

affirm they will perish everlastingly? But had they died in gross sin, we are sure they had fallen into "the fire that never shall be quenched."

I have now considered, as far as my time would permit, (not everything in your letter, whether of moment or no, but,) those points which I conceived to be of the greatest weight. That God may lead us both into all truth, and that we may not drop our love in the pursuit of it, is the continual prayer of,

Reverend Sir,

Your friend and servant for Christ's sake,
JOHN WESLEY.

June 17, 1746.

A LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON;

OCCASIONED BY HIS LORDSHIP'S LATE CHARGE TO HIS CLERGY.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away. Job xxxii. 21, 22.

MY LORD,

1. WHEN abundance of persons have for several years laid to my charge things that I knew not, I have generally thought it my duty to pass it over in silence, to be "as one that heard not." But the case is different when a person of your Lordship's character calls me forth to answer for myself. Silence now might be interpreted contempt. It might appear like a sullen disregard, a withholding honour from him to whom honour is due, were it only on account of his high office in the Church,

more especially when I apprehend so eminent a person as this to be under considerable mistakes concerning me. Were I now to be silent, were I not to do what was in my power for the removal of those mistakes, I could not "have a conscience void of offence," either "towards God or towards man."

2. But I am sensible how difficult it is to speak in such a manner as I ought, and as I desire to do. When your Lordship published those queries, under the title of "Observations," I did not lie under the same difficulty; because, as your name was not inscribed, I had "the liberty to stand, as it were, on even ground." But I must now always remember to whom I speak. And may the God "whom I serve in the gospel of his Son," enable me to do it with deep seriousness of spirit, with modesty and humility; and, at the same time, with the utmost plainness of speech; seeing we must "both stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."

3. In this, then, I entreat your Lordship to bear with me; and in particular, when I speak of myself, (how tender a point!) just as freely as I would of another man. Let not this be termed boasting. Is there not a cause? Can I refrain from speaking, and be guiltless? And if I speak at all, ought I not to speak (what appears to me to be) the whole truth? Does not your Lordship desire that I should do this? I will then, God being my helper. And you will bear with me in my folly, (if such it is,) with my speaking in the simplicity of my heart.

4. Your Lordship begins, "There is another species of enemies, who give shameful disturbance to the parochial Clergy, and use very unwarrantable methods to prejudice their people against them, and to seduce their flocks from them; the Methodists and Moravians, who agree in annoying the established ministry, and in drawing over to themselves the lowest and most ignorant of the people, by pretences to greater sanctity." (*Charge*, p. 4.)

But have no endeavours been used to show them their error? Yes; your Lordship remarks, "Endeavours have not been wanting. But though these endeavours have caused some abatement in the pomp and grandeur with which these people for some time acted," (truly, one would not have expected it from them!) "yet they do not seem to have made any impression upon their leaders." (*Ibid.* p. 6.)

Your Lordship adds, "Their innovations in points of discipline I do not intend to enter into at present. But to inquire what the doctrines are which they spread." (*Ibid.* p. 7.) "Doctrines big with pernicious influences upon practice." (*Ibid.* p. 8.)

Six of these your Lordship mentions, after having premised, "It is not at all needful, to the end of guarding against them, to charge the particular tenets upon the particular persons among them." (*Ibid.* p. 7.) Indeed, my Lord, it is needful in the highest degree. For if the Minister who is to guard his people, either against Peter Böhler, Mr. Whitefield, or me, does not know what our particular tenets are, he must needs "run as uncertainly, and fight as one that beateth the air."

I will fairly own which of these belong to me. The indirect practices which your Lordship charges upon me may then be considered; together with the consequences of these doctrines, and your Lordship's instructions to the Clergy.

5. "The First that I shall take notice of," says your Lordship, "is the Antinomian doctrine." (*Ibid.* p. 8.) The Second, "that Christ has done all, and left nothing for us to do, but to believe." (*Ibid.* p. 9.) These belong not to me. I am unconcerned therein. I have earnestly opposed, but did never teach or embrace, them.

"There is another notion," your Lordship says, "which we find propagated throughout the writings of those people, and that is, the making inward, secret, and sudden impulses the guides of their actions, resolutions, and designs." (*Ibid.* p. 14.)

Mr. Church urged the same objection before: "Instead of making the word of God the rule of his actions, he follows only his secret impulse." I beg leave to return the same answer. "In the whole compass of language there is not a proposition which less belongs to me than this. I have declared again and again, that I make the word of God 'the rule' of all my actions; and that I no more follow any 'secret impulse' instead thereof, than I follow Mahomet or Confucius." (*Answer to Mr. Church*, page 406.)

6. Before I proceed, suffer me to observe, here are three grievous errors charged on the Moravians, Mr. Whitefield, and me, conjointly, in none of which I am any more concerned than in the doctrine of the metempsychosis! But it was "not needful to charge particular tenets on particular

persons." Just as needful, my Lord, as it is not to put a stumbling-block in the way of our brethren ; not to lay them under an almost insuperable temptation of condemning the innocent with the guilty. I beseech your Lordship to answer in your own conscience before God, whether you did not foresee how many of your hearers would charge these tenets upon me ; nay, whether you did not design they should. If so, my Lord, is this Christianity ? Is it humanity ? Let me speak plain. Is it honest Heathenism ?

7. I am not one jot more concerned in instantaneous justification, as your Lordship explains it, viz., " A sudden, instantaneous justification, by which the person receives from God a certain seal of his salvation, or an absolute assurance of being saved at last." (*Charge*, p. 11.) "Such an instantaneous working of the Holy Spirit as finishes the business of salvation once for all." (*Ibid.*) I neither teach nor believe it ; and am therefore clear of all the consequences that may arise therefrom. I believe "a gradual improvement in grace and goodness," I mean, in the knowledge and love of God, is a good "testimony of our present sincerity towards God ;" although I dare not say, It is "the only true ground of humble assurance," or the only foundation on which a Christian builds his "hopes of acceptance and salvation." For I think, "other foundation" of these "can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ."

8. To the charge of holding "sinless perfection," as your Lordship states it, I might likewise plead, Not guilty ; seeing one ingredient thereof, in your Lordship's account, is "freedom from temptation." (*Ibid.* p. 17.) Whereas I believe, "there is no such perfection in this life as implies an entire deliverance from manifold temptations." But I will not decline the charge. I will repeat once more my coolest thoughts upon this head ; and that in the very terms which I did several years ago, as I presume your Lordship cannot be ignorant :—

"What, it may be asked, do you mean by 'one that is perfect,' or, 'one that is as his Master?' We mean one in whom is 'the mind which was in Christ,' and who so 'walketh as He walked ;' a man that 'hath clean hands and a pure heart ;' or that is 'cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit ;' one 'in whom there is no occasion of stumbling,' and who, accordingly, 'doth not commit sin.' To declare this a little more particularly : We understand by that scriptural expression, 'a

perfect man,' one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word: 'From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. I will also save you from all your uncleanness.' We understand hereby, one whom God hath sanctified throughout, even in 'body, soul, and spirit;' one who 'walketh in the light, as He is in the light,' in whom 'is no darkness at all;' the blood of Jesus Christ his Son having 'cleansed him from all sin.'

"This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet I live not, but Christ liveth in me.' He 'is holy, as God who called him is holy,' both in life, and 'in all manner of conversation.' He 'loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and serveth him with all his strength.' He 'loveth his neighbour' (every man) 'as himself;' yea, 'as Christ loved us;' them in particular that 'despitefully use him and persecute him,' because 'they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of 'the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love.' And 'whatsoever he doeth, either in word or deed,' he doeth 'it all in the name,' in the love and power, 'of the Lord Jesus.' In a word, he doeth the will of God 'on earth, as it is done in heaven.'

"This is to be 'a perfect man,' to be 'sanctified throughout, created anew in Jesus Christ;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God,' (to use Archbishop Usher's words,) 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable unto God through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, 'to show forth his praise who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.' O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus 'be made perfect in one!'"

9. I conjure you, my Lord, by the mercies of God, if these are not the words of truth and soberness, point me out wherein I have erred from the truth; show me clearly wherein I have spoken either beyond or contrary to the word of God. But might I not humbly entreat, that your Lordship, in doing this, would abstain from such expressions as these: "If they will but put themselves under their direction and discipline,—after their course of discipline is once over," (*ibid.* p. 15,) as not suitable

either to the weight of the subject, or the dignity of your Lordship's character. And might I not expect something more than these loose assertions, that this is "a delusion altogether groundless; a notion contrary to the whole tenor both of the Old and New Testament;" that "the Scriptures forbid all thought of it, as vain, arrogant, and presumptuous;" that they "represent all mankind, without distinction, as subject to sin and corruption" (*subject to sin and corruption!* strong words!) "during their continuance in this world; and require no more than an honest desire and endeavour to find ourselves less and less in a state of imperfection." (*Ibid.* pp. 15, 16.)

Is it not from your Lordship's entirely mistaking the question, not at all apprehending what perfection I teach, that you go on to guard against the same imaginary consequences, as your Lordship did in the "Observations?" Surely, my Lord, you never gave yourself the trouble to read the answer given in the "Farther Appeal," to every objection which you now urge afresh; seeing you do not now appear to know any more of my sentiments than if you had never proposed one question, nor received one answer, upon the subject!

10. If your Lordship designed to show my real sentiments concerning the last doctrine which you mention, as one would imagine by your adding, "These are his own words," (*ibid.* p. 18,) should you not have cited all my own words? at least all the words of that paragraph, and not have mangled it as Mr. Church did before?

It runs thus: "Saturday, 28. I showed at large, in order to answer those who taught that none but they who are full of faith and the Holy Ghost ought ever to communicate, (1.) That the Lord's supper was ordained by God to be a means of conveying to men either preventing, or justifying, or sanctifying grace, according to their several necessities. (2.) That the persons for whom it was ordained are all those who know and feel that they want the grace of God, either to restrain them from sin, or to 'show their sins forgiven,' or to 'renew their souls' in the image of God. (3.) That inasmuch as we come to his table, not to give him anything, but to receive whatsoever he sees best for us, there is no previous preparation indispensably necessary, but a desire to receive whatsoever he pleases to give. And, (4.) That no fitness is required at the time of communicating, but a sense of our state, of our utter sinfulness and help-

lessness; every one who knows he is fit for hell, being just fit to come to Christ, in this, as well as all other ways of his appointment." (Vol. I. p. 280)

In the Second Letter to Mr. Church, p. 434, I explain myself farther on this head: "I am sorry to find you still affirm, that, with regard to the Lord's supper also, I 'advance many injudicious, false, and dangerous things. Such as, (1.) 'That a man ought to communicate without a sure trust in God's mercy through Christ.' (Page 117.) You mark these as my words; but I know them not. (2.) 'That there is no previous preparation indispensably necessary, but a desire to receive whatsoever God pleases to give.' But I include abundantly more in that desire, than you seem to apprehend, even a willingness to know and do the whole will of God. (3.) 'That no fitness is required at the time of communicating,' (I recite the whole sentence,) 'but a sense of our state, of our utter sinfulness and helplessness; every one who knows he is fit for hell, being just fit to come to Christ, in this, as well as in all other ways of his appointment.' But neither can this sense of our utter sinfulness and helplessness subsist without earnest desires of universal holiness."

And now, what can I say? Had your Lordship never seen this? That is hardly to be imagined. But if you had, how was it possible your Lordship should thus explicitly and solemnly charge me, in the presence of God and all my brethren, (only the person so charged was not present,) with "meaning by those words to set aside self-examination, and repentance for sins past, and resolutions of living better for the time to come, as things no way necessary to make a worthy communicant?" (*Charge*, p. 18.)

If an evidence at the bar should swerve from truth, an equitable judge may place the thing in a true light. But if the judge himself shall bear false witness, where then can we find a remedy?

Actual preparation was here entirely out of the question. It might be absolutely and indispensably necessary, for anything I had either said or meant to the contrary: For it was not at all in my thoughts. And the habitual preparation which I had in terms declared to be indispensably necessary was, "a willingness to know and to do the whole will of God," and "earnest desires of universal holiness." Does your Lordship think, this

is "meant to set aside all repentance for sins past, and resolutions of living better for the time to come?"

11. Your Lordship next falls with all your might upon *that strange assertion*, as you term it, "We come to his table, not to give him anything, but to receive whatsoever he sees best for us." "Whereas," says your Lordship, "in the exhortation at the time of receiving, the people are told that they must give most humble and hearty thanks,—and immediately after receiving, both Minister and people join in offering and presenting themselves before God." (*Ibid.* pp. 20, 21.) O God! in what manner are the most sacred things here treated! the most venerable mysteries of our religion! What quibbling, what playing upon words, is here! *Not to give him anything.* "Yes, to give him thanks." O my Lord, are these the words of a Father of the Church!

12. Your Lordship goes on: "To the foregoing account of these modern principles and doctrines, it may not be improper to subjoin a few observations upon the indirect practices of the same people in gaining proselytes." (*Ibid.* pp. 23, 24.)

"I. They persuade the people, that the established worship, with a regular attendance upon it, is not sufficient to answer the ends of devotion."

Your Lordship mentioned this likewise in the *Observations*. In your fourth query it stood thus: "Whether a due and regular attendance on the public offices of religion, paid in a serious and composed way, does not answer the true ends of devotion." Suffer me to repeat part of the answer then given:—

"I suppose by 'devotion' you mean public worship; by the 'true ends' of it, the love of God and man; and by 'a due and regular attendance on the public offices of religion, paid in a serious and composed way,' the going as often as we can to our parish church, and to the sacrament there administered. If so, the question is, Whether this attendance on those offices does not produce the love of God and man. I answer, Sometimes it does, and sometimes it does not. I myself thus attended them for many years; and yet am conscious to myself, that, during that whole time, I had no more of the love of God than a stone. And I know many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of serious persons who are ready to testify the same thing."

I subjoined, (1.) "We continually exhort all who attend on our preaching, to attend the offices of the Church. And they

do pay a more regular attendance there than ever they did before. (2.) Their attending the Church did not, in fact, answer those ends at all till they attended this preaching also. (3.) It is the preaching remission of sins through Jesus Christ which alone answers the true ends of devotion."

II. 13. "They censure the Clergy," says your Lordship, "as less zealous than themselves in the several branches of the ministerial function. For this they are undeservedly reproached by these noisy itinerant leaders." (*Charge*, pp. 24, 25.)

My Lord, I am not conscious to myself of this. I do not willingly compare myself with any man; much less do I reproach my brethren of the Clergy, whether they deserve it or not. But it is needless to add any more on this head than what was said above a year ago:—

"I must explain myself a little on that practice which you so often term 'abusing the Clergy.' I have many times great sorrow and heaviness in my heart on account of these my brethren. And this sometimes constrains me to speak to them, in the only way which is now in my power; and sometimes (though rarely) to speak of them; of a few, not all in general. In either case, I take an especial care, (1.) To speak nothing but the truth. (2.) To speak this with all plainness; and, (3.) With love, and in the spirit of meekness. Now, if you will call this abusing, railing, or reviling, you must. But still I dare not refrain from it. I must thus rail, thus abuse sinners of all sorts and degrees, unless I will perish with them." (*Second Letter to Mr. Church*, pp. 479, 480.)

III. 14. "They value themselves upon extraordinary strictnesses and severities in life, and such as are beyond what the rules of Christianity require. They captivate the people by such professions and appearances of uncommon sanctity. But that which can never fail of a general respect is, a quiet and exemplary life, free from the many follies and indiscretions which those restless and vagrant Teachers are apt to fall into." (*Charge*, p. 25.)

By "extraordinary strictnesses and severities," I presume your Lordship means, the abstaining from wine and animal food; which, it is sure, Christianity does not require. But if you do, I fear your Lordship is not thoroughly informed of the matter of fact. I began to do this about twelve years ago, when I had no thought of "annoying parochial Ministers," or of "captivating" any "people" thereby, unless it were the Chica-

saw or Choctaw Indians. But I resumed the use of them both, about two years after, for the sake of some who thought I made it a point of conscience; telling them, "I *will* eat flesh while the world standeth," rather than "make my brother to offend." Dr. Cheyne advised me to leave them off again, assuring me, "Till you do, you will never be free from fevers." And since I have taken his advice, I have been free (blessed be God!) from all bodily disorders.* Would to God I knew any method of being equally free from all "follies and indiscretions!" But this I never expect to attain till my spirit returns to God.

15. But in how strange a manner does your Lordship represent this! What a construction do you put upon it! "Appearances of an uncommon sanctity, in order to captivate the people. Pretensions to more exalted degrees of strictness, to make their way into weak minds and fickle heads." (*Ibid.* p. 25.) "Pretences to greater sanctity, whereby they draw over to themselves the most ignorant of the people." (*Ibid.* p. 4.) If these are "appearances of uncommon sanctity," (which, indeed, might bear a dispute,) how does your Lordship know that they are only appearances? that they do not spring from the heart? Suppose these were "exalted degrees of strictness," is your Lordship absolutely assured that we practise them only "to make *our* way into weak minds and fickle heads?" Where is the proof that these "pretences to greater sanctity," (as your Lordship is pleased to phrase them,) are mere pretences, and have nothing of reality or sincerity in them?

My Lord, this is an accusation of the highest nature. If we are guilty, we are not so much as moral Heathens. We are monsters, not only unworthy of the Christian name, but unfit for human society. It tears up all pretences to the love of God and man; to justice, mercy, or truth. But how is it proved? Or does your Lordship read the heart, and so pass sentence without any proof at all? O my Lord, ought an accusation of the lowest kind to be thus received, even against the lowest of the people? How much less can this be reconciled with the apostolical advice to the Bishop of Ephesus: "Against a Presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses;" and those face to face. When it is thus proved, "them that sin, rebuke before all." Your Lordship doubtless remembers

* I continued this about two years.

the words that follow : (How worthy to be written in your heart!) "I charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." (1 Timothy v. 19-21.)

IV. 16. "They mislead the people into an opinion of the high merit of punctual attendances on their performances, to the neglect of the business of their stations." (*Ibid.* p. 26.) My Lord, this is not so. You yourself, in this very Charge, have cleared us from one part of this accusation. You have borne us witness, (*ibid.* p. 10,) that we disclaim all merit, even in (really) good works; how much more in such works as we continually declare are not good, but very evil! such as the attending sermons, or any public offices whatever, "to the neglect of the business of our station."

When your Lordship urged this before, in the "Observations," I openly declared my belief, "that true religion cannot lead into a disregard or disesteem of the common duties and offices of life; that, on the contrary, it leads men to discharge all those duties with the strictest and closest attention; that Christianity requires this attention and diligence, in all stations, and in all conditions; that the performance of the lowest offices of life, as unto God, is truly a serving of Christ; and that this is the doctrine I preach continually;" (*Farther Appeal*, Part I. p. 60;) a fact whereof any man may easily be informed. Now, if, after all this, your Lordship will repeat the charge, as if I had not once opened my mouth concerning it, I cannot help it. I can say no more. I commend my cause to God.

17. Having considered what your Lordship has advanced concerning dangerous doctrines and indirect practices, I now come to the instructions your Lordship gives to the Clergy of your diocese.

How awful a thing is this! The very occasion carries in it a solemnity not to be expressed. Here is an angel of the Church of Christ, one of the stars in God's right hand, calling together all the subordinate Pastors, for whom he is to give an account to God; and directing them (in the name and by the authority of "the great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ, the First Begotten from the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth") how to "make full proof of their ministry," that they may be "pure from the blood of all men;" how to "take heed unto

themselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers ;” how to “ feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood !” To this end they are all assembled together. And what is the substance of all his instructions ?—“ Reverend brethren, I charge you all, lift up your voice like a trumpet ; and warn and arm and fortify all mankind against a people called *Methodists* !”

True it is, your Lordship gives them several advices ; but all in order to this end. You direct them to “ inculcate the excellency of our Liturgy, as a wise, grave, and serious service ;” to “ show their people, that a diligent attendance on their business is a serving of God ;” “ punctually to perform both the public offices of the Church, and all other pastoral duties ;” and to “ engage the esteem of their parishioners by a constant regularity of life.” But all these your Lordship recommends *eo nomine*, as means to that great end, the arming and fortifying their people against the Moravians or Methodists, and their doctrines.

Is it possible ! Could your Lordship discern no other enemies of the gospel of Christ ? Are there no other heretics or schismatics on earth, or even within the four seas ? Are there no Papists, no Deists in the land ? Or are their errors of less importance ? Or are their numbers in England less considerable, or less likely to increase ? Does it appear, then, that they have lost their zeal for making proselytes ? Or are all the people so guarded against them already, that their labour is in vain ? Can your Lordship answer these few plain questions, to the satisfaction of your own conscience ?

Have the Methodists (so called) already monopolized all the sins, as well as errors, in the nation ? Is Methodism the only sin, or the only fatal or spreading sin, to be found within the Bills of Mortality ? Have two thousand (or more) “ ambassadors of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God ” no other business than to guard, warn, arm, and fortify their people against this O my Lord, if this engrosses their time and strength, (as it must, if they follow your Lordship’s instructions,) they will not give an account with joy, either of themselves or of their flock, in that day !

18. Your Lordship seems in some measure sensible of this, when you very gently condemn their opinion, who think the Methodists “ might better be disregarded and despised, than

taken notice of and opposed, if it were not for the disturbance they give to the parochial Ministers, and their unwarrantable endeavours to seduce the people from their lawful Pastors." (*Charge*, p. 22.) The same complaint with which your Lordship opened your Charge: "They give shameful disturbances to the parochial Clergy; they annoy the established ministry, using very unwarrantable methods, first, to prejudice their people against them, and then to seduce their flocks from them." (*Ibid.* page 4.)

Whether we seduce them or no, (which will be presently considered,) I am sorry your Lordship should give any countenance to that low, senseless, and now generally exploded slander, that we do it for a maintenance. This your Lordship insinuates, by applying to us those words of Bishop Sanderson: "And all this to serve their own belly, to make a prey of the poor deluded proselytes; for by this means the people fall unto them, and thereout suck they no small advantage." (*Ibid.* p. 15.) Your Lordship cannot but know, that my Fellowship, and my brother's Studentship, afford us more than sufficient for life and godliness; especially for that manner of life which we choose, whether out of ostentation or in sincerity.

19. But do we willingly "annoy the established ministry," or "give disturbance to the parochial Clergy?" My Lord, we do not. We trust, herein, to have a conscience void of offence. Nor do we designedly "prejudice their people against them." In this also our heart condemneth us not. But you "seduce their flocks from them." No, not even from those who feed themselves, not the flock. All who hear us, attend the service of the Church, at least as much as they did before. And for this very thing are we reproached as bigots to the Church by those of most other denominations.

Give me leave, my Lord, to say, you have mistook and misrepresented this whole affair from the top to the bottom. And I am the more concerned to take notice of this, because so many have fallen into the same mistake. It is indeed, and has been from the beginning, the *πρωτον ψευδος*, "the capital blunder," of our bitterest adversaries; though how they can advance it, I see not, without "loving," if not "making, a lie." It is not our care, endeavour, or desire, to proselyte any from one man to another; or from one Church, (so called,) from one congregation or society, to another; (we would not move a finger to

do this, to make ten thousand such proselytes;) but from darkness to light, from Belial to Christ, from the power of Satan to God. Our one aim is, to proselyte sinners to repentance; the servants of the devil, to serve the living and true God. If this be not done, in fact, we will stand condemned: not as well-meaning fools, but as devils incarnate. But if it be, if the instances glare in the face of the sun, if they increase daily, maugre all the power of earth and hell; then, my Lord, neither you nor any man beside (let me use great plainness of speech) can “oppose” and “fortify people against us,” without being found even “to fight against God.”

20. I would fain set this point in a clearer light. Here are, in and near Moorfields, ten thousand poor souls for whom Christ died, rushing headlong into hell. Is Dr. Bulkely, the parochial Minister, both willing and able to stop them? If so, let it be done, and I have no place in these parts. I go and call other sinners to repentance. But if, after all he has done, and all he can do, they are still in the broad way to destruction, let me see if God will put a word even in my mouth. True, I am a poor worm that of myself can do nothing. But if God sends by whomsoever he will send, his word shall not return empty. All the messenger of God asks is, *Δος μου στω;* (no help of man!) *και γην κινησω.** The arm of the Lord is revealed. The lion roars, having the prey plucked out of his teeth. And “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over” more than “one sinner that repenteth.”

21. Is this any annoyance to the parochial Minister? Then what manner of spirit is he of? Does he look on this part of his flock as lost, because they are found of the great Shepherd? My Lord, great is my boldness toward you. You speak of the consequences of our doctrines. You seem well pleased with the success of your endeavours against them, because, you say, they “have pernicious consequences, are big with pernicious influences upon practice, dangerous to religion and the souls of men.” (*Ibid.* pp. 8, 22.) In answer to all this, I appeal to plain fact. I say once more, “What have been the consequences (I would not speak, but I dare not refrain) of the doctrines I have preached for nine years last past? By the fruits shall ye know those of whom I speak; even the cloud of witnesses, who at this hour experience the gospel which I preach to be the power of God

* Give me a point on which to stand, and I will move the world — EDIT.

unto salvation. The habitual drunkard that was, is now temperate in all things; the whoremonger now flees fornication; he that stole, steals no more, but works with his hands; he that cursed or swore, perhaps at every sentence, has now learned to serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto him with reverence; those formerly enslaved to various habits of sin are now brought to uniform habits of holiness. These are demonstrable facts; I can name the men, with their places of abode. One of them was an avowed Atheist for many years; some were Jews; a considerable number Papists; the greatest part of them as much strangers to the form, as to the power, of godliness."

My Lord, can you deny these facts? I will make whatever proof of them you shall require. But if the facts be allowed, who can deny the doctrines to be, in substance, the gospel of Christ? "For is there any other name under heaven given to men, whereby they may thus be saved?" or is there any other word that thus "commendeth itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God?"

22. But I must draw to a conclusion. Your Lordship has, without doubt, had some success in opposing this doctrine. Very many have, by your Lordship's unwearied endeavours, been deterred from hearing at all; and have thereby probably escaped the being seduced into holiness, have lived and died in their sins. My Lord, the time is short. I am past the noon of life, and my remaining years flee away as a shadow. Your Lordship is old and full of days, having past the usual age of man. It cannot, therefore, be long before we shall both drop this house of earth, and stand naked before God: No, nor before we shall see the great white throne coming down from heaven, and Him that sitteth thereon. On his left hand shall be those who are shortly to dwell in everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. In that number will be all who died in their sins; and, among the rest, those whom you *preserved* from repentance. Will you then rejoice in your success? The Lord God grant it may not be said in that hour, "These have perished in their iniquity; but their blood I require at thy hands!" I am

Your Lordship's dutiful son and servant,
JOHN WESLEY.

LONDON

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