should take a few lines from thee exceeding kind and am with duty and great affection

Thy friend,

S. P.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / at Newcastle."

Endorsement: by CW, "Feb. 18. 1744 / S. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/36.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
March 10, 1744

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Thy letter refreshed my soul and strengthened my faith that it was the will of God I should abide at the Horse Fair.¹ I have been here almost a fortnight and have found great peace and at times great refreshments from the Lord. I see many things which I wish was otherwise, but the Lord in his own due time I believe will make this house a house of faith.

My heart sympathizes with thee in thy troubles, but I know the Lord will deliver thee. Our faith shall be tried. I look for trouble. But God will sweeten the cup to me and I trust to thee also. He is a loving tender father, and he has all power; can he let any mischief come near to hurt those whom he loves? Suppose he should permit our bodies to endure hardship. Those that trust in him will find their joy increase as their sufferings abound. And if we should be called to lay down our life for his sake (which has been given me to think will be my calling from a sudden but sweet impression that was made upon my mind this day), will it not be the greatest of all blessings, there triumphantly to be received to glory? O my friend great tribulation, but far greater consolation and divine enjoyment, is preparing for us. I find we are members of one body. Whatever inward or outward enemies thou mayst have to wrestle with, I am confident Israel's God is thy God and his hand is full of blessings for thee. O my dear friend, let us put our whole trust in him and cleave close unto him, for his arms are spread wide to receive us.

Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor desires me to send her duty. Thy lines was a great refreshment to her soul. For at that time she was very low. She and many others long for thy coming unto us. O may our Lord send thee and bless thee unto us, and we unto thee, and I doubt not but our love will increase to each other both in purity and strength. I cannot once doubt of it being the will of God my being joined wholly unto you, neither repent of it for a moment. Yet was not the Lord to keep me, I see daily that which would both cause me to doubt and repent of it. But I feel more of his goodness unto me than I can express. O that I may receive a thankful heart also. I still wait for the blessing and expect it, but do not always watch for it. O that my God would take away all that which remaineth and fill me with himself.

Let my dear friend, if he can, write to me—if but a line, it will have its service, for my soul earnestly desires thy happiness. I feel great love to our good friend [LH]. She is often brought to my remembrance with sweetness and sympathy of grief, believing she must meet with many trials, and I know of no reason for not writing to her but the barrenness of my own soul. I find nothing in me to communicate to her which I think could possibly administer any comfort or profit. O that I may be purged and made meet for the master's use, that I may always see his will and fulfill it in all [... letter breaks off at the bottom of a page; no address portion].

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin - March 10. 1744."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/38.

¹The site of the New Room; neither CW's letter to Perrin or Elizabeth Vigor is known to survive.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
March [31?] 1744¹

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Thy brother [JW] ordered me to send his letter enclosed to Lady Huntingdon,² and I find both love and duty constrain me to make use of the same opportunity to write to thee although I have nothing worthy of communicating. I still must cry out with the prophet, “O my leanness, my leanness.”³ The load of unprofitableness is at times rather too weighty for me to bear. With strong cries and groans unutterable do I make my requests known unto God. Yet still I fall short continually of fulfilling his will. Why Lord is it thus? Thou knowest all things; thou knowest I do desire to love thee with all my heart and serve thee with all my strength. And I know thou lovest me. O hasten the time the I may fulfill thy will in all things.

When I was baptized it was then my earnest supplication I might renounce all the world, yea everything that was near and dear unto me, and be devoted wholly unto the Lord. And I have since found I have given up my kindred, so far as not for them to be any hindrance unto me. No, I will forsake their company if God will make use of me in his church. I know of nothing which I desire to keep back, yet am I altogether barren and unprofitable. How can this be? Lord show it unto me. Many ways I believe my being placed here will be blessed unto me, for I find a daily cross to be taken up, but the Lord makes it easy. I see more and more what he has done for me and what still remaineth for him to do. I am his. O let him do with me as seemeth him good, should all men, even the church of God, speak evil of me. For this I trust, my master knoweth the way which I take is with a desire to serve him in his members. O mayst thou and our dear friend [LH] pray that I may be made meet for his use.

I feel great love to thee and confidence God will bless thy coming unto us, and doubt not lest we shall rejoice in his presence together. O what am I that God, the just, the good, should thus love me. Am I not a base vile ungrateful creature? I see, I feel, I am. Yet the Son of God, he that is fairer than the sons of men, the chiefest among ten thousand, loveth me. I find it spread over my soul and I can in a low degree (though not as I ought) praise him. O the grief for that I am, and the happiness for what he has done for me, how can I describe? It is impossible to reveal it to another. But all this he knoweth right well and will perfect that which remaineth.

It must be so. God cannot give these strong desires and not fulfill them. Surely I shall sink into him and become one spirit with the Lord, and my dear friends shall rejoice in their labour of love for me. I now look upon myself more immediately under your care, and no otherwise than as a servant to all. It is your duty to speak my faults plainly unto me, and I doubt not but God will greatly bless your advice or reproof to my soul. I find thy brother's being here stirred me up to be more earnest, and thine also will surely be blessed. O may my eye always be kept single to his glory who hath called me. I have been once to receive the sacrament at Church and think to receive it again tomorrow. I found great power and desire given me to pray for the ministers. I am not yet convinced whether it be the will of the Lord I should go to [the] Church [of England] but I find perfect resignation in it.

Our friend [Elizabeth] Vigor is taken very ill today. Her duty is to thee and hope thou wilt remember her. I should take it as a great favour to hear from thee, for absence has not at all lessened my love to thee or faith for thee. And I pray God to fill thy soul with all his fullness.

I believe friend Vigor would be much benefited by a few lines from thee. She wants a little quiet, I trust this illness is sent for good. With duty and sincere affection to thyself and our good friend, I

¹The letter is clearly sent to London, and CW did not arrive there until Mar. 27. Perrin is apparently writing on a Saturday, as she mentions taking the sacrament at church the next day.

²This letter is not known to survive. JW was in Bristol briefly Mar. 27–28, when he could have left the letter with Perrin.

³Isa. 24:16.

conclude

Thy weak unworthy friend,

S. P.

My love to brother [Thomas] Butts. I have not time to write at present but please to thank him for his letter. My love to all our friends at the Foundry. May God bless them and send thee shortly unto us. Farewell.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin - March]] 1744." (Also later written out in longhand.)

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/37.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[April 1744]

My Dear Friend,

I sweetly hoped we should have seen thee here. But as we are disappointed I took it exceeding kind of thee to write.¹ Greatly do I desire thy perfect happiness. I love thee with an unfeigned love and such as I am not ashamed to testify to the whole world. I still groan under the burden of my own unrenewed nature. This day have I deeply felt my unthankfulness and ingratitude to almighty God. His love is infinite to my soul, but alas I make him no return. I find no other beloved. I feel no desire but to fulfill his will. Yet in every word and action I plainly see I fall short of it. Therefore sorrow often encompasses me. Yet can I put my trust in the Lord, for I know he will set my heart at liberty and it will become my meat and drink to do his perfect will.

I cannot think thy ministry will soon be at an end. God is preparing thee for a greater work, for the edifying his body, for the perfecting his saints. And we my dear friend shall surely love him with all our heart, and each other more and more for his sake. Never did I find a greater nearness in spirit to thee than I have this day. And him whom my soul loveth I know loveth thee also. So long as I have power with God to pray for thee, so long will my love be kept alive and increase, though we was never to see each other more.

I have stronger assurances I am in the place my master has approved for me. I would fain do his will here in all things, but I am but a blind child. May the God whom I desire to serve give me wisdom and preserve me from all the snares that surround me, that I may be a stumbling to none. And may ye have comfort in me and rejoice in your labour of love for my soul. I believe some had rather I was not here. Others are glad. Neither of it has any effect upon me to hurt me. I earnestly desire to be made humble and I know he will make the way for me to do his will here as he sees good. There is such a very hot press that some in the church have thought it would be proper, if it could be, to get a protection for the preachers, for they are very much threatened by some through malice, especially Thomas Maxfield. Whether it would not be more for the glory of God by a prudent care to prevent it I leave to thee and our good friend [LH]. But I was desired to mention it by some who thought his Lordship would grant such a protection if thee thinks it is right. I should be glad if Stephen Maxfield has a protection also, for he is very serviceable to the church.²

By all the inquiry I can make I don't find but very few go to hear G[eorge] W[hitefield]. And indeed my dear friend, bad as we are, I believe we are better than some represents us to our ministers. And I see clearly that it is very wrong to lay unnecessary burdens upon you, which I believe some have done ignorantly and others through prejudice. For I am well satisfied God has a chosen people amongst whom he delights in. In haste at this time I must conclude, with duty to our dear friend. I should be glad hear how she has her health. Accept of duty and love from

Thy friend,

S. P.

Endorsement: "[[April]] 1744 / [[Sarah Perrin]]" (Also later written out in longhand.)

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/41.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Stephen Maxfield (fl. 1740s) was apparently the brother of Thomas.

From Howell Harris

May 25, 1744

My Dear, Dear Brother,

I long to know how the work of the Lord within you and in your home does prosper. My inmost soul longs for an increase of all gifts, graces, and success. And may all your enemies fly before you as chaff before the wind. And may you be the spiritual father of thousands and ten thousands. Should the Lord incline you to give a few moments' time in sending me a line, I should be thankful. If not, I am not offended. My love is free, as my Lord's is to me. And if my friends' love won't be so, soon my corruptions will rob me of my friends.

Blessed by God, our Lord has not done working in poor Wales. The door is opening still wider, and the opposition increases. When Satan sees one set of his soldiers won't do, he'll stir up another force. His plan now is to send us all with Uzziah.¹ But the tree has taken too deep root to be so easily destroyed. The work is of God and shall it therefore stand. The Lord reigns in hell as well as in heaven. Let the earth rejoice and let us be glad. Many great sights have you had, I am persuaded, since I saw you, to the mystery of love in God and the mystery of iniquity in us. I think that both are unfathomable. Though I am sought for narrowly, and though I discourse openly and go about publically, hitherto no hands have laid upon me; though they took the young man that went with me you know.

I told you about a twelve month ago some thoughts I had about marrying, and that I promised before I should marry to send you word. And according to my promise, I now send you my present thoughts. For above three years I think, after I was first awakened from a hatred I had in me to uncleanness, and from an opinion that it was impossible to marry and not to sink to the beastly nature, I had entertained a deep prejudice to the state of marriage in general and had fixed a resolution never to entertain such a thought myself in particular. And in that error of mine I abode till I did fall upon 1 Timothy 4:3. That stopped my mouth from speaking against it. But I was determined from a sense of my own corruption that I never would [marry] because, though I saw now marriage in itself was honourable and lawful, as it was an institution of God for us when in the state of purity, I thought I could not keep the marriage bed undefiled. Till some years ago it came instantaneously to me as there was such a thing as to marry in God, and to be kept by the power of God pure and spotless in their conversation as Adam and Eve was, though I thought the body of sin remained. And then I felt a cry in me that if the Lord would so order it that I might marry so, I was willing to marry. At another time, about five years ago or upward, it was set before me how utterly unfit I was to choose for myself if I was to marry—I had no wisdom to judge who was proper for me to answer the end that God ordained marriage for. And then I was called to prayer, and has a present power of faith given that moment to give it up to the Lord to choose a helpmeet for me. And on that faith I had power to rest to this moment. And now I think the time is not far that he had determined me to marry. As for the person, I have sufficient reasons to be satisfied about this two years and a half. She is about 29 years of age and has been called by grace about seven years ago.² She has been brought to my heart, I am persuaded, by the Lord about five or six years ago. But I always resisted and opposed. Till about two years and seven months ago, when the Lord began to open the way by another, that knew nothing of what was in my heart, and that too after I had a few months before, when there was necessity laid on my spirit to speak to her and I feared least it may be my own will, prayed in truth that if the motion in my heart [... a page or so of the copy is no longer extant].

[...] the fear of man indeed bringeth a snare. And since Mr. Gwynne³ wrote to a proctor to demand the license, there being no legal hindrance, and what will be the present issue I am helped to leave to God and rest in his will. Many great lessons I have learnt already from and by means of this

¹I.e., to death; see Isa. 6:1.

²Anne Williams (1718–70), whom Harris married this year.

³Marmaduke Gwynne (1691–1769), father of Sarah Gwynne, CW's future wife.

affair. And I believe it will turn out much to God's glory and his church's good, for the enemy rages horribly. I think I have hid nothing from, but simply and honestly unbosomed my whole soul to you as to a brother, knowing that your desire to hear from me on this head did purely arise from a concern for the glory of our Lard and the good of his people and mine. I think I feel what it is in my spirit, though not outwardly, to marry in the Lord and for the Lord, and what it is to have a wife and be as if I had one not. And indeed there are many privileges and blessings communicable to us, as well as many lessons to be learnt, by this means, which we cannot receive by any other, thereby filling us for our various places. And for this, among other, reasons I am obliged to go to the dust and bless God for the whole affair, and for all the crosses I met and shall meet hereby.

I have been tedious, but could not well lay the whole in its true light before you shorter. I am, with a grateful remembrance of all your love,

Yours, the most wicked and unworthy yet exceeding happy in our dear and common Lord,

H. Harris

This day, nine years, I had the first saving light of the precious Jesus. Be thankful for me. My love to dear brother John [Wesley], etc.

Source: Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #1185.

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
June 15, 1744

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Having just heard of this opportunity, I think it my duty to write a few lines. Barren as my soul is, she bears some love to those who have been instruments of good to her. I can find no words to describe my state such a mixture of grief and consolation of spirit none can conceive but those that have felt it.

I know not what way to stir myself up to be in earnest. I move so very slowly on. I am tempted to think I shall not enter the good land until I am near eternity. But I believe I shall never rest satisfied on this side Jordan.

I find a desire at times to hear from thee because I don't remember I ever received a line but it quickened me to prayer. And I would gladly partake of every burden indeed. My dear friend, my love does not decrease to thee. O that I had power given me to pray without ceasing, for I greatly desire thy soul's perfection. Nancy Perrot tells me her soul now grows in grace, but all the time she believed herself in the rest was lost time to her.¹ O that God would convince everyone that so deceiveth itself, I cannot help looking for greater things than I have yet met with. Surely those who have Christ dwelling in them must be as a flame communicating heat to all around them. I believe if either thee or thy brother was to make some stay in Bristol it would be unspeakably blessed. May God direct you in all things right. There seems to me a want of more true supplication and prayer I find no ordinance so much blessed to my soul as when we meet for this end, but we must watch thereunto or this also may sink into a form.

My duty to our dear friend. I have not seen Mrs. Wright today, but am now going to her.² She complains of my not talking enough to her and I think I talk a great deal to her for me. We all want to see thee. Accept of duty and affection from

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin / June 15. 1744."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/44.

¹I.e., the time during which she believe she had attained Christian perfection stymied her growth.

²Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright was in Bristol, convalescing at the Hotwells.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[c. June 22,] 1744¹

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

God will strengthen us to bear all things. O that I may share with you. I do not desire a life of ease, but I would fain be of some little help to you. Therefore you should always tell me wherein I could possibly serve you. Don't let us grow weary or faint in our minds. Though many are ungrateful, there are many also who would be willing to follow you unto prison or death. I feel the blessing more and more of my union to you. And I see by faith, if I keep my eye single, God is preparing me for a fellow helper with you. The love he has given me to you is not for a share to my soul, for it is pure and peaceable. But I can't describe it. It has no desire but that the work of our Lord may be promoted, that we may be of one heart and judgment in all things, and love as his saints loveth—or rather does he loveth—us.

I do not, nor have not, deceived ye in anything that I know of myself, and I pray all my secret faults may be discovered to me, for I cannot rest without all his righteousness fulfilled in me.

Let me, dear friend, prevail with thee to write a line or two to Nancy Perrot, if thee does not come soon, for she takes it hard and the enemy tempts her to think she is slighted. Poor brother Healy seems so dejected, my heart aches for him.² I believe he is truly sincere. If I can serve him by your order I am willing, O may I never think myself perfect in love till it flows freely to all the members of Christ's body. My kind love to brother [Thomas] Richards. I believe I shall rejoice to see thee. O may the Comforter never leave thee, but may every bitter cup be sweetened unto thee. Great and precious promises shall be fulfilled in thee. Yet a little while and the evil one shall have no power to touch or disquiet thee. Thou are the redeemed of the Lord and in blessing he will bless thee.

I can hardly see what I have writ[ten]. Remember me to our good friend. My duty and love attends you. Love to all friends,

S. P.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin 1744."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/40.

¹Dated by evidence that CW was in London, and Ann Perrot had returned to Bristol. Thomas Richards was in London with CW for the first Conference, which began June 25.

²John Healey (fl. 1740–50) aligned with Methodism in Newcastle by early 1743, when he served as a guide to JW (see JW, *Journal*, Apr. 1, 1743, *Works*, 19:321). He had a tendency to defend the cause physically, leading CW to send him out of Newcastle on Feb. 19, 1744 to avoid a mob (see *MS Journal*).

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
June [c. 29,] 1744¹

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I rejoice to hear from thee,² but should much more rejoice to see thee. If it was possible for thy brother and thee to visit the classes in Bristol together, I believe it would be an unspeakable blessing to the church. We want something to rouse us. I am fully persuaded we have many choice members amongst us, but believe if you could spend some time with us they would increase in number and stature.

Indeed I may say my being of one heart and judgment with you is the Lord's doing and is marvellous in my eye. I bear in my mind a constant remembrance of the blessing your ministry and conversation and prayers has been to me. How then can I forbear loving you? O that our Lord would make me helpful to you.

Mrs. [Mehetabel] Wright is now at sister William's.³ I will endeavour to make all things easy to her and I hope her being there will not be for the worse. What time I can spare I think to spend with her. I find my heart knit to her and if she can bear with our forgetfulness we shall do pretty well. But I think all our heads put together will hardly make one.

I am sorry to hear thy brother [JW] intends to stay so long from us. I am sure his presence is wanted here. Brother Wheatley's mouth is as it were stopped.⁴ A preacher you can depend on is greatly wanted amongst us for many reasons.

I thought to have sent these by brother [Thomas] Williams; but it being so uncertain when he'll reach London, and thinking it proper you should know he has left us, I chose this way. O that the hearts of all who preach the everlasting gospel were established in righteousness.

I find a great want in myself. I am seeking but not striving. O that everything was embittered unto me, so that I was lowly as my master. I can hardly receive this gladness of heart which I have felt lately as, my friend, I had much rather mourn—because I see continual occasion for it.

Our friends at Stokes Croft desire to be remembered to you. Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor says why she don't write to thee is because she hopes to see thee very soon. May it be according to her hope and our desire, and may God bless and prosper all thy ways.

Brother Williams is set out towards London.

With duty and affection I conclude,

Thy friend to serve thee,

S. P.

Friend Vigor's duty. Love to friend [Elizabeth] Cart, brother [Thomas] Richards, and [Thomas] Maxfield, etc.

Endorsement: by CW, "June 1744 Sar. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/43.

¹Dated by ref. to Thomas Williams returning to London; see CW, *Journal*, July 2, 1744.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Likely Anne Williams, an early band leader in Bristol.

⁴James Wheatley (d. 1775) became a travelling Methodist preacher about 1742.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
July 3, 1744

My Dear Friend,

Dost [thou] purposely seek to shun us as almost to go out of thy way to miss us? I know it will give great offense to come so near as Bath and not visit us, if but for one night.¹ and I hear that is the direct road to St. Ives. My good friend, cast us not off. We do not forsake thee. If thee dost not tarry with us, let us see thee. For as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend. Come and leave a blessing with us, that we may attend thee with our prayers and be stirred up to make supplication for thee. We have no contentions in our family. We love one another, therefore can bear with one another. But come thou and give a word of encouragement to go on.

I find but very little going forward, but I dare not say I go backward. And I think it is impossible to stand quite still. I want to be in earnest, to feel a holy violence; but an indolence of spirit still cleaveth to me. Don't forget to ask God for me that I may love him with all my heart and serve him with all my strength, for I see no happiness ought beside doing his will.

Mrs. [Mehetabel] Wright and I go on very well together, and I observe nothing but that she is easy where she is. But it is not in our power to accommodate her as I could wish, or indeed as I think she requires in her state of health.

I have no opportunity to try to convince sister Rawlins she is no new creature. Nor I have no inclination to converse with those that are esteemed so—for from the conversation I have had with all that they have thought they have attained I have not charity enough to keep me from doubting of their report. I look for greater things. I know I dare not allow myself the liberty some of them take. I should be glad to believe it if I could, but which I cannot. The less I say or think of it the better. Only this I wish, I may never more have any recommended to me as perfect until I have charity enough to blind me to their imperfection. For I must seek for the promises I find written, and not what I see fulfilled in others. I cannot help thinking those that have Christ dwelling in them will warm all around them, unless they are as the hearth in the desert which knoweth not when good comes. And perhaps this may be the case with me when I am with them. I have not been mistaken in some but I had rather be mistaken in the rest than they should prove as most of them have. It is an unspeakable blessing to know our own state in Christ, and I believe the mistakes of others will make me more watchful over myself, and make me more diligently seek to discover all the secret pride which is lodged within me.

Our friends at Stokes Croft join with me in duty and friend [Elizabeth] Vigor hopes she shall see thee soon. I remain

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

Pray remember me to our good friend [LH] in the way thee knowest best; it is not kind in thee never to mention her, for I am sure I desire her happiness.

Address: "To / Charles Wesley / in / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin July]] 3, 1744" and (later) "June [sic.] 3 1744 Sar. Perrin /
Doubting the witness of perfection."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/42.

¹CW was persuaded to stop by Bristol July 10–12, on his way to Cornwall.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Enfield Chase]
[c. July 8, 1744¹]

My Good Friend,

Being ill and in pain when I went to bed last night, it obliged me to take a physical medicine, which confines me this morning. I cannot say I am well, but let the Lord be praised in all his acts. I trust you will remember me in your prayers, and I live in hopes to see you after chapel to make me a sharer in the supper of our Lord also. Will Mr. Erskine² in his way home call with you.

Farewell. May the Lord be your everlasting treasure.

Address: "For / The Rev'd / Mr Wesley."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/2/[100].

¹CW's first known connection with James Erskine was Apr. 29, 1744 (see *MS Journal*); but CW was leaving London at that point. The next Sunday that he is recorded preaching in London was July 8. By Oct. 1744 the relationship of CW and LH had been broken by the Elizabeth Story accusations.

²James Erskine (1679–1754) served as Lord Justice Clerk of the Court of Session 1710–34, then resigned to enter parliament. He had recently been drawn into the evangelical revival.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[c. July 20, 1744¹]

My Dear and Honoured Friend's,

Kind letters I received.² O may the God of Israel reward thee for all thy labour of love to his people and bless thee at all times with the consolation of his Spirit. I feel such a barrenness of soul as cannot be expressed. I find a necessity to talk more of temporal concern than I have been used to and it seems to me as if my desire grows colder towards God. Yet I do not find any other desire to have place in me. I would fain do all that my hands find to do as done unto him, but my thoughts continually wander from him. How to be still and know God, and perform my duty to his people, as yet is not given me. And though I don't find that my heart is given to other lovers, yet I see clearly if all mine affection was unto God I should continually be sensible of pure praise and prayer arising from such an affection. Quicken me by thy Spirit oh my God. Supply my lamp with oil. Make me fervent in Spirit that I may give glory unto thee.

Our brother [Thomas] Richards set out for Wales this morning. He thanks thee for thine, but had not time to write.³ I see I want nothing to make me happy in the station providence has placed me but a heart to praise God. O that I had but life and truth in the inward parts. I know it would be my delight to serve his children because I love you all with an unfeigned love. We have no hard thoughts I believe of each other in the house.⁴ Peace and concord is amongst us and I trust will abide with us. Brother Capiter improves in his talents, but fervency of zeal is wanting.⁵ We seek but do not strive. Remember to pray for us. We do not forget to make mention of thee. I am assured God will deliver thy soul out of the hands of all thine enemies. Good will be brought out of all this evil.

O may the God of Jacob strengthen, comfort, and perfect thy soul. Fear no evil for he is with thee. Put thy whole trust in him, for his arm supports thee. I am still more and more united to you, the loving [... manuscript cuts off at bottom of page; no address portion].

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin / J 1744."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/39.

¹CW's annotation could be June or July 1744; the mention of receiving more than one letter fits better during CW's preaching tour in Cornwall in July.

²These letters are not known to survive.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴I.e., the New Room in Bristol.

⁵Thomas Capiter (1720–72), a native of Lincolnshire, was converted at age 18 and considered becoming a travelling preacher. He ended up serving the area around Grimsby as a local preacher. See JW's letter to Capiter of Feb. 6, 1753 (*Works*, 26:500); and JW's comment on his death in his *Journal*, July 22, 1772 (*Works*, 22:342–43).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
September 5, 1744

It is ever matter of rejoicing to me to find the gracious God is still calling sinners to redemption. The earth is full of wickedness! O that the inhabitants would learn righteousness.

I have seen Mr. [Edward] Ellis twice. I think he grows more in grace as is evidenced by his progress in humility. He has great experience in the spiritual life. He strongly holds the “suffering all things,”¹ and literally holds turning the left cheek, the less smote. All evil and darkness only, I am convinced, arises from the weak and proud starts of young believers. I feel much consolation that I have lately been tried, and I find such a liberty in having *nothing to do but* to bear all things that it cannot be expected. In the school at Melbourne the minister² and the court have gained by lies all power at present,³ and I rather feel sorrow when I reflect upon these words which must be, “Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. I will repay”⁴

A man came from Nottingham in the name of threescore who wanted to have flown in the magistrate’s face because he would not let them meet every night. In a morning he would not prevent them. I told him instead of revenge for all of them, go to him and return him thanks for the freedom they have; and that as far as their conscience will let them, they will be obedient to him in all things. Strange advice some of your people would think, who think because they serve God they are to rule all mankind instead of being servants to all. I know nothing would disappoint the devil like taking as closely our Lord’s advice. Who can harm you if you do that which is right?⁵

Mr. Ellis and I, the Lord suffering it, are determined neither by word or deed to let a hair of our enemy’s head to suffer either by us or any means whatsoever that we can prevent. I am silent upon this matter to all who think this may be carrying the matter higher than the gospel supposes, but I see it to be the acts(?⁶) of our Lord and this is enough for me.

I wrote to your brother that I thought the latter part of the dedication he means approved is teemed full of flights and had nothing of simplicity in it.⁷ I wrote to him that the first part (before the character was touched upon) was much the properest and that only with the addition of “your humble servant” was quite sufficient. The shorter and plainer I think the best. I returned that part of the first only, hoping he would not think of adding the rest. I trust the Lord will more and more increase in you the spirit of meekness and humility, and with the (?⁸) he has made use of you for turning (others to?) himself, you may enjoy a blessed (eternity?).

I think you may depend upon rough usage from Ox;⁹ be prepared against your adversaries.

¹Cf. 1 Cor. 9:12.

²Rev. John Ward was vicar of Melbourne 1732–56.

³A charity school in Melbourne, Debyshire, had been established by a endowment of Lady Elizabeth Hastings (1682–1739); LH was trying to move it in a Methodist direction.

⁴Deut. 32:35.

⁵See 1 Pet. 3:13.

⁶The word is very difficult to read; CW appears to render it “acts” in his shorthand copy.

⁷JW’s dedication of the three volume *Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems* to LH, which is dated August 1744. There is no evidence he shortened it.

⁸a small portion of the manuscript is torn away by the wax seal.

⁹Short for Oxford??

Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

Address: “To / The Rev. Mr. Charles / Wesley at the new-school / in the Horse Fair / Bristol.”

Post Marks: “5 / SE,” “Free Huntingdon.”

Endorsement: “[September Lady Huntingdon]] 1744.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/16. See also CW’s polished and abridged shorthand copy in MARC, MA 1977/567/2, p. 18b.¹⁰

¹⁰An expansion of the shorthand was published in Maddox, “Treasure-Trove,” 142–43.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
Thursday [October 4(?), 1744]

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

How shall we sufficiently praise God for his care over us? For though the enemy pushed some at us, he had not power to wound us. Are we not confirmed our friendship is upon a right foundation when all the powers of hell could not prevail to break it? I believe it is very right to write freely to me.¹ It increases my love and earnestness with God for thee. Gladly would I bear a part of thy burden. It does not appear at all strange to me a minister should be doubly tempted. Is it not for the interest of our subtle adversary to hound our pastors? But he that knows you will be sifted makes intercession for thee and will preserve thy soul in safety.

My dear friend, think on the exceeding weight of glory these momentary afflictions are preparing thee for. The refreshings from the presence of the Lord will come, and what will these tribulations be to us when we are possessed of all that is good and all that is lovely. Had not God given me an evidence of things not seen, I believe I had never joined in this fellowship. But my satisfaction increases more and more. I want a settled inward waiting upon God, constantly to feel him in my heart whilst my hands are employed.

I seem more at home for these few days than I have ever done in this house. For sister Williams went on Monday night to lie in the church yard, without saying anything to me, and returned no more, left us to shift as we could. I have found a confidence today and I trust it is right that if I should not find quite so much fervency of spirit or sense of divine love whilst I have more care of temporal concerns, as long as my eye is single, I shall not lose ground. Yea and I felt a resignation to part with a degree of sensible love so I might anyway be useful to the church.

Thy brother's letter was very satisfactory to me.² If I know my own heart, I would bear any cross rather than do anything contrary to your judgment. O may our God always increase and bless my affection to you.

My good friend, I would write more if time would permit. The Lord I know is on thy side. The gates of the New Jerusalem are open to receive thee. Press forward, for a crown of glory shall be given unto thee.

Let me know where I shall write again and when we may expect thy brother. With duty to you both and love to all our Foundry friends, I remain

Thy poor, unworthy friend,

S. P.

Our friend at Stokes Croft desire to be remembered to thee.³

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin Oct. 1744."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/45.

¹This is likely referring to CW's poetic "Address" to Perrin, c. Sept. 30, 1744, written while she was inclined to believe the charges of Elizabeth Story. This helps account for why no letter from Perrin to CW survives between July 20, 1744 and the current letter.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bradford]
December 1, 1744

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

I would fain write but my unprofitable mind tells me I can administer nothing to thee. I am but a lukewarm seeker. What is the hindering thing? I can hardly perceive I go forward. I am far, very far from what I see a Christian calling. Lately I have not kept so close to God in fervent prayer as I ought. But I hope the time passed shall suffice, for with my whole heart I would fain seek his righteousness.

I never saw more of the goodness of God to me. One continual blessing has my life been. But I have not yet given up myself unto him. I see the depth of my ingratitude, but do not feel it as in times passed. My soul is not disur[bed], and I fear this easy indolent state more than all the sorrow I ever felt in my life. Lord, thou knowest what way best to deal with me. Learn me the lesson of thy cross and make me a true disciple.

I came to Bradford last Wednesday. I found my aunt much worse than I expected.¹ The enemy at first would have disturbed my peace by making me think it was my duty to be at home and to be here too. But I soon saw the Lord requires no more of us than we are able to perform, and until my aunt is a little recovered I believe it is very right I should be with her, and I think she mends every day. I find thy lines a comfort to me.² Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for though many rise up against thee, the Holy One of Israel is with thee and will preserve thee to the end. Fear not, we must be humble before Christ is exalted in us; and if all evil is spoken of thee falsely, great will be thy reward in the kingdom of glory.

My heart is more and more united to you, and it is not want of love but my own barrenness of soul and my time being very much taken up that has prevented my writing oftener.

Our friends at Stokes Croft desired to join in duty. I left poor Nancy [Stafford] very ill but fervent in spirit. I believe she will become a mother in Israel.

Ask of God my friend that I may be helpful to you, that I may receive wisdom from above to know his will and to do it with all my might, and always look upon me as your servant for his sake. O may his Spirit rest upon you and make ye perfect in every word and work.

Farewell,

S. P.

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 1. 1744 S. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/46.

¹Constant (Groom) Bailward (1686–1744).

²This letter is not known to survive.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bradford]
December 22, 1744

My Honoured Friend,

It was not long after I wrote(?) to thee, without drinking of that cup which I thought would be good for me to drink of, I have been afflicted and it has been good. O may I always praise his name. After a very painful passage, in assurance of a blessed eternity, my dear friend departed this life on Wednesday morning.¹ She is to be interred tomorrow but in order to fulfill the will of the deceased I shall continue here until the beginning of the week after next. I find it a great trial but the comforter has been with me and given me fresh desires wholly to devote the little time allotted me to his service.

O that I could every moment set before my eye the example of him in whom the Father was always well pleased. What a pattern of meekness and humility should I then be. But alas how far short do I fall of it. But shall we not be more despised my dear friend, and will not this make us more humble? Surely great things the Lord has already done and he will not leave us till he has fulfilled every promise unto us.

I hope I shall be made helpful to you. But was I to look at my own ability I should despair of it, so weak, so poor that I often think there is none like me. Yet my Lord has preserved me from the beginning from things which I have seen the strong both amongst the Quakers and our people fall into. O that I may ever see myself as I am, and not think I have attained what I have not. Lord give unto me a lowly heart and let me suffer whatever seemeth good unto thee.

My spirits have been very low in this late trial, which was partly owing to illness of body. But prayer at all times relieved them and I think I have seen my own rebellious nature and the goodness of God clearer than ever. I am unworthy to be one of his hired servants, yet he makes me heir of all. But I want a heart capable of praising him.

I believe if thee had known how great my trials have been, thee would have prayed for me and writ[ten] to me.² But perhaps it was better for me to receive no comfort but from God alone. O that I may place all my affection on him and my whole trust in him.

Endorsement: by CW, "Sarah Perrin Dec. 22. 1744."
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/47.

¹Constant (Groom) Bailward was buried Dec. 23, 1744 in the Quaker cemetery.

²CW's letter to a "friend" on Dec. 17, 1744 was likely to Perrin. Given he sent it from Epworth and she was in Bradford rather than Bristol, it is understandable it had not made it to her yet.

1745

From James Erskine

1745

“on the disputed doctrines of particular and universal redemption — subject treated in a clear and judicious manner”

Source: Description in inventory of Erskine’s manuscripts, The National Archives of Scotland (ref. GD 124/15/1642); current location of the original letter is unknown; cf. *WHS* 58 (2012): 264–75.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[February 1745]

My Dear Friend,

Our friend Meriton is just returned from Wilshire weary and unfit to write tonight, but sends his love.¹ I missed him much this week. I find great nearness of affection to him and love to converse with him. I grow more and more a housekeeper, and he likes to stay at home. But we want to have thee with us.

I hope we shall hear thy health is restored and a time set when we shall see thee. I long for you both to leave London for a season. I believe God will bless your absence there both to your s(elves)² and many others.

I don't f(orget) thee, nor believe ever shall. I seem to find a continual sense of the blessing of your acquaintance. I see it more and more. I can say even in this God giveth not as the world giveth. The friendships contracted by his providence are benefits indeed. I feel it so to me.

I find my outward strength increased for a few days passed much, and I am ready to think we shall live some years and be made meet for our master's use. I cannot doubt but our friendship will continue to eternity. The foundation thereof standeth sure. I cannot say how much I love you, but I still desire to be your servant for his sake all my days. With duty to you I remain

Thy affectionate friend,

S. P.

My kind love to brother [Thomas] Butts. I often think of him. I hope to write soon to brother [Thomas] Richards. My love is to all our brethren in the family. In haste, farewell.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin]] Feb. 1745"; added later "S. Perrin."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/48.

¹Rev. John Meriton (1698–1753) was ordained deacon in 1723 to serve as curate to his stepfather, the rector of Oxborough, Norfolk. In 1740 he served as a hired clergyman in the Isle of Man, arousing some opposition because of his evangelical preaching. By 1744 Meriton was closely associated with the Wesley brothers, and attended their first Conference that year. See CW's appreciative hymn at the time of Meriton's death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 28–29.

²A small portion is torn away; the missing text is suggested.

From John Haime

Bruges
March 6, [1745]

Dear Brothers,

Having received so many instances of your love and friendship, of your sincere regard for the promulgation of the gospel and for the eternal good and welfare of my soul, I think myself in duty bound to acquaint you that Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all who will believe, is daily offered in this garrison with great success. Our number daily increases. And the Lamb smiles upon our meetings. The cross is bore with greatest fortitude, being strengthened by the invisible operations of undistinguished grace. In short, the work is carried on throughout the army in a surprising manner.

The little flock in Ghent flourishes, and they have almost a perpetual addition. A regiment which marched from this place to Audenard,¹ having almost all of this society in it, has been highly favoured. In so much that the number is now upwards of 40, in the space of eight weeks. So boundless is the free grace of God to a rebellious army. And though I am sensible you cannot be ignorant of our proceedings, and what opposition this doctrine of justification by faith alone meets with in a Romish country, by reason of the natives speaking English (a great many of them) tolerably well. As also the number of British Romish clergy which are residing in Flanders. Yet our Saviour crowns us with wonderful success. In so much that our own chaplains are turned our persecutors, and the scourge of their tongues is a constant dish. But the roaring lion is obliged to quit the field and give way to the Lion of the tribes of Judah.

I am lost in admiration that such a poor unworthy, illiterate² wretch as I should be made of instrument, the first instrument, in so glorious a work. Yet thanks be to my exalted saviour. My strength is self proportioned to my day. And I find my faith daily stronger. The house of Saul is still waxing weaker, but the house of David prospers and flourishes. How shall I praise my God for all his mercies unto me?

We received the books you sent us, and are bound to pray for you, which is the most suitable return we can make. In the meantime we humbly desire the prayers of all the children of God under your care. Sister Thompson is safe arrived. And we rejoice to hear of the glorious success the gospel meets with in our native country. My kind love to Mrs. Cleaver. In my last letter except one I made mention of my being pressed in spirit to come over to England. But there is no possibility in me of getting my discharge, though I am persuaded the Lord has something for me to do there. And what to do in it I cannot tell, but shall wait your advice. And, my dear brothers, let me entreat you to favour me with a letter, which may be (through the blessing of God) a means to establish and confirm this little branch of the church. From

Your unworthy brother,

John Haime

I have been sore chastised by sickness, but it has pleased the Lord to raise me up again. Since this wonderful work has begun in the army, the Lord has raised up six labourers in his vineyard besides myself, one of which has been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.³ But it has pleased the Lord to cast down all all his worldly wisdom, and also to take away the fear of man from him. So that he now preaches free grace boldly—but writes all his sermons.

Address: “To The Rever’nd / Mr John or Charles Wesley / at the Foundry / near Upper Moorfields / London.”

Postmarks: “BRUGES” & “18/MR.”

¹I.e., Oudenarde, Belgium.

²Haime may mean that he lacks a formal degree. His spelling and grammar are fairly standard.

³I.e., has a formal theological education; see Acts 22:3.

Endorsement: by CW, “Haynes [[March]] 6, 1745 / Success in Flanders.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/69.⁴

⁴Transcription published in *WMM* 73 (1850): 1273–74; excerpt included in *Works*, 26:123.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
[c. April 10, 1745¹]

My Dear Friend,

Nancy Stafford desires me to let thee know she rather grows better, though continues very weak. She thinks much of thee and says she felt the benefit of prayer and hopes thee will still remember her. Her duty is to thee and her love to thy fellow travellers.

I hope we shall hear soon of your safety. We miss you and shall be glad to see thee return to us soon. In the meantime, my good friend I hope will take up his cross and lodging at the Foundery. For so many reasons do I desire it.

Betty Holder met with me this morning.² It was her cross and ours. I see more than I did the necessity of that separation. They are straightened in their own bowels and it is time they should be enlarged.

I have felt yesterday and today my great weakness. I should be glad if I could let my friends see me as I see myself. I know many eyes are upon me,³ and I think I would rather have grief—nay, anguish of Spirit for my companion to the grave—than by one unguarded word or action be an occasion of stumbling to the least in the church. Almost everything which I intended to shun in this life I think happens to me. Quiet and unobserved was my aim of life, but the Lord hath allured me in this way and I now can see no way to escape. My hand is put to the plough and I dare not look back. I think I find more enemies to fight with than for many years. But I have confidence the Lord will not let me suffer loss. I can't explain my helplessness, but he that is mighty to save enables me to look up unto him. O my friend, remember to ask God wisdom for me.

Sometimes I think I will praise God for I have felt nothing of this or that evil for a long while which I hear others groan under. But alas, what is this I feel—the root of all iniquity, and I know not how soon every unholy desire may revive again. How shall I be thankful enough for what the Lord hath already done and yet see how little is done in comparison of what remaineth?

With duty and real affection, I remain,

Thy friend,

S. P.

My love to thy fellow travellers. Please to tell brother [Thomas] Butts we have given his penknife and sheath to Stephen Maxfield to put up. My love to friend [Elizabeth] Cart. Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor, etc. send their duty. May the God of Jacob dwell with thee. Farewell.

Thursday. Nancy Nowell had a very dangerous passage, but is got home safe.⁴

Endorsement: by CW, "S Perrin 1745."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/49.

¹Thomas Butts had accompanied CW to visit Bristol Mar. 24–Apr. 8, 1745. They left Apr. 9.

²Elizabeth Holder was converted under the preaching of JW in Apr. 1739 in Bristol. See JW to James Hutton, Apr. 26, 1739, *Works*, 25:636.

³Possibly heightened by the current accusations against CW, encouraged by Thomas Williams.

⁴Ann Nowell, of Cardiff, had taken the ferry at the Passage after visiting Bristol.

From Elizabeth Winter

April 15, 1745

Sir,

A short account of the death of Ann Winter, a girl of 15 years.¹ On Friday, April the 5th, being at work, she was taken with a violent pain in her arm, which continued till Tuesday, April the 9th. The family going to the [New] Room, to take their leave of the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley, returning home found her under great conflict of soul. The enemy thrust sore at her, that she might fall. But the Lord was her helper. Wednesday, April the 10th, she found great comfort in meeting the class. Thursday, April the 11th she found that she was seized for death, her soul being in great grief. So she continued till 2:00 on Friday morning, continuing in prayer, begging of the Lord to blot out her sins. She desired the Lord to give her ease to declare what she had to say to the family. The Lord granted her petition. She prayed for all the clergy, that the Lord would enlighten their understanding and open their eyes. Then she desired the nurse to call her father and the rest of her family, to exhort them to repentance and a godly life, and to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth. She said she was just going, for she saw a chariot waiting for her, to carry her over a fine green into paradise. She saw heaven's gate open for her. Her mother asked her if she was afraid of death. She replied no, for she would not change her state for Bristol, London, nor yet for all the world. She continued one whole hour praising God, crying "Come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly!" She continued in great anguish of body till 5:00 Saturday morning, when she broke out in prayer in these words, "That it may please thee to give to all thy people increase of grace, to hear meekly thy words, to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." She saw the angels coming for her and so departed. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labour.

Your unworthy servant in the Lord,

Elizabeth Winter

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Apr 15. 1745 - Amy [sic] Winter's death."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/139.²

¹Ann Winter was buried on Apr. 16, 1745, in Bristol.

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

From the Rev. John Wesley

Leeds
April 23, 1745

[[Dear Brother,]]

It was time for me to give them the ground at Newcastle and to fly for my life. I grew more and more honourable every day; the rich and great flocking to us together, so that many times the room would not hold them. Iniquity for the present hath stopped her mouth, and it is almost fashionable to speak well of us. In all appearance if I had stayed a month longer the mayor and aldermen would have been with us too.

On Easter Monday [Apr. 15] we met at half-hour after 4:00, and the room was full from end to end, with high and low, rich and poor, plain and fine people. At 9:00 I preached to almost as large a congregation in the street at Chester.¹ All were quiet and still, for the hand of our Lord was in the midst of them. About 6:00 I preached at Northallerton, in the house; but it should have been (I afterwards found) at the cross[roads], for the people there are ((most) of them) a noble people, and receive the word with all readiness of mind. A gentleman of Osmotherley² (east from Northallerton) telling me he wished I could have come and preached there, I took him at his word, set out immediately, and about 10:00 at night preached at Osmotherley, in a large chapel, which belonged a few years since to a convent of Franciscan friars. I found I was got into the very centre of all the papists in the north of England. *Commessatorem haud satis commodum.*³ This also hath God wrought.

The classes call me away. I must (for several reasons) see London before Bristol. One is, I shall go from Bristol to Cornwall, so that if I come to Bristol now I shall not be at London these three months. What I propose, therefore, is to go from Birmingham, through Oxford (as I wrote before), straight to London. You can send me word where you will meet me. All here salute you much. If you could come hither soon (think of it), Leeds would vie with Newcastle. I wish you could. O let us watch!

Adieu.

Address: "To The Revd Mr C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother] [[April]] 23, 1745"; and "Apr. 23, 1745 / B. in Honour at N. C."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/6.⁴

¹i.e. Chester-le-Street.

²Watson (or "Peter of Alcantara") Adams; see *WHS* 7 (1909): 28–31.

³"Not a very agreeable companion, in truth!" See Terence, *Adelphi*, 783.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:131–32.

From James Erskine, Lord Grange¹

Westminster
April 23, 1745

Of outward Christian Communion between Messrs. John and Charles Wesley
and such as, agreeing with them in the essentials of real Christianity, do
yet differ from them as to all or any of the three points underwritten.

I meddle not at present with the truth or falsehood of doctrines, but whether those after-mentioned are maintained by my friends to be terms of communion, private (and, as it is called, lay communion) or ministerial, and whether their practice answers to what they do herein maintain.

These doctrines are chiefly three: absolute predestination, universal or general redemption, and that sinless perfection in holiness is attainable in this life by a true believer in Jesus. The first they deny; the other two they affirm. But they do not maintain that their opinion of all or any of these should be a term of communion, either lay or ministerial. For

1. None of these are asserted in their pamphlet *The Character of a Methodist*, and they profess that whosoever agrees to that character is their brother, sister, and mother, whatever their other opinions be.

2. They openly declare their desire of a reunion with Messrs. [George] Whitefield, [Howell] Harris, etc.; and of union with many of the Church of Scotland and churches in America who are not of their opinion in the foresaid three points; and I never observed nor heard that they restrict this declaration with the condition that Messrs. Whitefield, etc., should embrace their opinion of these three points. I did indeed hear *one* say that they did insist of something like this when a reunion with Mr. Whitefield was talked of some time before he last sailed to America. But I have heard this from *one only*. And this were to be more rigid than the Church of England itself, which admits even into ministerial communion with her some of both sides of these questions. And I am sure they do not make it a term of lay communion, because I every day see them very willingly admit into such communion with them persons who are not, and whom they know not to be, of their opinion in these three points.

3. It would very ill agree, and I humbly think would be inconsistent, with what Mr. John Wesley writes concerning the experiences of the late Mr. Thomas Halyburton, in his preface to the extract he has published thereof—viz., that the work of God in the soul of man is so described therein as he had not “seen it in any other ancient or modern, in our own or any other language, so that I” (says Mr. John Wesley) “cannot but value it, next to the Holy Scriptures, above any other human composition, excepting only the *Christian Pattern*, and the small remains of Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, and Ignatius.”² Now Mr. Wesley could not but know that this eminent saint was of the opinion of the Church of Scotland in all these three points, which is the reverse of his. Farther, Mr. John Wesley blames Mr. Jonathan Edwards of New England for seeming in his books to be of opinion that there cannot be any work of God carried on by any who do not hold absolute predestination, and for being so vehemently attached to his own opinion,

¹In his eagerness to secure closer co-operation among Christians, James Erskine felt that he had found a kindred spirit in the Wesley brothers, though he confessed to some reservations. In his letter of Apr. 3 to JW he expressed a desire to “talk over some particulars, which I hope you will allow me ... to lay before you.” For JW’s consideration he prepared a document in the form of a legal brief, a corrected draft on eight pages of foolscap paper folded into four and docketed on the outside. It is clearly a personal communication, found among JW’s papers. Erskine probably left it with CW, who had returned from Bristol on Apr. 9, and would pass it on to JW after he arrived from visiting the societies *en route* from Newcastle, on May 11. The journal of neither brother contains explicit reference to the letter or the probable discussion with Erskine.

²JW, Preface, §3, *Abstract of the Life and Death of ... Halyburton* (1739), *Works*, 13:28–29.

not only as to their truth (for so every honest earnest man is, though not in the same degree), but even as to the necessity of adhering thereto in order to the knowledge of God in Christ. And whatever is said in this respect as to absolute predestination is applicable to particular redemption. For though it would humbly appear that we may possibly be either for general or particular redemption, and yet be an absolute predestinarian; yet it would also humbly appear that an absolute predestinarian must be for particular and not for general redemption, taking these things according to the rigour. But that neither Mr. John nor Charles Wesley hold their opinions to be so necessary appears from their openly owning many of those who are of the contrary opinions to be eminent instruments in carrying on the work of God and to be eminently the children of God—as the foresaid Whitefield, Harris, Halyburton, etc.

4. If they did otherwise it would drive them to hold no communion at all with any almost but their own particular disciples, or with such whose communion on other accounts they reject, and not with such whose communion on other accounts they prize or wish for. Papists, Socinians, and the grossest Remonstrants or Arminians (i.e., Pelagians) maintain my friends' opinions on all these three points. But none of the Reformed churches maintain any of them—except that the followers of Camero[n],³ Amyraldus,⁴ and Le Blanc⁵ in the French church (among whom were the famous Daillé,⁶ Claude,⁷ etc.) and those in Britain called Baxterians⁸ went a sort of middle way as to the two first of these three points, which seems to be much the same with the way of my two friends. But very few of the Reformed, nor so far as I know of the Lutherans, agree with them as to the third point—viz., the attainableness of sinless perfection in holiness during this life. And the Moravians, who agree not with them as to the third, yet *now* agree with them as to the two first, which yet they did not agree with them in at their first setting up at Herrnhut. On the whole it would appear that they do not require agreement in opinion with them as to all or any of these three things as a term of lay or ministerial communion.

And their practice *in the main* is answerable to this, as appears from what I have already said.

But I want to be cleared whether it be so in such particulars as I shall beg leave now to mention.

And since they do not make their own opinions thereof to be terms of communion, therefore should they not, in every ordinance wherein they wish their differing brethren to hold communion with them, to abstain from such things concerning the points in difference which they know such brethren cannot join with them in according to their *present conscience*? And is it not to mock me, instead of testifying brotherly love and union, to invite and urge them to join with what it is known they cannot at present join with *salva conscientia*?⁹

Hence it follows that there should be nothing of these points in public prayers or praise or celebration of the Lord's Supper which differing brethren cannot join with, and which yet their joining in these ordinances supposes they go along with. Therefore the observing directly, or by necessary obvious consequence, universal redemption or sinless perfection should in these public ordinances be abstained from. Or at least differing brethren should be warned to abstain from their communion at such times (and this would be a very odd warning, and shock more people at the warners).

When a sincere soul is drawing near to God in Christ Jesus in prayer or praise, etc., and that something is said which he thinks is not the truth, it strikes him down as a clap of thunder and puts him in terror of sinning against the God he seeks after and was drawing near unto. And when a faithful minister of Jesus, sent to his people, reflects on this with seriousness and in hearty tender love of him who sends

³John Cameron (c. 1579–1625), Scottish theologian, who spent time in France.

⁴Moyses Amyraldus (Latin); or Moïse Amyraut (1596–1664), French Protestant theologian.

⁵Louis Le Blanc De Beaulieu (1614–75).

⁶Jean Daillé (1594–1670).

⁷Jean Claude (1619–87).

⁸I.e., those who imitate the irenic spirit of Richard Baxter (1615–91).

⁹Latin: “with a safe conscience.”

and those he is sent unto, can he bear to be the instrument of thus driving back any of them that are approaching to God in Jesus Christ? Or does he diminish his office and restrict his commission so much as to think he is only sent to those who agree with him in these particular opinions? That his business is only to bring *them* near to God in Christ Jesus, but that he may be the active instrument of causing *all others* to stumble and of driving them back from God in their sincere and earnest approaches to him in the Lord Jesus?

Was this minded in the prayer after forenoon's sermon at the chapel in West Street,¹⁰ April 21, 1745, with respect to sinless perfection?¹¹ And was that the *only* time it was forgot? I fear it was not!

And therefore the same caution should be used in hymns for public use. And it is easy, even for such as are much less masters of language than the composers of the hymns for the Foundery and [West Street] chapel, to use such words as those of both sides of the question in these three points may conscientiously concur in without prejudice to the edification of any. And if the composers know that in writing them they intended to express their own particular opinions, must not the differing brethren in singing them know that they express what is not their own opinion—consequently that they presume to offer in praise to the God of truth what they believe to be a falsehood, and so go to God with what is a lie to them?

I was going to give instances of this from the two volumes of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*,¹² and from the *Collection of Hymns and Psalms* (not to mention others), which are in common use. But they are so frequent that it were quite needless. I wish there may be none such in the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, soon to be published.¹³ And it grieves one's soul to find in hymns otherwise so excellent and delightful what may stumble and drive back such as are real believers, and love Jesus in sincerity, and are rich in faith and experience, and favourites of their Lord and love. Why will you have public hymns that a Halyburton, a Whitefield, etc., cannot, and but very few of the Reformed churches can, join with? Is not this *in fact* to form yourselves into a sect, a party, and to distinguish and restrict yourselves from the Catholic church of Christ? Some passages that would stumble many who are indeed of the Lord's people may be altered very easily. For example, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, p. 9, Hymn 10, st. 3, "The death sustain'd for *all* mankind" — [which could be rendered instead] "The death sustained for mankind."

Some who are less scrupulous, and which many call more strong, may satisfy themselves by being silent at such passages, or in prayer abstaining in their own minds to join with such. But, 1) this will not appear enough to very many most worthy Christians, whom the Lord receives. 2) It is a hardship, and inwardly grieves and offends even the less scrupulous, and greatly disturbs them, and mars their joy in drawing near to God in their Lord and Love, Jesus Christ. And [3]) it occasions debate, for their seeming in time of worship to go along with what they do not go along with makes them take occasion at times when it does not create so public disturbance to testify their dissent, which brings on disputes when otherwise there would not have been any.

I have seen another expedient used, and it was at Newcastle some years ago,¹⁴ the first time I heard Mr. John Wesley preach. He, being to sing a hymn that was express on his own opinion of some of these three points, desired all such as could not join with it to hold their peace. But this is not an

¹⁰This was a former Huguenot chapel, which JW had rented, at the intersection of West Street and St. Martin's Lane in London.

¹¹CW preached on 1 John 5:6, but gives no indication in his account in *MS Journal* that he touched on the subject of sinless perfection.

¹²After *HSP* (1742) was published, the two earlier volumes — *HSP* (1739) and *HSP* (1740) were combined and issued as a single volume in 1743. So by 1744 there were only "two volumes" of *HSP*.

¹³*Hymns on the Lord's Supper* was published in late Mar. 1745. Since Erskine quotes from it later in this paragraph, he must have had access to at least the final galleys, if not a published volume.

¹⁴JW's first extended preaching stint in Newcastle was mid-Nov. through Dec. 1742.

expedient for joining in communion real Christians differing in opinions as to these three points. It was to warn one side not to join in communion at all, though bodily present. And therefore such did but misspend their time, by being in the company but not in the communion of the rest. And it led them not to communion with the Lord, but to abstain from his worship lest they should speak to him things against their consciences, and so sin. And this natively leads them to think they had better not be where such stumbling blocks are layed in their ways. And this again tends to separation, and to differing and separate societies or churches. And for what is Christ's seamless coat thus rent in pieces? Why, it is for different opinions, though either side is consistent with real and very eminent degrees of grace. And though it be acknowledged openly that those of the opposite opinions have been saints of the first magnitude, and whom the Lord has countenanced and honoured above most of his servants in advancing his Kingdom, and separating from whom is of the greatest disservice thereto.

All resolves plainly into this question: whether it be most for our Lord's service and honour, whether it be most in the spirit of fervent love to blessed Jesus and our brethren in him, not to bring our own opinions as to the three points expressly into the acts of our joint worship, and so to unite cordially therein, and send up our hearts and souls together in him in the same outgoings of faith and flames of love? Or, by bringing our own opinions as to the three points expressly into the acts of what otherwise would be our joint worship, to divide and separate from our brethren (such as above) and not to send up our hearts and souls together to our common dear Lord, in the same outgoings of faith and flames of love? With all possible esteem and regard to others, very much my superiors in knowledge and grace (and God forbid I should be so presumptuously vain as to fancy I could in the least compare with them) I do not see that it can be doubted by a real lively Christian but that the affirmative of the first of these questions is indeed the truth as it is in Jesus. And by what I have said and argued about the beginning of this paper it would humbly appear that the worthy persons I have in my eye must herein be of the same mind to be consistent with themselves.

One cannot on any account own the smallest thing to be true which he believes to be false, nor to practice the smallest thing which he thinks to be sinful. But he can bear with what he takes to be considerable errors and bad practices in his brethren in Christ who are not of his judgment about them. And it is not he who leaves the outward communion on account of such opinions or practices who is the separatist, but he who imposes his own as necessary when they are not, even supposing them true. This is an old and common and a just remark, and I hardly know an exception to in churches not of the legal establishment, if it be not this one—viz., when whatever you do, some or other will not join with you, and even out of conscience. For example, if Messrs. Wesley layed aside the liturgy of the Church of England, some might join with them who now cannot. But on the other hand, there are some who could not in that case join with them, and these they ought to regard, being of the same church. But this touches not the question as to communion or non-communion on account of the three points aforesaid. And I know of no exception to the foresaid remark, applicable to their case on account of the said three points.

To make men acknowledge opinions they do not believe in praying to and praising God is an imposition, as well as to make them subscribe such opinions. And whatever way some may fall on to satisfy themselves that they do not acknowledge these opinions, though joining in prayers or praises wherein they are acknowledged, yet it is a great hardship on them and straitens them, and keeps them back in the approaches to the Lord. And it tends not to the real edification of the rest, but to foster them in a conceit that these opinions are more necessary than indeed they are, which is downright bigotry. And it is a great sin to render people bigots, and to turn aside their zeal for Christ to bigotry. Whatever lays more stress on anything than is due to it is a degree of bigotry. And whoever does so, or leads others to do it, is in so far a bigot.

The case, as I humbly conceive, is different as to preaching, at least as to one sort of it. When preaching is used to warm and enliven, and to lead directly to actual communion with the Lord (and blessed be his dear name it sometimes does so, and I hope not seldom) the difference is less. But when it is mainly intended for mere teaching and instruction I suppose the difference is considerable. For then the preacher, if he finds it needful to instruct his hearers in such or such things, must teach what he takes to be truth, whether his hearers be of his mind or not. And the rather that they are not of his mind as to

materials points which he preaches of, he is to labour to persuade them to be of his mind. But this brings not the hearers into the former strait, for the hearing such things asserted in a preaching does not import your being of that opinion, as their being asserted in a prayer or hymn you join in seems to do. It is supposed when you hear [a sermon] that you are to search the Scriptures whether it be so or not, as the Bereans did of hearing Paul, the extraordinary apostle of Christ.¹⁵ If on search, you think it is not so, yet you are to bear with diversity of opinion in the preacher as well as in another brother. This is not generally the practice, but it ought to be. And on the other hand, it seems to be incumbent on the preacher, in duty as well as prudence, so to manage his preaching on such points as not to give just offence to his dissentient hearers.

But is it so managed when in a sermon harshness is used rather than arguments (or mixed with arguments) in the spirit of meekness? When the arts of politically disputing for victory seem to be used in misrepresenting and straining the opposite opinion, and putting odious colours on it and the maintainers thereof, which nevertheless do not belong to them? And when the preacher confines not himself to solid argument that convinces and enlightens the mind, and fills it not with mere prejudices?

I most earnestly and humbly entreat and beg that offence may not be taken at my giving instances of this kind, as they appear to me to be, though I'm persuaded that the preachers were led into it by earnestness for what they believed to be true, without the least intending to mislead, or to wrong or be harsh to any on the other side of the question. This happens so frequently in controversy, that though it is certainly very far wrong in itself, yet should be the more readily overlooked in good men who are betrayed into it. And the Lord who knows my heart knows this to be my disposition of spirit towards the preachers I have in my eye, whom I honour and love most heartily as the Lord's instruments for good to many hundreds, and I humbly hope to my poor unworthy self also. My end and design in frankly noticing these things, as well as what is above, is that being favoured by them to be admitted into (I may say, full) communion with them and their dear people, what grieves and offends me (and perhaps may grieve, offend, and stumble others much more worthy) may be brought under their serious consideration and review. If I err, most gladly will I be corrected and set right.

In the above-mentioned sermon at Newcastle by Mr. John Wesley on the attainableness of sinless perfection in this life, he said to this purpose: "Others may plead for sin and Satan, but let us stand for Christ and for holiness." And Mr. Charles Wesley in his sermon at the [West Street] chapel Sunday forenoon 21 Apr. 1745 said to the same purpose. And in the first sermon (as if I remember well it was) which Mr. John Wesley preached after his coming to London in the spring 1744,¹⁶ he said to this purpose, "that in the last age many had preached and printed worthily on justification, but almost none on sanctification, nor had been for strict, absolute holiness, nor attaining to perfection in sanctification." And he particularly instanced Dr. John Owen. To the same purpose spoke Mr. Charles Wesley in the foresaid sermon 21 Apr. 1745, and he charged the same on the worthies after the Reformation who were called Puritans. And why is this charged on them? For no other reason but because they said that the perfection of holiness could not be arrived at in this life. Do therefore all of this opinion plead for sin and Satan, and are not for strict holiness? It by no means follows, and it is a begging of the question. And if it were so with those of that opinion, they could not be real Christians. For whoever is for sin and not for strict absolute holiness is not, and cannot possibly be, a real Christian. Is not this to offend against the generation of God's children (to use the expression of Ps. 73:15), both by thus maintaining the higher necessity of this opinion and by being injurious to them and reducing the most worthy and eminent of them to be children of the devil, patrons of sin, and enemies of holiness? What worse could be said of the most black gross antinomian in principle and practice? If you do not think so of them, why do you say it? And if you mean not to say it, why do you use words which seem naturally to import it, and which everybody will readily take in that meaning? And is not this to strain their opinions into a bad sense, and to represent them in wrong and odious colours? And does not everybody blame such turns in controversy

¹⁵See Acts 17:11.

¹⁶This would be JW's sermon on Ps. 18:1, preached Feb. 1, 1744 at the West Street chapel.

as unfair, and proper only to create prejudices and ill-founded aversions in the minds of people unacquainted with these injured godly men and their writings? For those who know them cannot think so of them, contrary to what they see with their own eyes in their books. And they will rather be offended at such who thus misrepresent them, or use such words and expressions as naturally tend to it.

To allege that they plead for sin because they say it cannot be fully conquered in this life is injurious to them. For to plead for sin seems plainly to import that they approve of sin. But this is a mere clinch. One is not an usurping tyrant because he says it is not possible for some time to shake his yoke and get fully free from him. Who can, with common justice, say that herein one pleads for the usurping tyrant, whom yet he tells you that you are never to be at peace with but to fight against him without ceasing? And that though by your fighting you cannot fully prevail for a time, yet if you continue to fight manfully all that time, you shall then fully conquer; but never overcome if you give over fighting. And who could justly say that then your fighting was in vain? So it is here according to the doctrine of these worthy men. Sin is the usurping tyrant. The time of your fighting without fully prevailing against him is this life. But you shall completely conquer in the next, if you cease not to fight in this; and otherwise you shall never overcome. All these men, from the old Puritans and downwards to this very day, have thus taught. They have uniformly condemned all sin, and declared (as in the Confession of Sin in the Communion Office of the English Liturgy) that they do earnestly repent of it, that the remembrance of it is grievous to them, and the burden of it is intolerable; and that a great reason of their so ardently longing for heaven is that they may be fully free from it. And they pray not only against the guilt, but pray and wrestle all they possibly can against the power of it. They plead not at all for sin, nor that they may commit it, but plead that they themselves are vile and abominable because they cannot get fully the better of it here. They plead not to approve of sin, but to disapprove of themselves because of sin. How can this with justice be called a pleading for sin in any sense whatsoever? Is it not, very clearly and plainly and obviously to common sense, to plead expressly against all sin?

And all these men have uniformly given it as an infallible mark of a child of the devil to allow of any known sin, and not to fight against it with hatred and abhorrence continually! And as a mark of true saving faith, that it produces hearty approbation of all the commands [of] God, and delight in them and in universal and constant obedience so far as they possibly can attain in continual struggling for it, and to grow in grace and in holiness in all manner of conversation, and in heart, lip, and life. This we find in all their books. As a sample I name only Dr. [John] Owen's *Evidences of the Faith of God's Elect*, and the ninth book of his *Discourse on the Holy Spirit*. Mr. William Guthrie's *Christian's Great Interest, or the Trial of a saving Interest in Christ*. And see the same fully though briefly in Mr. John Wesley's *Extract of the Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Halyburton*, Pt. I, Chap. 2, §5, 6, at pp. 31–32; Pt. 2, Chap. 1, §7, at p. 38 [and as to his Law, etc.] and Pt. 4, ch. 3d, §6 [Thirdly] at pp. 65–65. Who can consider all this and yet say that these men did plead for sin, and were not for strict absolute holiness, though they did not maintain that perfection in holiness could be attained in this life?

I cannot wilfully mistake or misconstrue what my dear friend Mr. Charles Wesley says, because anything he should say that I thought far wrong would give me pain. If I did not misapprehend him in his sermon aforesaid 21 April, 1745, he seemed to speak as if a true believer not only could, but would, attain to perfect holiness before he went out of this life, because otherwise he could not be made meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. And I do not remember that he insinuated any other reason for it. But for the same reason it was that the late Dr. Hicks and other considerable men asserted a middle state between the state of a saint in this life and in the state of glory, in the immediate presence of God—a middle state wherein such perfection is attained unto and renders the saint meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. And according to this doctrine the argument proves not that such perfection must be attained in this life. Nor yet according to the common doctrine of all Protestants, which I take to be that when the body is dropped all imperfection is also dropped, and none of it carried into the next state of the saints. Thus perfection is not attained in this present state, but immediately on going out of it, and before or immediately at entering on the next state. And I do not remember any scripture that says otherwise. But I have heard of such as (by all that could be observed of them) did die in the Lord (and therefore are blessed, for “blessed are the dead who die in the Lord” Rev. 14:13) and yet

had not at their last attained to perfection in holiness. And if what I apprehended my dear friend did say be true, it will bring into question the eternal blessedness of many who seemed to die in the faith, and so destroy the comfort of their surviving friends and incline them to sorrow as others who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

I have explained my poor thoughts frankly and sincerely; but if offensively, it was far contrary to my design. And I humbly beg I may, and hope I shall, be pardoned for what I have been led into, not by ill will, or pride, or any by-view, but only by frankness, sincerity, love, and desire of profiting, which are the only motives which I think worthy of Christian friendship, and that do not disgrace it and render it noxious.

Endorsement: by Erskine on outside cover, “Of outward Christian communion between Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, and such as agreeing with them in the essentials of real Christianity, do yet differ from them as to all or any of the points within written. Westminster, 23 April, 1745.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 4, file 19.¹⁷

¹⁷Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 26:132–36.

From Mary Francis¹

Kingswood
June 28, 1745

Reverend Sir,

The most that sister Rogers spoke she spoke to me.² Therefore he desired me to write it.

She, all the time [of] her illness, seemed resigned to the will of God, excepting once for a little season. She was tempted to take it hard that she could not go to hear the word. But as she grew nearer her end she was resigned in that also. She was in a great deal of body pain but she never seemed the least impatient, but cried out, “Lord give me but patience and lay what thou will upon me.” When she was in the greatest extremity of pain she would say. “Well is it for me that my peace is made with God.” She exhorted everyone that came to see her to be earnest to seek the Lord and not put it off to a sick bed. “For what should I do if Jesus was not my Lord. But I know he is.” She had no fear of death all the time of her illness for she said she was as sure of heaven as if she was there already, though she knew the work was not finished in her soul. But she believed he that had promised would also preform it before she went hence.

For about a fortnight before her death she said nothing interrupted her peace night nor day, but she was in continual prayer unto the Lord. And so she continued till she died. The day before her death she sent for me and told me her departure was at hand. I asked her if she was willing to die and leave her family. She said she was, for she committed them into the hands of the Lord whom she knew would care for them. She said, “Don’t ye doubt of me if I can’t speak much before I die, for I know I shall be eternally happy and be forever with him whom my soul loveth.” She chose her text, the 23 Psalm, and she desired that her funeral sermon might not be preached till you came, for she said you knew more of her than anyone else. About three o’clock the next morning she sent for me again and she was then a-dying. I asked her if she had a full assurance of her happiness. She said, “I have. I know I shall be happy forever but I have not strength to speak.” Her whole cry was, “Come Lord Jesus. Come quickly.” Some minutes before she died she seemed to have a strong combat with the devil. But she turned herself about like a lamb and cried, “Come Lord Jesus,” and so departed.

O may my end be like unto hers. O sir, pray for me.

Your daughter in the gospel,

Mary Francis

Sir,

I hear that Hanna Barrow at the chapel hath sent for you to give her the sacrament. I should be glad to speak with you first.³

¹Mary Francis was currently mistress of the school for girls at Kingswood that was lodged in the “old house.” In 1751 she would marry John Maddern, one of JW’s travelling preachers. The couple served together at Kingswood for a few years, then moved to London, where John became a respected local preacher. When John died, Molly returned to Bristol, to serve as housekeeper at the New Room 1770–82. See A. G. Ives, *Kingswood School* (London: Epworth, 1970), 40, 50.

²CW had visited with sister Rogers in Apr. 7, 1745, while in Bristol; and, as requested, preached her funeral sermon on June 30, 1745 (see *MS Journal*). In the left margin of the second page of this manuscript CW added a comment in shorthand: “[[She met her bands till the last week. Several met to pray there, and found a great blessing. I myself know [she] never missed the word]].”

³Hannah Barrow had been housekeeper at the Kingswood School in 1741, until she sided with the Calvinist Methodists and joined their effort to take possession of the school. CW dismissed her from that role on Apr. 22, 1741 (see *MS Journal*). She was now the housekeeper of the chapel that John Wayne kept in Conham, and was spreading a rumour about CW (likely similar to that of Elizabeth Story); see *MS*

Address: “To the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Molly Francis’s Account of sister Rogers / June]] 1745.” (Later expanded by CW: “M. Francis of S[ister] Roger’s Death.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/61.⁴

Journal, June 30, 1745.

⁴For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Ann Nowell¹

Cardiff
July 5, 1745

My Dear Friend and Father,

Since I parted with you, you have been often in my thoughts, and could I but retain the sympathizing spirit which I have felt towards my suffering friend, I should think the five weeks I spent in Bristol was not lost, but rather that time, and all the fatigue of a dangerous passage home to be abundantly recompensed. It was not altogether in vain that you read those sad lines to me.² I think I then found God in some manner fulfilling the desire of my soul. I know you need not my compassion, because [I am] incapable of relieving your distress. Yet I want to feel great sorrow and to pray for you. I believe if I were near you my heart, hard and stupid as it is, would be often affected what a sense of what you have and with you daily suffer. I could not see your affliction and hear your groans unmoved, surely I could not. It was my regard for you which caused these uneasy apprehensions of which I complained; but I did but fear, as you assure me, where no fear was. Your late behaviour has encouraged me to use that freedom which I am naturally inclined to use towards those I would esteem my real friends. Where I am sensitive there is sincerity I can bear with everything, and excuse every weakness, therefore expect everyone who vouchsafes to admit me in the number of their friends and hath in some measure proved me faithful will thus bear with me.

I was so overpowered the day I left Bristol with a sense of my obligation to all my friends that I had little to say in return. How shall I be sufficiently thankful? I must desire you'll thank Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and her sisters in my name, their friendship having been more abundant to me upon your account. I want to be useful to my friends but am sensitive of my unprofitableness. I would fain avoid the cross. How grievous it is to a grateful mind to reprove a dear friend, because it is so disagreeable to human nature to be convinced of its errors, either in principle or practice, that it is seldom we can admonish one another but it is thought the reprover must think himself wiser or better than ourselves and therefore his esteem for us must certainly be lessened.

I wanted an opportunity of talking with you more particularly about our friend.³ I would fain have every hindrance to her soul's health removed. It was with concern I observed that needless anxiety she hath for her friends. I have known her to be burdened two or three days in writing a letter to you, which hath for that time almost wholly employed her time and thoughts. She is fearing this may be thought too free, or that may be thought amiss. How you can act in this particular I cannot advise. I observed a word you mentioned one day, that you were burdened even among your friends. I knew partly what you felt, and could not wonder at your constant desires to quit this vale of tears. I could almost say "amen" to your prayer. But how apt are we in the bitterness of our souls to utter words without knowledge. Were you or I to talk with a person under your circumstances, we would not point them to death as the remedy of their woe. No, you would say, "Wait upon the Lord and you shall renew your strength. He will shed his love abroad in your heart and make all your ways pleasantness, and all your paths peace, and you shall rejoice evermore." Though I have not faith to believe I shall thus see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, but think my sorrow remediless in this life; yet, I dare not speak this to others (except those who know the conflict of a soul with the power of darkness) because it would be inconsistent with the principles I profess to believe.

¹Ann Nowell (1716–58), daughter of Craddock (d. 1748) and Ann (Jones) Nowell, was active in the Cardiff Methodist society. She visited Bristol on at least two occasions: the one described in this letter; and in 1749, see CW to SGW, Apr. 29–30, 1749.

²CW had likely read to her MS Address to a Friend, an extended lament on his current suffering under false accusations fomented by Thomas Williams of Wales.

³Likely Mary (Forrest) Jones, of Cardiff.

At my return I found this society in a very declining way. Many are weary and faint in their minds. Others are altogether gone out of the way, so that the hands of those who laboured amongst us are much weakened, insomuch that they are few who seek the truth in the love of it. Some rest in notions, others in dead form. May the Lord hasten your coming in pity to us. Your sending any of those who have lately been amongst us will be of little advantage. They don't so much want to know, as to be directed in practice, to be built up in the faith which by you hath been delivered to us.

Our society hath been injured by being reputed wise, but I cannot condemn them herein. For whether I am wise, or a fool, I desire to be instructed how I may attain communion with God. Indeed all forms and opinions seem to me as nothing, and I wait as one stripped of all dependence upon anything but the immediate power of God. Yet I cannot but highly value every instrument whereby God conveys light and life or comfort to my soul. And I may truly say that excepting you and your brother's preaching, I found but little good for my soul at Bristol. But whatever my thoughts are on these things, I have so much wisdom as to conceal my sentiments in regard to the good of others. But speaking them to you cannot be amiss, because my heart is open to receive your advice, to bear your reproof, and to acknowledge any fault or error you can convince me of. Be but as free with me as you would with your own soul, and I trust you shall never have cause to repent your friendship to your weak unworthy friend.

I do really desire to see you, and am not altogether selfish herein; though you especially are a preacher to my state. But whether you come or not, I desire God to bless you with every spiritual gift, to give you a right judgment in all things, and to prosper the work of your hands, and make you even here a witness of his uttermost salvation. Then you will surely receive this saying, "Thou shalt weep no more."⁴

If it is not imprudent in me to ask such a favour, I would desire when you write that you would transcribe ten, or a dozen of the first of those lines. I do acknowledge I stand in need of means to excite my stupid soul, both in regard to the love of God, and my neighbour, and nothing seems to me so effectual as a lively description of another's sufferings to oblige me to remember those in bonds as bound with them.

My mother and sister,⁵ and Mr. [Nathaniel] Wells desire their love to you.

I was not told Mrs. [Mary] Jones hath taken it ill that you have not written to her. I wrote to her since my return and urged all the reasons I could in your excuse.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Miss Nowel]] 1745 [[July]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/114.⁶

⁴Isa.30:19.

⁵Ann (Jones) Nowell; there was more than one sister.

⁶For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Howell Harris

Trevecca
July 16, 1745

My Dear Honoured Brother,

I will forget all distance and use that freedom I know you have love enough to bear with, having had long proof of the truth and over-flowing of the Saviour's toward me, even to my astonishment at times. What shall I say? But that, according to my measure, you are near my heart. It is matter of joy and praise to me to see those that move in the most conspicuous places in the work of God, most favoured with all the shining qualifications. By these they are enabled to convince God's enemies and, maugre all the malice of the wicked, to adorn the dear and glorious gospel. Though I find a cry in my soul to be peculiarly useful, and that from a sense of God's love to me and of the great honour of being employed by so great and good a Lord. I see his wisdom and care, both of his own glory and of my real good, in that he doth not, as yet, add to my gifts and usefulness, because I cannot bear more. O what depths of iniquity lies yet lurking in my heart! But, blessed be God that I am what I am. I find it is given me to rejoice at the success of all others, equally with, if not more, than in my own; and also to long insatiably to see all that love our Lord, in any measure, sincerely brought to love one another every moment. I believe that a great and glorious work is begun on the earth. The Lord is indeed gone forth, and though for some wise ends some little differences yet remain in expressions, and perhaps in our conceptions of some things, I am persuaded it is his will we should bear with each other in great tenderness, and that will bring glory to his name, even when we are in the dust. Col. 3:1–2; 1 Pet. 1:22.

I believe we have all cause to be humbled before him, and should loath ourselves that we have not been more tender of each other, and that we have not been more careful to avoid offences before the world. However, I believe the Lore will wipe away our reproach, and bring us together in time. For the present, let us forbear in great love and fortify each other's hands as much as we can. Everyone will have his peculiar thoughts and ways of expression. But all who hold the head and foundation clear should give and take brotherly freedom, neither be offended nor put the worst construction on others, but endeavour to understand fully the whole of what each mean. But where am I going? You see I give my heart its full vent. I am sure you are not offended at my freedom. When I find persons of any denomination humbled at the Saviour's feet, and made acquainted with the mystery of his blood by his Spirit, I love and honour such. And though, according to my light, in these may be many things amiss, yet where I see that the Lord has revealed his Son in them, and given them a true and lasting faith in him, I wait, being assured all other things shall be soon added.

Blessed be God, I can send you good news from hence. The gospel never ran with more glory than now. And Satan rages horribly on his chain, biting and roaring as if he would swallow us up alive. But blessed be our Lord, who tells us he has but a short time to reign. Last week we had a meeting of ministers and labourers that help in the work, and the Lord was indeed among us. The breach that was like to be made is, I trust, slopped up effectually. The brethren that were for disputing, being now satisfied—brother [Daniel] Rowland was gone to England, and could not return to us; brother [Howell] Davies, brother [William] Williams, and brother Powell,¹ etc. brought glorious news indeed: congregations everywhere increasing, fresh doors opening, and, as it were, a new commission given; many called and wounded, whilst others were so favoured with views of our Emmanuel as to be kept up whole nights singing his praises, being so filled with his love that they are obliged to cry, "Lord hold thy hand." The gentlemen in part of Breckonshire and Carmarthenshire hunt us like partridges, but still the work prospers. There are four pressed now in Brecon goal—one was a private man, another a Welch schoolmaster to Mr. Griffith Jones. One was pressed last year, and they then would not take him; and the other taught an English school and exhorted, and is full of faith. These are kept exceedingly happy in their souls. With my hearty respects to brother John [Wesley], in hopes of a line in answer. I remain,

¹Rev. John Powell of Blaenau Gwent.

Yours most affectionately, humbly, and heartily in our dear Lord Jesus,

H. H.

Source: printed transcription; Benjamin La Trobe (ed.), *A Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris* (Trevecka, 1791), 164–67.

From Sarah Perrin

[Bristol]
July 18, [1745?]

My Honoured Friend,

I shall be glad to hear when we may expect to see you. Thy brother writes word he shall not be with us till the 30th instant.¹ At the beginning of the fair one of your being here will be very needful.² Therefore [I] hope we shall see thee.

Nancy Stafford mends and is got downstairs. Poor Nancy Perrot is murmuring in the wilderness. Of all whom I know, whose faces are turned Sionward, her state I think the least desirable. I am persuaded she hankers after Egypt. She is an occasion of stumbling at Stokes Croft.³ But they now see their sister's light shines like the noon day and it is plain this trial of her faith has been for great good. The other's state is a mystery I cannot comprehend, so much discontent and ingratitude, and so much faith and love at the same time is strange.

My time has been very much taken up of late in going out. But most of the sick I think are on the recovery. Our sister Parsons is likely to live.⁴ Mr. Dyer has been very bad,⁵ but he and Mr. Durbin is a little better.⁶

I find of late great want of the spirit of supplication. I see such need for prayer that I should be glad to spend my strength and life in it, yet [am] often cold and dead. I cannot describe how much I see of the mercy of God and how little thankful I am to him for it. Methinks in everything I see infinite love, yea in things that would have been quite unobserved till of late. And what does this do for me? Does it cause my heart to praise him more? I cannot say it does, but convinces me deeper of my ingratitude and want of praise, and I am ready to cry "How long Lord shall I be this unholy vessel and yet retain the treasure of thy love?"

Can one that is so much wanting to God have that sympathy we ought to have for a friend? No, surely I plead a want of the temper. Also I used to think I could sympathize with my friend, but alas in how little a degree was it in comparison of what I now conceive of a Christian sympathy. Yet still my dear friend, thy sufferings in a measure I partake of, and may our Lord give me his mind that I may be capable of Christian friendship, and pray without ceasing for thee. Indeed your trials are great. It will be through much tribulation your robes will be made white in the blood of the Lamb. But go on, follow the Captain. He has overcome and we shortly shall sit down with him in his kingdom.

I have just received brother [Thomas] Butts's letter. I thank him for it. I hope his labour will not be lost. It is good for me to hear the sorrows of all. O that I were counted worthy to bear the burden of my Father's children. But may our dear friend be filled with the consolations of his Spirit.

Farewell,

S. P.

¹JW actually arrived in Bristol on July 25; CW joined him there on July 30.

²An annual fortnight-long festival in Bristol, beginning on July 25, the feast day of St. James.

³Where Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her sisters lived.

⁴Elizabeth Parsons was a former Quaker, baptized by CW; see CW to Joseph Butler, Oct. 30, 1739.

⁵Perrin spells "Dier," but almost certainly means John Dyer (1701–80), of Quaker ancestry, who is listed as a trustee of the New Room on the deed of 1746, described as a gentleman. He married Ann Stratton in 1748.

⁶Henry Durbin (1718–99) was an apothecary in Bristol. Henry and his wife Hester (Thrilly) Durbin became early members in the Wesleyan work in Bristol, with Henry serving as another trustee of the New Room chapel in 1746.

Charles Wesley In-Correspondence (1741–45)

(page 328)

Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

Address: (half torn away) “⟨To Charles⟩ Wesley at / ⟨the Foundery upper⟩ Moorfields / London.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Sarah Perrin July] 18. 1745” and “S. Perrin.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/50.

From John Bennet

Chinley
July 30, 1745

Dear Brother,

Though I have not written to you for some time, nor seen your face in the flesh for months past, yet in Spirit we have been one, and [I] doubt not but it shall be so to our lives' end. I am constrained to love you, and to bless God on your behalf, making mention of you in my prayers continually.

Oh that your faith may not fail! May the Lord strengthen you for the work he has called you out unto. though you walk in the midst of trouble, the Lord shall revive you. He shall stretch forth his hand—yea, his right hand—and save you. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. None that trust in him shall be desolate. But the fear of man bringeth a great snare.

I doubt not but you remember us in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire. The word is gladly received (though with much contention) by some; others are turned aside. All these things shall work for good to them that love God. Those that have been faithful to the grace of God now find the better of it—to wit, the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The late persecutions we have had have been as fires to purify them from dross, so that many are much more bold to speak what the Lord has done for their souls.

At Woodley in Cheshire I and three of our brethren were pressed for soldiers. But the Lord sat in heaven and laughed his enemies to scorn. For they dared not to keep me. I insisted to see their warrant, which was only a common warrant to take up strollers and vagabonds, etc. I asked them, "Surely ye will not dare to seize upon me. Ye all know I am no stroller. Consider what you are doing. If you will run the hazard, I am here, do your pleasure." They soon let me go, but my three brethren had their trial and all were delivered. Glory to God.

Since, the officers of that township have made themselves busy in searching houses under this pretence. They wanted the Methodists. I find this was to affright our people from meeting. – It was so. They neglected to meet for some time, which brought them to be miserable. And many resolved to meet, be what it would. No sooner did they take up this cross but many were filled with joy and peace. I preach there publically, out of doors, and our congregation increases. The justices have consulted together how to suppress me. I cannot hear the way is clear to them as yet.

This persecution was begun by the Dissenters. Many of the society at Woodley are Dissenters and many of our people are communicants. The minister of that place seemed very free a considerable while. But as soon as our people began to take notice of the lives and conversations of several, and speak freely, they began to be uneasy with them. And thus, as I have above mentioned, set about to prevent our meeting. For most of the press gang were dissenters. Our people have been with the minister and talked with him, desiring in love that he would use means to prevent such disturbance. His answer was [that] he thought they were not to be blamed, and he should never defend our erroneous cause.

The ministers of the Church [of England] persecute with all their strength. I desire your advice in this affair; with whom shall we join?

The people are some miles from the church, and cannot have fellowship with this people. They have a desire to know whether you or your brother once or twice in the year would not deliver them the sacraments. As to my own soul, I am weakened much for want of partaking of the ordinance. And the minister of Chapel-en-le-Frith flatly denies me the sacrament and has ordered me and some others to be put out of the Church. Dear sir, consider these things well and let me have your answer speedily.

A friend in Woodley has a desire to license a house for preaching, and thinks I should preach at the same hour the Dissenting minister does. Would this be well so to do? Can a penalty be laid upon any man for suffering preaching in his house unlicensed?

It is much the same with us at Chinley. Dr. Clegg does much harm amongst our people.¹ Many

¹Rev. James Clegg (1679–1755) was the current minister at a Dissenting chapel in Chinley.

both see it and feel it. But how to help themselves [they] know not. Mr. Clegg has affirmed your brother has led me into an error in drawing me to the Church [of England]. He shows, in a letter to me, wherein the Church is wrong in discipline, and that in eight particulars. He saith, had I read the Scripture, Mr. John Wesley could not have deceived me. But if he hath deceived me in this, I have reason to suspect in many other things, which he shall be enabled to prove. Mr. Clegg's son,² who is designed for a minister, has read your books and had a strong desire to see Mr. John Wesley. I think he will be at London in a little time. I shall then given them directions to find you. Farewell.

I hear there is little or no disturbance in Yorkshire. I have not been there since brother Nelson came away.³ If you think it well for me to remove to any place, where I can bring glory to God, I hope I shall always be ready to obey you.

I find I am weak, ready to listen to false reports, which has weakened me much. I sometimes wish that I had no outward effects. I find it is that which carries me through persecutions, more than the love of God in my soul. Pray for me, that my faith fail not. I am not destitute of love. I am kept from turning back.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. I am

Your affectionate brother and son in the gospel,

John Bennet

Address: "To / The Reverd. / Mr Cha. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Bennet July]] 1745" and "1745 Jul. J. Bennet / persecution by the Dis / senters and / the Ch[urch]."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/11.

²James Clegg Jr. (1705–82).

³John Nelson (1707–74), a stonemason from Birstall, heard JW preach while working on buildings in Moorfields, London in 1739, and was converted. On his return home he became an evangelist in the area around Birstall. In 1742 JW enrolled him as a regular traveling preacher and he remained under appointment until his death.

From James Erskine¹

September 9, 1745
Millbank

Very Dear Sir,

I wrote to you by last post but one. I am told not to go to Scotland at all; and indeed, as it is believed things are there, if I went I could hardly miss falling in the young Pretender's hands.²

General Cope,³ who commands the forces in chief in Scotland, on the young Chevalier's landing in the West Highlands, sent up a plan of operations to the regency, which was to march through the Highlands with all our King's troops, and attack him before he gathered strength. The answer was approving and ordering him to execute it, but to talk thereof to Duke Argyll then in Scotland. His Grace said it was wrong, and that the King's forces being so few should be kept at Sterling, the great pass between the north and south. And if thereby the Chevalier should get leave to overrun all the Highlands and northerly counties (2/3 of Scotland), yet the southern part and that called the West would be safe; and when our King got more troops, the Chevalier would easily be driven from the northerly. And if Cope with his handful of men ventured through some strait narrow passes in the Highland mountains, a very few could destroy him, and they not lose a man.

This being represented to the regency, they notwithstanding ordered him to perform his first plan. And the orders being sent by Marquis Tweeddale,⁴ Secretary for Scotland, were drawn so peremptorily and angry that there was no latitude left him to delay or vary. So he marched. And advancing to a place among the mountains called Dalwhinnie, where the road he was to take toward Fort William (within a few miles of which the Chevalier landed) goes to the left hand; and finding he could be quite routed in the straight passes by 1/10 of his number and the enemy not lose a man, he took the right-hand road, which goes to the town of Inverness (which is a fine place), from thence intending to march and attack the Chevalier by a better and safer road. But this put him at about 50 or 60 miles distance from the Chevalier, who thereupon marched down to Dalwhinnie without opposition, and thence to Blair of Atholl (the chief seat of the Duke of that name), and rested there about a day or two, to get the Atholl and Lord Perth's highlanders to join him, and then marched for Stirling. At the last rebellion, the old Duke of Atholl was alive and went not into the rebellion, nor yet his second son. But [the] eldest did and was attainted of high treason. On the old Duke's death, the estate and title descending to the attainted eldest son, would have forfeited. But to prevent this an Act of Parliament was passed, fixing the succession of both in the second son, who accordingly is Duke of Atholle and Lord of the Isle of Man (his grandmother was a daughter of Earl Darby's). Now the eldest son is with the Chevalier, and if they should have success would take all from his second brother. And the highlanders being much attached to the lineal succession, and what is called the right of blood, it is thought probable they will follow the eldest, and so join the Chevalier. Lord Perth is popish, as the family has been since the late King James's time, when his grandfather was Chancellor of Scotland and his brother, Earl Mellfort, Secretary of State, and both turned popish and bigoted, and following King James to France. It is feared that the Chevalier is now in possession not only of Sterling but of Edinburgh, and except one regiment of dragoons which is at Edinburgh, our king has no forces in Scotland at all but those of General Cope at Inverness, which by the highland road (and the nearest) that he marched, is upwards of 100 miles north of Sterling. And Sterling is called 24 miles northwest from Edinburgh, but here you would reckon it more than 30. Sheriff Muir, which is about four miles from Sterling, and on the north side as Sterling is on the south side of the River Forth, is the place

¹Mistakenly credited to John Erskine.

²Charles Edward Stuart (the "Young Pretender"), grandson of the exiled James II, had landed in Scotland on July 25, and was threatening to invade England in a second Jacobite rebellion.

³Sir John Cope (d. 1760).

⁴John Hay (1695–1762), 4th Marquess of Tweeddale.

where the battle was the last rebellion at which the rebels were driven back, and the King's troops returned to Sterling and waited there till more troops joined them, and particularly some regiments of Dutch and Swiss, which forced the Pretender to fly to France, and our King's troops marching through the highlands reduced them all to his Majesty's obedience. At that time the people about Glasgow and farther west, who are mostly Presbyterian and zealous for protestancy and the revolution (and suffered cruel and bloody persecution soon after the Restoration till the Revolution) sent about 5,000 men in arms on their own charges to the King's camp at Sterling. But afterwards complained that they were scarcely thanked or noticed by the government for this service, and said they would not again be so forward. I have not heard that any of them now have offered to take arms, nor that any orders or warrants for arming against the rebels have been sent to such in the highlands who we hear did offer their service to the government. But we are told that Sir Alexander McDonald, Mr. McLeod (member of Parliament for the County of Inverness)⁵ and Lord Lovat,⁶ men of great interest and who can raise many bold, hardy, fighting fellows, have assured the government that they will not assist the Chevalier. Thus, except *that* one regiment at Edinburgh, there is nothing in the south of Scotland to oppose the Chevalier. And if he be at Edinburgh, Cope is upwards of 130 miles north from him the nearest way, and cannot return but either through the highlands (where I fear there are still more than enough to fall on him in his march, if on the Chevalier's success they take [⁷] in their heads), or about by the eastern coast, which though not highlands is a much longer march, and encumbered with ferries and large rivers⁸

Thursday, September 10

The Chevalier was not so far as Sterling, when the last post came off. 300 of his men had seized the town of Perth. Your brother having read the *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, etc.,⁹ thought it too Calvinistic. He told me so, in the presence of five or six others in my own room Friday last. ... I did not see him again but a short start last Lord's Day, between the evening sermon and the meeting of the society at the Foundry. Among other very good things he said to the society, I was exceeding glad of the moderation and brotherly communion he advised them to with regard to Mr. [George] Whitefield's people. May the Lord prosper you all in the work of the gospel and not partyship.

Dear sir, most faithfully yours

J. E.

Source: published transcription; *The Manuscripts of J. Eliot Hodgkin, Esq., F. S. A. of Richmond, Surrey*, Volume 15, Part 2. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1897), 245–47.

⁵Norman MacLeod (1706–72).

⁶Simon Fraser (1667–1747), 11th Lord Lovat.

⁷a lacunae in original.

⁸This and other ellipses in the published transcription.

⁹David Dickson, *The Summe of Saving Knowledge; with the Practical Use Thereof* (Edinburgh: Swintoun & Brown, 1671).

From Sarah Perrin

[Leominster]
[September c. 15, 1745¹]

My Dear and Honoured Friend,

Friend [Elizabeth] Vigor receives thy letters of so late a date that we are still at a loss where to send to thee. But though I seem forgotten, yet I cannot refrain writing. I writ from Bristol, and since I came here I sent a letter to Garth.² May our Lord comfort thee in thine affliction. It cannot be for evil this trial is come upon thee.³ He seeth not as man seeth, and for his children he ordereth all things well. Great blessings and great sufferings are thy portion in this vale of tears, and great glory prepared for thee in the heavens above.

Dost thou not see the everlasting gate is open, how the apostles and the prophets of the Lord surround his throne, and at his right hand remains a place for their beloved brother and fellow servant? Methinks I behold a glimpse of the glory reserved for thee. I can fear no evil. Under the shadow of the Almighty shall thou be kept. Thou shalt dwell in the secret place of the most high. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder. The young lion and the dragon thou shalt trample under feet. Because thou has made the Lord thy refuge, he will be with thee in trouble. He will deliver and honour thee.

The weakest of all his children am I, the most ungrateful of all his servants. Yet he forgetteth not to be gracious. He causes water to gush forth from the rock. He spreads a table in the wilderness. O my soul, praise thou the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever.

I find great comfort in having friend [Elizabeth] Vigor with me, and as much freedom in meeting the society here as a class or band in Bristol. And we have agreed, as many of us as can, to meet every evening whilst we stay here, to worship the God of our fathers after the way which they call heresy.⁴ The enemy strives to prevent our meeting at one place and another place, but as our friend George Fox used to say, the power of God is over all. We find it so in our day.

If you have leisure we should take it as a favour if you would send a hymn or two suitable for those who are seeking the Lord, for we have but one hymn book among us.

Our love is to all our friends at Cardiff. With duty I remain,
Thy weak friend,

S. P.

My sister's kindest love is to thee.⁵

Endorsement: by CW, "Sept. 1745 S. Perrins / Faith for me."
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/51.

¹CW had been in Garth for three weeks, returning to Cardiff Sept. 9.

²CW was currently on a preaching tour in Wales.

³Perhaps referring to the leg injury CW suffered on Aug. 10, 1745, which would be over a month in healing; see *MS Journal*.

⁴I.e., her Quaker relatives.

⁵Mary (Perrin) Southall.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newcastle
September 22, 1745

[[Dear Brother,]]

I have only just time to inform you that since the account is confirmed by an express to the Mayor that General Cope is fled and his forces defeated (all that did not run away),¹ the consternation of the poor people is redoubled. The townsmen are put under arms, the walls planted with cannon; and those who live without the gates are removing their goods with all speed. We stand our ground as yet, glory be to God, to the no small astonishment of our neighbours. Brethren, pray for us, that, if need be, we may

True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay him back his dying love.²

Adieu

Endorsement: by CW, "Sept. 22. 1745 / B[rother] from N. C. / alarm'd by Cope's Defeat."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/7.³

¹Sir John Cope (d. 1760), commander-in-chief of the English forces in Scotland. He was absolved from blame for being completely outwitted by the Highlanders at Prestonpans on Sept. 20.

²Cf. *HSP* (1742), p. 25.

³Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:153.

From James Erskine¹

London
September 30, 1745

My Dear Friend,

The inclosed was sent too late to the posthouse Saturday last [Sept. 28]. I had not room to notice your many kind expressions.² None of them are lost on me. ...³

When the young Chevalier came to Edinburgh, he on the Saturday night sent to each of the ministers in the city that they might preach next day etc., as usual. But if they would [pray] at all for king, prince, etc., he desired them to keep in general and to name none. The bells rung next day at the usual hours for the forenoon and afternoon service, but no minister went to a pulpit, not daring to pray for King George by name, nor willing to forbear it (as I suppose) if they appeared at all. But whether they fled from the city on the Chevalier's approach, I have not learned. I suppose the episcopal or Church of England men have continued in their meeting houses as before, for they never prayed otherwise for king, prince, etc. than as the Chevalier enjoined the Presbyterians of the established church.

The battle that was between the Chevalier and our King's forces was upon the estate I have six miles on this side of Edinburgh, and the Preston you see mentioned in the *Gazette* is my house, gardens, and enclosures, and Preston-Pans, a village hard by, the best part of which is mine. I don't yet hear of any damage my estate has suffered, if it be not breaking down some of my walls.

The victory gained by the Chevalier appears to have been complete, and they say his highlanders fought like enraged furies, and drove all down before them in less than a quarter of hour. General Cope got soon to the town of Lauder 12 or 14 miles thence, and over hills. The dragoons behaved abominably. Colonel Gardiner,⁴ finding he could not stop the flight of his regiment of dragoons, put himself on foot at the head of the foot forces, and was so mortally wounded that he died. I hear the Chevalier visited him in his wounds and spoke civilly to him. And I am told Gardiner said to him, "You are come, sir, to seek a temporal crown, and I am going to get a crown of glory." He was an honest, brave fellow, and I believe a real Christian, as for many years he professed to be. His lady is my kinswoman and of the same name and family, and his house and land was divided from mine at Preston only by the highway.

I find our people here speak of the Chevalier's army as but about 4,000 strong. How then came they to gain so complete a victory over Cope? And yet the Chevalier had many not there; and of those there, it is said that only 2,000 were engaged, having so suddenly done their business that the rest had nothing to do. This seems to have been partly owing to the cowardice of the regiments of dragoons, both Irish. It is reported by both sides that the Chevalier, till he came to Edinburgh, was dressed in the highland habit. That at crossing the Forth and other rivers he was the first who jumped in. That he goes to the King's palace at Edinburgh to hold his levées and receive company, but lies every night in his tent in the camp, and eats there and dines on bread and a bit of cold roast beef or mutton, or any scraps. That he headed his men and went on with them at the battle. That on his standard, and the cockades his men wear, there is on one side a crown and on the other a coffin, with some such motto as this: "The one or the other." That there is no sort of violence committed by his people but what is unavoidable by an army. That in his march from Sterling to Edinburgh, one of his highlanders stole a sheep, for which he held a

¹Mistakenly credited to John Erskine.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³This and other ellipses are found in the published source.

⁴Col. James Gardiner (1688–1745) was killed at the Battle of Preston-pans, on Sept. 21, 1745. Philip Doddridge commemorated him with *The Christian Warrior Animated and Crowned; a sermon occasioned by the heroick death of ... Col. James Gardiner, ... Preached at Northampton, October 13* (London: J. Waugh, 1745). In 1726 Gardiner married Lady Frances Erskine (1700–66), daughter of David Erskine (1672–1745), 9th Earl of Buchan, and his wife Frances (Fairfax) Erskine (1675–1722).

council of war on him, and had him immediately shot. That he has levied a contribution in the city of Edinburgh of 12,000£ sterling, and of 15,000£ from Glasgow, which was demanded peremptorily. That at Perth (and Edinburgh) he danced with the ladies at their balls and assemblies, does all he can to ingratiate himself with all sorts.

The Dutch troops and those of our own come from Flanders are marching north, and it is said that Marshall Wade sets out Wednesday next to command them;⁵ and that all the rest of the British in the Netherlands are ordered immediately home. This will make an army much superior every way to any which I can see how the Chevalier can get except there be a French or Spanish invasion in his behalf. And they cannot easily land on us, there being so many of our King's navy now on all sides of the island. Admiral Vernon⁶ and his squadron now in the Downs is to sail northwards, and for that purpose he has got pilots from Hull and Newcastle, that are well acquainted with the Scotch coast. The two from Hull I travelled with for two stages as I returned from the country, they in one post-chaise and I in another. Both appeared to be honest, religious men. They are Dissenters. One of them is acquainted with some of your people at the Foundry and entreated me to take a note of one of them, who by trade is a chapman: that I might call for him, which I intend to do at the first time I can find for it. ...

J. E.

Source: published transcription; *The Manuscripts of J. Eliot Hodgkin, Esq., F. S. A. of Richmond, Surrey*, Volume 15, Part 2. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1897), 247–48.

⁵George Wade (1673–1748).

⁶Edward Vernon (1684–1757).

From Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright

Frith Street [London]

October 4th, 1745

Dearest Brother,

I received both your kind letters, and thank you for them.¹ But [I] am surprised you have heard no account of my better health, though I could not write myself, since many have seen me who I know correspond with you, and some of them are gone to Bath and Bristol lately, especially sister Naylor² and Mrs. Wigginton.³

Indeed, I continue exceeding weak, keeping my bed except when I rise to have it made, and it is almost incredible what a skeleton I am grown, so that my bones are ready to come through my skin. But, through mercy the fever that immediately threatens me (with a violent cough and some fatal symptoms) is gone off, and I am more likely to recover than ever; nay, if I could once get my strength I should not make a doubt of it. This ease of body and great calm of mind I firmly believe is owing to the prayer of faith. I think this support the more extraordinary because I have no sense of God's presence ever since I took my bed, and you know what we are when left to ourselves under great pain and apprehensions of death. Yet, though I am yet in desertion, and the enemy is very busy, I enjoy so great a measure of quietness and thankfulness as is really above nature. Hallelujah! Whether or no the bitterness of death is past, I am perfectly easy and resigned, having given up this, with dear Will's spiritual welfare,⁴ and all other things, to the sovereign Physician of souls and bodies.

Dearest brother, no selfish consideration can ever make me wish your stay in this most dangerous, diabolical world. Yet we must always say, "Thy will be done."⁵ And I am pleased still to think God will permit us to meet again, though I cannot say I desire life a minute longer, even upon these terms. Willy gives his love, and would be unfeignedly glad to see you. Pray join in prayer with me still that he may persevere. Molly too gives her duty and desires your prayers.⁶ Neither of their souls prosper as I could wish them. Strange that though we know sanctification is a gradual work, we want our neighbours to go faster than we can ourselves. But poor Willy only waits for the first gift. I have not one fear for those who are truly in earnest.

If the nation is run stark mad in politics, though never a jot the wiser or holier, no wonder that the person you mentioned in your last is brimful often, though she keeps within bounds, and does not talk treason, whatever she may think. I am glad the believers I know seem to run into no extreme about the present affairs, either of losing the one thing needful, by talking too much or praying too little. The Lord give us a right judgment in all things.

My prayers, love, and best wishes attend all dear friends at Bristol, from whom I have received innumerable obligations: but, above all, Mrs. Vigor and her family,⁷ who showed unwearied love in serving and humouring me; with my never-to-be-forgotten friend and sister in spirit, Sally Perrin, who, if

¹These letters are not known to survive.

²Mary Naylor (1715–57), of Bath, was drawn into Methodism by CW in 1745 (see *MS Journal*, Oct. 9, 1745), and traveled on occasion with him in the area. See CW's six-part hymn on her death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 49–59.

³Ann (Bundy) Wigginton (d. 1757), the wife of Ebenezer Wigginton (d. 1745) of Bristol; CW baptized Ebenezer on Oct. 26, 1739 (see *MS Journal*). See CW's hymn on the occasion of her death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 31–34.

⁴Her husband William Wright.

⁵Matt. 6:10.

⁶Molly is likely a servant, as they had no children that survived to adulthood.

⁷Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor and her three sisters.

possible, showed more kindness in the latter end than beginning. Give my particular love and humble service to Dr. [John] Middleton; poor Nancy Perrot, my companion in misery; Mrs. Burdock and Miss, who were most wonderfully civil to me;⁸ and Mr. and Mrs. Wiggington; with Stephen and Betty Maxfield; poor sister Spear and Mrs. Williams, who spared no pains to serve me; and Sally Colston, Sukey Peck,⁹ and Mrs. Halfpenny, with her daughter,¹⁰ who have all been very loving and obliging. And may our best Master reward their labour of love a thousandfold. It has been one of my heaviest crosses that I have been unable to write to them all; but if ever I recover I despair not of doing it yet, if acceptable from a novice. You think, perhaps, I may write to them as well as you. But dear Charles, I write now in bed, and you cannot believe what it costs me. I trust to remember and bless you many times yet before I die; wishing we may have another happy meeting first, if it is best. So, with prayers for the universal church, ministers, assistants, and all mankind, I take leave to subscribe myself

Your most obliged and loving sister, etc.

Mehet. Wright

Forgive all blunders. Adieu

Endorsement: by CW, “Oct. 4, 1745 S[ister] Wright / loving and faithful.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/20.¹¹

⁸Ebenezer and Agnes (Hatch) Burdock (d. 1760) were the parents of Mary (1719–49), Sarah (1709–89) and Susanna (1720–72) Burdock.

⁹JW mentions a Susy Peck, of Bristol in his diary, Sept 3, 1740, *Works*, 19:433.

¹⁰One of these two would be Elizabeth Halfpenny, see her testimonial written for CW in 1742; the other may be Sarah Halfpenny, buried in 1758 in Bristol.

¹¹A transcription was published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 316–17.

From Sarah Clay¹

[London]
c. 1745–1746²

Reverend Sir,

In the year 1739 I went one Sunday morning to Islington church. There was a great stir among the people. I was very inquisitive to know the cause, and gave great attention. At last I heard them say, ‘One of the Wesleys is to preach.’ When you went up into the pulpit I fixed my eyes on you, and thought you were more than man. Your text I have forgot. But you spoke so plain to the rich and great that it delighted me. I went home and told my mother I had heard a man at Islington church that I would go ten miles to hear again. I felt myself strangely drawn after something, but I could not tell what. The next Sunday I went again. Now I had nothing to do with others, for as Nathan said to David, ‘Thou art the man.’³ I found my soul greatly alarmed, so that I never omitted going to the church till they turned you out.⁴ After I had lost you for some time, I grew very careless and indifferent again.

About this time I heard much talk of Mr. [George] Whitefield. And one day seeing a great concourse of people going to Kennington Common to hear him, I thought I would go too.⁵ While Mr. Whitefield preached, you stood by his side, and when he had done you gave out this hymn,

Angel of God whate’er betide,
Thy summons I obey;
I ever take thee for my guide,
And walk in thee my way.⁶

I found such a warmth come into my soul, that I thought I could have gone all over the world to hear you. I went home very much affected, and my soul was drawn out after the Lord.

Now I began to search the Scriptures. Aforetime I never liked to read any but the historical part. All the epistles I knew were written to believers; and I knew I was an unbeliever, and that, if I died as I was, must go to hell. For that text was brought to my mind, ‘Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.’⁷ I knew Christ was that stone, and that I was not broken. So I went up and down seeking rest but finding none. Wherever I went to hear, I was condemned. I felt the sinfulness of sin, and had a real desire to flee from the wrath to come. The 7th chapter to the Romans pointed out my state. I could have read it forever. But I saw and felt that if I had the sins of the whole world on my single soul, that would not keep me out of Christ if I could believe. Yet

¹Sarah Clay (c. 1717–83) was a member of an unmarried women’s band at the Foundery from Apr. 1742. She was leader of such a band from Nov. 1742, and a member of the select society from its beginning in Dec. 1743. When JW buried her remains on Feb. 11, 1783, he spoke of her as ‘the last of those holy women who ... forty years ago devoted themselves wholly to God’ (JW, *Journal, Works*, 23:262). Sarah prepared this autobiography at the request of CW, which JW published after her death. The heading in *AM* wrongly identifies the letter as written to JW.

²The published transcription does not include a date. The events recorded run through 1742–43, and the ending suggests it is written sometime not too long after.

³2 Sam. 12:7.

⁴CW served as curate to Rev. George Stonehouse at St. Mary’s Church in Islington, preaching often, from mid-1738 until the church wardens forbade him on Apr. 29, 1739 (see CW, *MS Journal*).

⁵This was likely the sermon recorded by CW (in *MS Journal*) on Sunday evening, June 3, 1739.

⁶CW, ‘At Setting Out to Preach the Gospel’, st. 1, *HSP* (1740), 113.

⁷Matt. 21:44.

I could as well reach heaven with my hand as believe. The devil tempted me much, telling me my day of grace was past, and that there was no mercy for me now. And therefore I knew not what to do.

One day as I was very sad, a person came to me in whom my heart had been greatly bound up. He said, ‘Sally, will you take a walk?’ I was at a stand, for I had no mind to go anywhere. At last I consented. But before I went out, all on a sudden there came such a peace into my soul that I knew not where I was. My trouble was all gone. I stood like one confounded! Oh, how did I wish I had not been going out. But I thought I must go because I had promised. Accordingly I went. But all the day I did nothing but weep with a sense of the love of God. He who was⁸ with me said, ‘Sally, what makes you weep?’ I said, ‘Not a sense of misery, but because I am happy.’ I cannot express what the Lord gave me to feel all that day. By faith I saw the Lord looking down upon me with complacency and love. Oh, I thought, if I could but hide myself under the earth before him! I now found that what was dear to me as a right hand, or a right eye, I had power to cast them from me, with a resolution never to resume them again. Yet I could not say my sins were forgiven. I could not call Jesus ‘Lord’ by the Holy Ghost.

After the Foundery was taken, I came constantly to it, and could not rest night or day till I had a clear sense of the pardoning love of God. One Sunday I went to St. Paul’s [Cathedral] and sat down at the bottom of the aisle. Many of our people were there. I could compare myself to nothing but a dead dog before the Lord. When I came home I could neither eat nor drink. At night I went to the Foundery, and heard you preach on the 37th chapter of Ezekiel.⁹ When you came to those words, ‘Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts’,¹⁰ I felt my soul as it were cut off from God, and as if I was just dropping into hell. But as you repeated the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses, my soul was brought out of the grave of sin, and my feet set upon the Rock of eternal ages. Now I could say, ‘Thou art my Lord and my God.’¹¹ And with St. Paul, whether in the body or out of the body I could not tell.¹² But if I had had a thousand lives, I could have laid them all down for the sake of Jesus. O what love had I now in my soul! I could have laid down my life for the worst sinner out of hell. I went home to my house justified. I was now exceeding happy. I walked upon the high places of the earth, and was fed with the heritage of Jacob my father! Before this I had saved a little money, but now it all went; if I had had ever so much it would all have gone.

And now I thought I should see war no more, and that the work was done. But I soon found myself mistaken. Though I always retained a sense of the love of God, and never lost it from that time to this, the devil began to assault me, telling me it was all a delusion and I was deceiving myself. And indeed I reasoned so much with him that I was brought into great heaviness. But the Lord soon answered for himself, giving me the spirit of adoption, whereby I could continually cry, ‘Abba, Father.’¹³ And now I had put on Christ, I saw I must go and die with him; die to everything here below, that I might rise with him and sit with him in heavenly places.

But in a short time he began so to uncover my heart that I saw there was nothing but pray or perish. For I felt pride, anger, and all the roots of bitterness to that degree, together with the temptations of the devil, that I thought I should go out of my senses. I have been constrained to cry out on such occasions,

⁸Orig., ‘He was were with me’.

⁹This was possibly on Apr. 7, 1740; a journal letter records that CW preached at the Foundery that day, but gives no text.

¹⁰Ezek. 37:11.

¹¹Cf. John 20:28.

¹²Cf. 2 Cor. 12:3.

¹³Rom. 8:15.

What have I known since thee I knew,
What trials hast thou brought me through,
Hardly I yet can credit give;
Surely my soul, 'tis all a dream,
Sav'd as by fire, if sav'd I seem,
If still the life of grace I live.

What have I felt, while from within,
Full of the energy of sin,
Horror to think, and death to tell;
The prince of darkness rul'd his hour,
Suffer'd to show forth all his pow'r,
And shake me o'er the mouth of hell.¹⁴

But blessed be the Lord! He showed me a fair prospect, by which I surmounted all my trouble.

Your preaching, sir, was now greatly blessed to my soul, in building me up in my most holy faith. And the Lord guided me by his blessed Spirit, and gave me a watchful heart. I was driven to many extremes, but the Lord kept me daily on the right side. I found such a hunger and thirst after inward holiness that it drank up my spirits. The Lord indeed gave me many of the bunches of grapes of the good land. I seldom came to the preaching but I died away with the power of God. But still it was not the thing I desired. I wanted the bent of backsliding taken away. I wanted to love God with all my heart, and soul, and strength. I wanted my soul to be so united to God as to become one spirit with him; and that nothing might stand between him and my soul, no not for a moment. For this I mourned in secret places. And one day as I was deeply mourning the Lord Jesus showed me the Father. I never knew the worth of Jesus as I did now. My soul was so let into the attributes of God: his love, his mercy, his holiness, his purity; but above all, his strict justice! And now I live every day as if it were my last. Yet I thought I would live a thousand times more strict if it were possible. O the love that I felt for the Lord Jesus. Now indeed I saw nothing would have done but that great atonement. For the space of three weeks my very flesh seemed to crawl upon my bones with the awfulness of God upon my soul. O how did I long to be lost in the fullness of his love. Indeed I was in sweet distress. I had none to speak to but God. But here I could not rest. I must go on. I had not got that which I had in view. I found no gift or grace could save me, but the Giver himself.

I went on about three months after that in close walking with God. And one day as I was at home at work, longing and looking for that great salvation, all my natural strength was taken away from me. Indeed I was brought to nothing. But oh sir, where shall I begin, or what shall I say? All words must fail. I must be silent before the Lord. My soul was brought so nigh to God the Father, and so united to him, I could only say, 'It is finished.'¹⁵ He has finished the transgression and made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. All the day I could do nothing but say to everyone, 'God is love, and whosoever dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.'¹⁶ My soul was brought into the inner court. It entered as it were within the veil. Now I knew what that meaneth, 'I have written unto you fathers, because you know him that was from the beginning.'¹⁷ Now I knew indeed that my soul had cast anchor. I found that rest of lasting joy and peace, where all is calm within. I knew all was quietness and assurance forever. I found the Lord did take away all my unbelief, all my bent to backsliding. I found it as natural to pray as it was to breathe.

¹⁴Cf. CW, 'The Just Shall Live by Faith', sts. 15–16, *HSP* (1740), 164.

¹⁵John 19:30.

¹⁶Cf. 1 John 4:16.

¹⁷Cf. 1 John 2:14.

This was about two years after I was justified. From that time I have found that whatever comes from any quarter, whether from men or devils, it is always broad day between God and my soul. At present, I find nothing stands between, no not for a moment. But still I am a beggar continually, and I must receive out of his bounty, grace upon grace. Methinks I have yet everything to learn, and I feel my soul every moment in the school of Christ, waiting to know and do his will more perfectly. The Lord is continually opening fresh scenes of glory to my soul. I know that while I am in the body he will enlarge my soul, and fill it with his fullness, and when I have done receiving, I shall cease to be.

I blessed the Lord from the first time I heard you and your brother [JW]. I knew you were the true ministers of Jesus Christ. And I never had a desire to hear any other but those in connection with you. I feel a love stronger than death to you all, for your work sake. I hope, sir, you will not cease to pray for,

Your dutiful daughter,

Sarah Clay

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 6 (1783): 528–30, 582–84, 641–43.