



George Whitfield's Journals

Deal, Kent

(December, 1737—May, 1738)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Part 1 From London To Gibraltar..... | 2 |
| Boston 1740..... | 39 |
| A Letter To John Wesley | 42 |

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Part 1 From London To Gibraltar

(pp 97-127)

My dear Friends,

According to your request, I have herewith sent you an account of what God has done for my soul since I left England. The sole motive (if my heart doth not deceive me) which induced me to leave my native country was a full conviction that it was the Divine Will. What reasons I can urge for this persuasion, is needless to mention, because few in this case would judge impartially; and what seems a reason to me, may not be deemed so by another. Let it suffice to inform you that after earnest prayer for a year-and-a-half that if the design was not of God, it might come to naught, though strongly solicited to act in a contrary manner, I found myself as eagerly bent on going abroad as ever.

Accordingly,

Wednesday, December 28, 1737, after having continued instant in prayer with my friends at Mr. James Hutton's, and afterwards receiving the Holy Sacrament at St. Dunstan's, being recommended to the grace of God by a great number of weeping Christian brethren at the Rev. Mr. H's,¹ I set out at night for Deptford in a coach, accompanied by four friends, and got there safe at ten. Here a widow woman gladly received us into her house; and many of my friends gave me the meeting, who came on foot from London, with intent to accompany me to the ship; and with them I took a little bodily refreshment; spent two or three hours in particular intercession for our friends and enemies, and all mankind; sung psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and then betook ourselves to rest, and the Lord made us to dwell in safety. Oh who can express the unspeakable joy of religious friends!

¹ The Rev. John Hutton, father of Mr. James Hutton, the publisher

Thursday, December 29. Rose early in the morning, and continued instant in intercession, chanting, and singing of psalms with my friends until nine, at which our hearts were much rejoiced. After this we went in quest of our ship, but finding she was fallen down to Purfleet, and was not to remove to Gravesend for some time, we returned to Deptford praising God, and praying for a blessing on our intended voyage. The Lord perform our petitions!

Being returned to Deptford with my friends, we dined comfortably together, joined in a psalm, read the Lessons for the day, and concluded with prayer. Some were then obliged to depart for London. After they were gone, I continued with the rest in particular intercession for near two hours, and then God was pleased to comfort my heart. If parting from a few earthly friends for a season be so grievous, how will the wicked bear to be parted from God and good men for all eternity!

It happened providentially that a lecture was to be preached that evening at Deptford, and several importuned me to preach it; at first I was fearful (O me of little faith), having no notes. But afterwards (having got the consent of the minister), I went up, depending on the promise, "Lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world," and was enabled to preach to a large congregation without the least hesitation. Did anyone yet ever trust in the Lord and be forsaken? What gave me great comfort, and made me more thankful was, that the opportunity, I believe, was granted in answer to prayer.

Friday, December 30. Went with our baggage and nine or ten friends in a Gravesend boat to Purfleet, where the Whitaker was fallen down. Spent the time we were on the water in singing psalms and particular intercession, and came on board about ten in the morning.

I spoke some few things to my new charge; and spent the remainder of the day on shore with my friends, in singing psalms, prayer, and exhorting one another to love and good works.

Returned at night to our ship, and lay with my friend Habersham² upon the ground on a mattress, in the great cabin, and God was pleased to give me a proof that He was with me in the ship.

Saturday, Dec. 31. Began this morning to have public prayers on open deck, at which the officer and soldiers attended with decency and reverence. After prayer, I enlarged a little on those words of St. Paul, "*I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified*"; told them what my future conduct would be; made some professions of my hearty love and sincere affection for their souls; and then dismissed them. I believe some were moved. Oh! that I may have grace to act suitably to this profession.

To-day, also, I began to visit the sick, and took that opportunity of discoursing on the uncertainty of life and the certainty of a future judgment, to those around me; and God was pleased not to let my words fall to the ground.

About twelve, I went and paid my friends a visit who were on shore, and spent two or three delightful hours in praising and blessing God. Soon after came another friend with two honest men from Gravesend, desiring me in the name of the minister to come and preach to them the following Lord's Day. At first, I was unwilling to leave my own flock in the ship; but my friends' reasonings overbalanced mine, and I went on board, read public prayers, visited the sick, gave the soldiers an exhortation (at which the soldiers were much affected), and then took boat with them for Gravesend. My heart was much enlarged in intercession. The evening was exceedingly calm, the sky clear, and all things conspired to praise that glorious and lofty One who inhabits eternity, who stretcheth forth the heavens like a curtain, and holdeth the waters in the hollow of His hand.

² Mr. James Habersham, who was manager of Bethesda till 1744. He eventually became President of Georgia.

About seven at night, God brought us safe to Gravesend, where Mr. Hutton received both me and my friends most courteously, and loaded us with many benefits.

We spent the evening very agreeably in prayer, and singing; and then betook ourselves to sleep, having before exhorted one another to prepare our spices and ointments of praise and thanksgiving, and to rest on the approaching Sabbath.

Sunday, January 1, 1738. Blessed be God for the happy be-ginning of a new year; for it has been a day of fat things. We rose in the morning, and retired to an adjacent hill with my friends, to prayer; and, afterwards, were most agreeably surprised with the coming of several more London friends who came all night on the water to see me.

About ten, we went to church, where I preached; and the curate was so kind, at our request, as to give us the Sacrament. In the afternoon I preached again to a more numerous congregation than in the morning; and as we were to stay there but one Lord's Day, I was pressed to preach and read prayers a third time,—at six in the evening. It was a thing I found entirely new; but upon the curate's readily complying to lend the pulpit, and my friends' and the people's importunity, I looked upon it as a call of Providence, and accordingly read prayers and preached to a very thronged auditory; and this I did without notes, having brought but two written sermons with me. Oh! who can express the loving kindness of the Lord, or show forth all His praise!

Monday, Jan. 2. Sat up till twelve at night, to take leave of some of my friends, whose business obliged them to be at London the next morning; and then, after three or four hours' rest, rose and walked to Greenhithe with the remainder of my friends, intending to take a boat there, and so return to my charge at Purfleet. But just as we were entering the boat, providentially came a boy, telling us the Whitaker was fallen down to Gravesend, and ready to sail, if not

actually under sail. We immediately hastened back from whence we came, and went on our way rejoicing.

About eleven, we reached Gravesend, and found the ship was not to sail till the morrow. This put gladness into my heart, as it gave me an opportunity of settling some affairs of consequence, and conversing a little longer with my dear friends.

About twelve o'clock I went on board, leaving my friends to dine on shore, and as I went along God was pleased to show me He had given a blessing to my discourses. The people seemed greatly alarmed, and wished me heartily a good voyage; and the very sailors were surprisingly affectionate. Blessed be God for setting His seal to my unworthy ministry! Spent the remainder of the day in settling things on board, visiting the sick, teaching the children, and reading prayers, and preaching. All love, all glory be to God through Christ!

In the evening, I went on shore again to my friends, prayed, sung psalms, and expounded a chapter out of the Holy Scriptures to them, and was not a little comforted. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

Tuesday, January 3. Went on board, read prayers, and preached, visited the sick; and then took a final leave, as I thought, of my friends. Spent the afternoon in writing letters, and putting things in order.

This evening began to read prayers between decks, judging it would be too cold above. At night I went, according to custom, on shore to Gravesend, where I was agreeably surprised by seeing my friends. I took leave of them in the morning once more, the weather preventing their going to London. Here also Mr. C. W.³ and Mr. W. H. gave me the meeting; with whom we prayed, sung psalms, commended one another to God, and parted the next morning, like Christian brethren.

3 Charles Wesley.

Wednesday, January 4. Came on board at ten in the morning; but I could not have public prayers, because the soldiers were engaged with their officer. But I visited the sick, and perceived the soldiers were attentive to hear me, when I applied myself to those around the sick persons. I also distributed presents amongst the sick of my London friends, to convince them I had a love for, and to gain an access to, their souls. I visited the sick, read prayers, and preached extempore (as I constantly do morning and evening); and went with Mr. H. in the evening on shore to Gravesend, where we interceded for friends, expounded a chapter, and went to bed, with that peace of mind which passeth all understanding. Oh that the sensual, careless, half-Christian could but know the comforts of religion!

Thursday, January 5. This day, I was refreshed in spirit, by hearing from some London friends, and receiving some kind presents from persons I could never have thought of; was assisted much in writing letters; came on board, read prayers, and preached; visited the sick, and had God with me all the day long. Began to catechise six or seven of the young soldiers on open deck. I was surprised they would submit to it; but God has the hearts of all men in His hands. Great civility was shown me on board by the officers; and Captain Whiting⁴ sent his boat to fetch me to Gravesend, whither I went, having first visited the sick, read prayers, and preached on deck. When on shore, I wrote several letters, and expounded a chapter to a room full of people. I catechised the children of the house and three of my own companions; and then went to bed, full of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

My health of body, I could perceive, increased, and my soul was much refreshed. I now began, once more, to feel the comforts of a retired life, and blessed God from my heart, that He had called me whither I was going.

⁴ Captain Whiting, of the Whitaker.

Friday, January 6. About nine, I came on board, read prayers, and preached between decks; and Mr. H. sung a psalm, as he generally does. In the meanwhile, the ship loosed from Gravesend, and sailed by twelve o'clock to the Nore. We had a very brisk gale of wind. God gave me great comfort, and I went between decks, and sat down on the ground, and read Arndt's *True Christianity*. Part of the time I stood upon deck, and admired the wonders of God in the deep.

Three or four were added to-day to my catechumens, some of whom I have great hopes. I read prayers, preached upon deck, and catechised my own companions; interceded upon deck near the stern, having no place for retirement; talked to the sailors on the forecastle; wrote my journal; and climbed up into my cabin to bed, where my friend Habersham and I lay as comfortably as on a bed of state. Some of the passengers, amongst whom was Mr. Habersham, began now to be sick, but I felt very little of it; on the contrary, God enabled me to rejoice with exceeding great joy. My heart was warmed by talking to the sailors, and I was lifted even above myself. I found that above a hundred, exclusive of the ship's company, were on board. God grant that not one of them may perish through my neglect!

Saturday, Jan. 7. Breakfasted with some of the gentlemen in the great cabin, who were very civil, and let me put in a word for God. Read public prayers, and began to expound the Lord's Prayer to the soldiers,⁵ by way of sermon; and God enabled me to do it with power. After that, I instructed my catechumens, who now amounted to twelve or thirteen. God make them soldiers of Christ as well as of the King.

Had an hour's conversation with a gentleman on board, on our fall in Adam, and the necessity of our new birth in Christ Jesus; and hope it was not unpleasant to him.

⁵ "Red-coat parishioners," as he called them.

Today I obtained what I prayed for, *viz.*, a place to retire into; for Capt. Whiting, on my bare mentioning my want of such a thing, offered me the free use of his own cabin,—a place very commodious for that purpose.

Catechised those that went with me on open deck, for example to others: and found they improved. Capt. Whiting, the two cadets and sergeants, sat very serious and attentive. But when the Captain of the soldiers came, my heart sank a little, though without reason; however, I did not leave off. O corruption, thou art my sister!

Read public prayers, and finished my exposition of the Lord's prayer to the soldiers, at which they attended very orderly. At night, I and my five companions went upon deck, and interceded and sung psalms, by which my heart was much enlarged. The weather was very cold, and the wind magnified that God at whose word the stormy wind ariseth. Now I fulfilled my promise to the Lord's people; and while the winds and storms were blowing over me, I made earnest supplication to God for them.

The ship continued at the Nore all this day, but I hope we made some advances towards eternity.

In the evening the wind blew very fresh indeed; and had our ship been in the Downs, we should have been in great danger. I low wisely doth God provide for us! Most people began now to be seasick, particularly J. D. one of my companions was grievously afflicted.

Sunday, Jan. 8. My friend Habersham and I have great reason to be thankful to God; for we slept as well as we could desire, though the wind blew very hard, and the sailors were very busy in taking care of the ship, which by the morning had dragged her anchor two miles.

I went early and visited the seasick soldiers and their families between decks; gave them some sage tea and sugar, etc., and excited them all to thankfulness and repentance, out of gratitude for their preservation from the last night's storm, and returned public thanks at morning prayers.

Thought much of my dear London friends; though absent in body, was present in spirit in sacred ordinances; and interceded for them and all mankind. Read public prayers, and preached twice to the soldiers; and read prayers once in the great cabin to the officers, at their request, which I liked very well. Catechised my own companions, but had not time to catechise the soldiers, on account of attending the sick.

To-day being the first Lord's Day I have spent this long time in so private a manner, I could not avoid reflecting on the following lines:

*I sigh whene'er my musing thoughts
Those happy days present,
When I with troops of pious friends
Thy temple did frequent;*

*When I advanc'd with songs of praise,
My solemn vows to pay,
And led the joyful sacred throng
That kept the festal day.*

But I considered it was the Divine will that placed me here, and therefore I rejoiced. He is unworthy the name of a Christian, who is not as willing to hide himself when God commands, as to act in a public capacity.

I began now to live a little by rule, and to examine into the interiors of those who came with me; which I found a most useful exercise, both for them and me. Continued all this day at the Nore, being quite becalmed, and at night had a most comfortable intercession for all friends, etc.

Monday, Jan. 9. Mr. Habersham began to learn Latin. I had near twenty catechumens with my own companions, who I believe made some advances.

Weighed from the Nore, and sailed before the wind in company with several others, which carried us on so briskly that we anchored before Margate about one. Here I enjoyed a wished-for opportunity

of writing to some of my London friends, and found my heart greatly enlarged towards them.

After dinner, having some necessaries to buy, Mr. H. and I went on shore to Margate. The wind blew very fresh, and the sea raged horribly; but He Who dwelleth on high was mightier, and kept us from the least fright, and filled me with great joy and brought us safe on shore.

We had the most abandoned man with us I ever saw, who came out of an East India ship. He had so much of the Devil in him, that the very boatmen, profane as they were, abhorred him; from whence I infer, that were the Devil himself to appear as he is, the wickedest sinners could not but detest him.

This afternoon I began to feel the power of faith more than ever I did before; and to find that, as the day, so will our strength be. When I went into the boat the sea ran dangerously high; but I could boldly say:—

*God is our Refuge in distress,
A present Help when dangers press;
In Him undaunted we'll confide.
Though earth were from her centre toss'd,
And mountains in the ocean lost,
Torn piecemeal by the roaring tide.*

About five we got safe to Margate, where having received a little bodily refreshment, and recommended ourselves to God in prayer, we went about the town to buy the things we came for. The generality of the people we met with were civilized and teachable.

After we had done our secular business, we paid the curate a visit, the minister being at Canterbury. He received us most courteously. Our conversation ran chiefly upon the great importance of the ministerial function, the necessity of preaching the doctrine of the new birth, and the necessity and benefit of visiting from house to house.

About ten we left him, greatly refreshed in spirit, and thankful to God for exciting persons everywhere to entertain us. On the morrow

I sent him Mr. Law's *Serious Call and Christian Perfection*, with some other books; and also a few catechisms and sermons to some other serious people, whom Providence put in our way. Now "*thanks be to God,*" saith the Apostle, "*Who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place!*"

Tuesday, Jan. 10. About four this morning, Mr. H. and I arose, intending to go on board immediately; but the wind blew so violently, that by the advice of the boatmen we deferred going on board till daylight; and therefore, after we had kneeled on the shore, and prayed for ourselves and others, we went back to the inn, and took that opportunity of writing to a friend or two.

About seven, we took boat and praised and blessed God to see the floods clap their hands. About eight we came on board, and found we had great reason to be thankful that we were on shore last night. The sailors told us that the lightning shone on the sea all night; that the storm was very great, and the ship's long boat was lost.

I read public prayers, returned public thanks for our deliverance, and expounded by way of sermon the second article of the Creed, which I began yesterday, and did the same after evening prayers. Spent the remainder of the day in writing letters; and have not enjoyed a more calm delightful frame of mind a long time.

The sick increased on my hands, but were very thankful for furnishing them with sage-tea, sugar, broth, etc. At the sight of so many objects of pity, I was sensibly touched with a fellow- feeling of their miseries. I could not but transverse the prodigal's complaint, *How many of my Father's children are ready to perish with hunger, whilst I have enough and to spare?*

I had a most comfortable sense of the Divine Presence with me in many particulars; and in the evening joined in intercession with my other companions on deck, in behalf of absent friends and all mankind.

Wednesday, Jan. 11. Weighed from Margate road, and cast anchor in the Downs, the ship sailing most pleasantly before the wind. Wrote several letters whilst the ship was under sail. Had my spirits refreshed upon our arrival in the Downs, by hearing from two or three Christian brethren at London, and was desirous to bless God for an opportunity that was offered of sending a whole packet to them and some other friends, to acquaint them how lovingly the Lord had dealt with me.

Had no public prayers this morning, being much hurried in writing letters to go by post; and when I went to read, the soldiers were engaged in their military affairs upon deck, so that I did nothing but visit the sick. I fear I did foolishly.

Went on in explaining the Creed after evening prayers, and was enabled to talk of the crucifixion of our Lord. I believe it pricked them to the heart. O that I could hear them cry out, "*What shall we do to be saved?*"

Had the comfort to hear good was done among the soldiers; and the Captain was pleased to express his approbation of my conduct. God grant I may with a single eye seek to please the Captain of my salvation!

After evening prayers and visiting the sick, went ashore with Mr. Habersham to Deal, and were so delighted with a prospect of the Downs, that we expressed our thankfulness in singing of psalms all the way. The boatmen, I believe, wondered at it at first; but they were not ashamed to blaspheme, and I thought I had no reason to be ashamed to praise God. I had the satisfaction before we got to Deal, to hear one of them join seriously with us; and perceived a surprising alteration in their behaviour always after. Blessed be God!

About five we got to Deal, and not knowing a single person, went, as at Margate, to pay my respects to the two ministers of the place; but finding neither of them at home, spent the remainder of the evening with my friend H. very comfortably in religious talk, family prayer, interceding for absent friends and all mankind, and writing to

Christian brethren. And even here God did not leave my ministry without a witness; for He was pleased to impress something I said on a poor woman's heart, who providentially came in, and joined with us in family prayer; for which we endeavoured to thank Him. Behold how great a fire this little spark kindled before we left Deal!

Thursday, Jan. 12. Spent most of the morning in writing letters. Went about eleven on board; and was highly delighted with the prospect on the Downs, which was exceedingly calm. A great many beautiful ships which were riding here added to the prospect. O that men who occupy their business in the great waters would (since they cannot but see) admire God's wonders in the deep!

Read prayers and went on explaining the Creed to the soldiers; visited and prayed with the sick, and began this afternoon to explain the Catechism to the women by themselves. I find they are in number about sixteen. Blessed be God! they were much affected. Prosper Thou, O Lord, this work of my hands upon me!

Had some religious talk with the surgeon of the soldiers, who seems very well disposed. I seldom, if ever, see him idle, and find he has many good qualities. God grant Christianity may be grafted in him!

After evening prayers and expounding the Creed, went again to Deal with Mr. H. to buy some necessaries for our companions. Spent the remainder of the evening in writing letters, and reading and praying with eight or nine poor people, who came, I suppose, at the report of the other poor women to hear me.

Friday, Jan. 13. Remained all day on shore, the weather being too rough to go on board. Was in care about leaving my flock so long; but hope this short absence will make our meeting more agreeable tomorrow. Had the pleasure of joining in public worship at Deal, in a pretty chapel, which was more pleasant on account of our being confined for some time within the narrow limits of a ship.

Set apart this day as a day of humiliation, abstinence, and intercession for friends and all mankind; and found my heart greatly enlarged in that Divine exercise. Intercession is a glorious means to sweeten the heart.

Spent the remainder of the day, and sat up till one in the morning, in writing to friends. Had two or three added to my company at night, who seemed very attentive, and prayed for me most heartily. The poor receive the Gospel. I dispersed some books among them, as I saw proper; I hope God will give them His blessing.

Expected letters to-night from London, but was disappointed. God enable me in everything to give thanks!

Fancied myself all this day in my little cell at Oxford; for I have not spent so many hours in sweet retirement since I left the University.

Saturday, Jan. 14. Spent the morning in writing letters, and was much pleased with the pious conversation of a poor woman, who was one of my auditors last night, and who, I believe, has passed through the pangs of the new birth.

Hastened on board about eleven, the wind promising fair to take us out of the channel, and was affectionately received by the people. I was greatly delighted to see all the ships sail together from the Downs. Nature, indeed, would have been glad to have stayed till the morrow, that I might have received letters from my London friends; but God, I considered, ordereth all things for the good of those that love Him, and therefore I gave thanks from my heart. Examined into the state of my little ones, (my friend H's charge), and had reason to hope well of them.

Was enlarged in preaching after prayers to the soldiers; and spent two most pleasant hours in reading God's Holy Word. At night, though it was piercingly cold, we continued instant in intercession on deck; and the prospect of a clear sky, the stars glittering, and the moon shining bright, warmed my heart, and made me greatly rejoice in spirit.

I now began to be more reconciled to a ship life; for God gave me health of body, and, without which all is nothing, content of mind. Had near an hour's conversation with one who, I hope, will become an altogether Christian. Oh! that that blessed time would come!

Sunday, January 15. God gave me and Mr. H. sweet sleep. Had near two hours' retirement in the Captain's round house; and was much delighted with singing psalms on deck with my companions. Read public prayers in the cabin this morning; and was much enlarged in preaching to the soldiers on this Article, *I believe in the Holy Ghost*,—in treating of which, I took occasion to show the nature and necessity of the new birth, a subject on which I delight to dwell.

Catechised the soldiers, and, blessed be God! I find some of them improved. Was enlarged again in my evening sermon to the soldiers, and had prayers a second time in the great cabin, which gave me no small satisfaction; the officers and others willingly complied as soon as I imposed it. God be praised!

Had great delight in reading the Holy Scriptures, enjoyed an unspeakable peace of mind, and was much comforted in interceding for friends, etc. on deck. The weather was cold, and the wind blew very hard; but when the heart is full of God, outward things affect it little. Surely my friends in England pray for me; methinks I feel they do.

All the day the sea was entirely becalmed; and everything about us seemed hushed and quiet, as though it would remind us of that sacred rest the day was set apart to commemorate. In the evening the wind blew very fresh, but being full against us, we were obliged to sail back to the Downs (though we had got near fifty miles) where we arrived about twelve o'clock.

Monday, January 16. After private prayer, was most agreeably entertained with some letters from my London friends, which filled my soul with unspeakable pleasure.

If the correspondence of good people is so transporting here, O, how unspeakably ravishing must the personal communion of saints be hereafter! Hasten, O Lord, that blessed time, and let Thy Kingdom come.

Was a little affected by seeing a poor soldier tied neck and heels, for several mutinous words he had spoken. The captain related the case to me, and said if I could make him sensible of his crime, I might beg him off. I endeavoured to do it, but alas in vain; he continued obstinate, and thereby hindered my design taking effect. After this, the captain ordered him to be tied down between decks; from whence I took occasion, in my morning sermon, to exhort the soldiers to obey them that had the rule over them, and to avoid those sins, that would provoke God to command them to be tied hand and foot, and to be cast into outer darkness, where would be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

About twelve, a Deal boat coming alongside. I was minded to go on shore to answer my letters. The sea was very boisterous, but God brought us to shore rejoicing. O wherefore did I in the least fear? What am I, when left to myself!

It being the 16th day of the month, Mr. H. and I joined in an hour's intercession and abstinence, with all those who meet together to bewail their own and the sins of the nation. About four, took some bodily refreshment, and from thence till one in the morning, continued answering my correspondents.

Tuesday, January 17. Was awakened with an alarm, that the ship was ready to sail, but found it soon contradicted. Spent an hour in particular intercession, and the rest of the morning in writing letters, and teaching Mr. H. Latin. Oh, that I may be made an instrument of breeding him up for God!

Came on board about two in the afternoon, and found all things quiet in the ship; I was most kindly received, and the women were very attentive when I proceeded to explain the Catechism to them.

May God open their hearts as He did that of Lydia, that these may give diligent heed to the things that are spoken.

Was much enlarged in my evening discourse, and hope the Word entered into their hearts. Was kindly invited by the Postmaster of Deal, to lie at his house. Gained an opportunity, by walking at night on deck, after intercession, to talk closely to the chief mate and one of the sergeants of the regiment; and hope my words were not altogether spoken in vain. O that all men would come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved!

Wednesday, January 18. Spent all the morning in retirement, reading the Scriptures, public prayer, and preaching, the weather being extremely pleasant. Began to live by rule more than ever, for nothing I find is to be done without it. All who had been sick, being recovered, came to prayers, for whom I gave thanks; at the end of my sermon exhorting them with the utmost earnestness, to sin no more, lest a worse evil should befall them, and to spew forth their thankfulness, not only with their lips, but ill their lives. O that there may be always in them such a mind!

Finished my exposition on the Creed. Read public prayers, studied, preached as usual in the afternoon. Catechised both my own companions and the soldiers, and was pleased to see many others were attentive to hear. Had great comfort in reading the Scriptures. Was afterwards a little inclined to heaviness, but drove it off by a long intercession. Prayer is an antidote against every evil.

Upon examination had reason to hope my companions grew in grace. Blessed be God for it! About eleven at night, went and sat down among the sailors in the steerage, and reasoned with them about righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come.

Thursday, January 19. Was much comforted by hearing from my friends. Began, after prayers this morning, to explain the Catechism to the soldiers, and drew proper inferences by way of sermon.

I find it is much approved of, and, for them, by far the fittest way of instruction.

Spent the afternoon in answering correspondents. Was much assisted in my evening exposition on the Catechism, and had great hopes of two soldiers becoming Christians indeed. Would to God all the King's soldiers were such!

We had now such a calm and smooth sea, that all the people expressed their admiration of it. God grant we may in a calm provide for a storm, and, like the primitive Christians, when the churches had rest, walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and be edified!

Friday, January 20. Spent all the morning in composing a sermon. Happily composed a difference between a soldier and his wife, who were one of the four couples I married when first I came on board. The man had resolved to leave her, but upon my reminding him of his marriage vow, and entreating him with love, he immediately took to her again. What may not a minister do through Christ, when his flock love him? Almost finished the sermon I began yesterday.

Went on in expounding the Catechism after evening prayer, and now began to read the first Lesson, which I purposely omitted before, not knowing whether they would bear it.

Proposed to the Captain to read a few prayers in the great cabin every night, which he readily consented to, and withal said, he should be glad to hear me preach, whenever I should think proper.

Was surprised in the midst of my evening's discourse by the chief mate, who came and told me, that the minister of Upper Deal had sent a boat for me, desiring me immediately to come on shore. Accordingly, after I had concluded, Mr. H. and I went and found the minister who was left to officiate, who desired me, at the request of the inhabitants, to preach the Sunday following. After this, we retired to our lodging in Deal, and after a sermon, and long intercession, was comforted by the reception of several letters from persons, who, I believe, sincerely fear God.

Found the number of my hearers greatly increased tonight, and very joyful to see me once more on shore. I sat up till one in the morning, answering my correspondents, and then laid down, filled with such joy as no man could take from me, nor a stranger intermeddle with. Oh that all men knew the comforts of religion!

Saturday, January 21. Spent all the day in writing letters, and delightful conversation with Mr. Habersham. At night, the number of my hearers was so increased, that the stairs were full, as well as my room. I expounded to them the 25th of St. Matthew; at which they were much affected, and seemed to love and pray for me most earnestly. I desire to have no greater portion than the prayers of the poor.

Sunday, January 22. About nine, went on board with Captain Whiting, who is always extremely civil. Visited the sick, and read prayers in the great cabin. Read prayers, and preached my sermon on early piety on open deck to the soldiers; the officers and other gentlemen attending seriously. The weather was very cold, but preaching warmed my heart.

About noon went on shore with Capt. Whiting and Mr. Habersham. Dined at the Postmaster's, who received us hospitably. In the afternoon, preached at Upper Deal on Acts 28:26. Many seemed pricked to the heart, and some so quickened, that they expressed a desire to follow me wherever I should go. O free grace in Christ Jesus! I have scarce known a time I have preached anywhere, but I have seen some effect of my doctrine. From the hearts of the mighty the Word of the Lord hath not turned back, the Sword of the Spirit returned not empty. A proof this, I hope, that the words are not my own, and that God is with me of a truth. May I never by pride and vainglory provoke Him to depart from me.

Stayed all night on shore to expound the Lord's Prayer, and had a large company to hear me; and should have had seven hundred, as my hostess told me, would the house have held them so swiftly ran the Word of God and prevailed.

Was again refreshed by receiving five letters. Sat up till past ten to answer some of them, and then went to rest, with comfortable reflections of God's unmerited loving kindness to me.

Ten thousand, thousand precious gifts,

My pious thanks employ :

Nor is the least a thankful heart

That tastes those gifts with joy.

Through all eternity, to God

My grateful song I'll raise:

But oh! eternity's too short

To set forth all His praise.

Monday, January 23. Was much comforted by receiving five more letters; answered some of them, and about eleven in the morning went on board the *Amy*, to pay my respects to Col. C., and to visit the soldiers, whom I looked upon as part of my charge. I was received very civilly by the officers and went among the soldiers and enquired into the state of their souls; gave them a word or two of exhortation, promised to bring them some books (I saw their wants), and, at the officers' request, to come and preach to them, if opportunity should offer, before we left the Downs.

After this, I visited the *Lightfoot*, our other transport ship, in which were about twelve soldiers and a sergeant; they received me kindly. I sat down and conversed with them, promised to send them some books, and to come and preach to them also, if Providence should permit. The Downs being exceedingly calm, and the weather clear, going from ship to ship was very pleasant. Mine are but little flocks. O that it may be my Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom.

About two, went again on board the *Amy*, to dine with the officers; being kindly invited by them when I was before on board. They all treated me with great kindness, and in the midst of our meal was most agreeably surprised by the coming of two London friends, who made a journey from thence on purpose to see me. Dinner being ended, I went and dispersed some books among the soldiers; took my leave and hasted on board my own ship; read prayers and preached, and then went on shore with my friends, being not a little rejoiced to see them. This night God let me see greater things than before, for so many came to hear me that the poor landlady who owned the house where I lodged sent to her tenants, beseeching them to let no more come in for fear the floor should break under them; and indeed there were such numbers that I first expounded the Creed to about eighty, and then the Second Lesson to as many more, among whom I observed there were many of the chief inhabitants. About eleven, they went, and I then rejoiced with my friends for what God had done for my soul; interceded for absent friends and all mankind, and went to bed about two in the morning. Oh what shall I render unto the Lord for all the mercies He pours down upon me!

Tuesday, Jan. 24. Spent all the morning in writing letters, walking, singing psalms, and intercession all along the seashore, from whence we had a most delightful prospect of the Downs, which afforded me and my friends most noble matter for praise and thanksgiving. Met with a little opposition today; but I should have wondered indeed, if such an effectual door had been opened for preaching Christ, and there had been no adversaries. Nothing has done more harm to the Christian Church than thinking the examples recorded in Holy Scriptures, were written only to be read and not imitated by us.

More people came to hear me tonight than ever, so that I divided them into two companies again, and providentially from the Second Lesson for the morning, had a glorious opportunity for showing the absolute unlawfulness of running or buying run⁶ goods, a sin that does most easily beset the Deal people.

After exposition, paid Mr. E. a visit, who most kindly entertained us, and offered me his boat to go or come on shore when I pleased, which would save me much expense. After we returned from his house, we kneeled down on the seashore; and prayed for them who opposed themselves; and then went to bed, blessing and praising God.

Wednesday, Jan. 25. Went on board in the morning with my friends intending to read prayers and preach to the soldiers; but they were engaged about their own affairs, and I could not stay long. Had great civilities shown us by the officers, etc., who treated my friends respectfully; and the Captain, upon my request, pardoned a woman who otherwise was to have been sent on shore.

After breakfast, returned on shore with my friends; and read prayers, and preached at Upper Deal to a large congregation. I was surprised to see such a number of people, but all Deal seems to be in a holy flame, and was I prepared for it, I should see still greater things than these.

Dined at Mr. R's, a grocer in Deal, with my friends. We were most hospitably entertained, and what was far better, had an excellent opportunity given me of discoursing for a considerable time on our fall in Adam, and the necessity of our new birth in Jesus Christ.

Expounded to two companies again at night the Epistle for the morning, and the two Lessons for the evening, as most suitable for the day. More people came to-night than before, so that they now did actually put a prop under the floor of the room.

⁶ That is, smuggled.

Was agreeably entertained with more letters and though the duty of the day had a little fatigued me, yet God strengthened me to sit up till three in the morning, answering my Christian correspondents.

Thursday, Jan. 26. I had a visit paid me by an Anabaptist teacher⁷, who came to discourse with me about the things that belong to the Kingdom of God. By what I could find out he was a spiritual man. I asked him several questions about taking the ministerial function, without being called as was Aaron; but he did not answer to my satisfaction. However, we both agreed in this, that unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. I was much comforted by the coming of two more friends from London, with whom I took sweet comfort, and could not but fancy myself once more at London, being surrounded with religious intimates.

*How sweet must their advantage be,
How great their pleasure prove,
Who live like brethren and consent
In offices of love.*

*'Tis like refreshing dew, which does
On Hermon's top distil,
Or like the early drops that fall
On Zion's fruitful hill.*

In the afternoon I took my friends on board, and read prayers and preached to the soldiers. After this, I went on shore, sung psalms with my friends, and then expounded to the people, who now increased so much that I was obliged to divide them into three companies; and God enabled me to continue expounding three hours without any intermission, or the least weariness. Thanks be to God for His strengthening grace! As our day is, so shall our strength be.

⁷ See BOSTON 1740, diary of Friday, September 19.

Received three more letters, and sat up till one in the morning to answer some sent before; and then went to bed rejoicing and blessing God for the great things He had done for me, but, withal, desirous to say with the divine Herbert, "*Less than the least of God's mercies shall be my motto still.*"

Friday, Jan. 27. Spent the beginning of the morning in writing letters; then breakfasted with all my friends at one Mrs. H's, a widow gentlewoman, who kindly invited, and as kindly entertained us.

About twelve, I came on board, being unwilling to be absent from my proper charge long together. I was received kindly, visited the sick and catechised the soldiers, some of whom answered most aptly, for which I distributed amongst them all something I knew would be agreeable. Oh! that I may catch them by a holy guile! But that power belongeth only unto God.

About two, came a clergyman on board, from a neighbouring village to pay me a visit, with whom I spent an hour or two agreeably; had prayers on open deck, and enforced the duty of keeping holy the sabbath day, which then came in course to be explained, but was afraid to sing a psalm, Mr. H. being at Deal with friends. Where was my courage then? Lord what am I when left to myself!

At five, returned ashore with the clergyman, to whom I promised some books for his parishioners. Expounded three hours to three companies as before. Glad tidings of great joy sent me by four or five correspondents; sat up till one in the morning answering them, and then went to bed and had a feeling possession of my God. And will God in very deed, dwell in this heart of mine? O free grace in Christ! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His Holy Name!

Saturday, Jan. 28. Spent the morning most agreeably in conversation, intercession for all friends and all mankind, walking on the seashore.

Dined with Mrs. St. L., who hospitably entertained us. Went about three in the afternoon intending to go on board, but could not, which gave me a little uneasiness, thinking it by no mean right to leave my flock so long. At night I expounded to three companies more numerous than before. Received letters, and sat up till one in the morning answering them.

Sunday, Jan. 29. Went on board early in the morning, read prayers, preached to the soldiers, and visited the sick; then returned on shore, and, accompanied with a troop of pious friends hasted to Shroulden⁸ Church, about a mile-and-a-half distant from Deal, where I preached to a weeping and thronged congregation, at the request of the minister, who at my request, gave me and my friends the blessed Sacrament. Others stayed also, to the number of sixteen, and, which I never observed before, the Clerk pronounced a loud Amen to every person who received either bread or wine. An excellent custom, and worthy in my opinion to be imitated in all churches. After this, I and my friends went on our way rejoicing; dined at Mr. R's, and in the afternoon preached at Upper Deal. The Church was quite crowded, and many went away for want of room; some stood on the leads of the Church outside, and looked in at the top windows, and all seemed eager to hear the Word of God. I preached against worldly-mindedness, and had great reason to think God gave it His blessing. The weather was exceedingly pleasant, and seeing the people go in such flocks over the fields, put me in mind of our blessed Lord's words, when he saw the people coming in companies from Samaria, "The fields are white already to harvest." I then prayed that He would be pleased to enable me to gather wheat into His heavenly garner.

In the evening, such numbers came to hear me, that I was obliged to divide them into four companies, and God enabled me to expound to them from six till ten.

⁸ Sholden

Some would have persuaded me to have dismissed the last company without expounding, but I could not bear to let so many go empty away. I find the more we do for God, the more we may. My strength held out surprisingly, and I was but little, if at all fatigued. Afterwards, I gave thanks with my friends for the blessings of the day, and we went to our respective beds about twelve at night. Oh who can express the loving kindness of the Lord, or show forth all His praise?

Monday, Jan. 30. At the request of the inhabitants, and the leave of Mr. R. (who sent from Canterbury a most obliging message), I preached again at Upper Deal, to as crowded and attentive an audience as I had yesterday; and afterwards, I with Mr. H. waited upon the Rev. Mr. W., who read prayers, and most courteously invited me to come and see him. Our conversation ran chiefly on the expediency of baptizing infants at church. I continued with him about an hour, and then at his request visited a poor woman of the parish, who was grievously troubled in mind; and God was pleased to bless my ministry to her comfort. To Him be all the glory!

*So poor, so frail an instrument
If Thou my God vouchsafe to use,
'Tis praise enough to be employ'd,
Reward enough if Thou excuse.*

*If Thou excuse, then work Thy will
By so unfit an instrument;
It will at once Thy goodness show,
And prove Thy power omnipotent!*

Soon after this we went to Mr. R's, where our friends expected us. But we had not been long there before the wind shifted about on a sudden, and a cry came, "the wind is fair, prepare yourselves for sailing." I received the news with joy; but sorrow filled the hearts of my dear friends who came from London to see me.

We immediately retired, intending to intercede for all mankind before we parted; but the people were in such a hurry, for fear the sea should grow too tempestuous to go off, that we were obliged to be very brief. Having therefore recommended ourselves to God, I took my leave. But oh, what affection did the Deal people express to my unworthy person! For no sooner were they apprised of the wind being fair, but they came running in droves after me to the seashore, wishing me good luck in the name of the Lord, and with tears and other expressions of kindness praying for my success and safe return. I was confounded with a sense of God's mercies to me.

The sea was very boisterous indeed, and the waves rose mountains high; but God was pleased to give Mr. H. and me an unusual degree of faith, and we went on singing psalms and praising God, the water dashing in our faces all the way!

About five, we came on board, and were received with joy, for the ship was under sail, and the people were afraid I should be left behind. As I was going into the great cabin, I fell down the steerage stairs, but received little or no hurt. After we had sailed for a short time, the man-of-war not moving, we cast anchor again. Mr. H. was so sick by the ship's motion after we came on board, that he was obliged to go to bed.

Tuesday, Jan. 31. Spent the morning in writing letters, visiting the sick, reading prayers and preaching to the soldiers About twelve, was pleasantly surprised with another sight of my London friends, who stayed at Deal all night, and finding this ship did not sail, came with some more Deal friends to take me on shore, that I might bid them once more farewell. I was little unwilling at first; but by their importunity and affectionate entreaties they compelled me. I accordingly went with them singing psalms and praising God all the way⁹.

⁹ "It is a remarkable fact, that two days after this, while the ship Whitaker was still at anchor, John Wesley, at half-past four o'clock in the morning,

I had scarce been on shore an hour before the man-of-war gave a signal for sailing, and so we were obliged to hasten back on board. The people expressed much joy at seeing me come to Deal again, and accompanied me to the seashore, as before. The weather being fair, we went on board with pleasure; the ship was under sail, but we met with it. I hope that these frequent and sudden removes will put me in mind that I have here no continuing city.

Another thing I could not but reflect on yesterday, when I saw Deal all in a confusion at the time the wind shifted about so suddenly, some crying for one thing, some another, but all anxious lest their ship should sail without them. Alas! what confusion, thought I, will the inhabitants of the world be in, when in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they shall hear the voice of the Archangel and trump of God, crying aloud, "*Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!*"

After I was on board, I preached, read prayers to the soldiers, visited the sick, wrote some letters, and interceded for all mankind on deck; and retired to bed about twelve. Our ship sailed briskly for a few hours; but the wind shifting again, was obliged to return back once more, and we cast anchor in the Downs about nine at night. After this I went cheerfully about my ministerial business, visited the sick, read prayers and preached to the soldiers, and answered some letters I had received in the morning.

landed at Deal, on his return from Georgia. Great was his surprise to hear that Whitefield was close at hand; and still smarting from the wrongs he had suffered at Savannah, he immediately despatched a letter advising the young evangelist to relinquish his mission.... Who can estimate what would have been the consequences of Whitefield's yielding to Wesley's wish. Had he now returned to London, the probability is he would never again have started for America; and, in such a case, many of the brightest chapter of his history could never have been penned."--Tyerman's Life of Whitefield.

Wednesday, Feb. 1. Sent some books for the soldiers on board the Lightfoot, and at night went on shore at Deal with Mr. H., where we were kindly entertained and lodged at Mr. R's. Did nothing that night, it being late, save that I visited a sick person at her earnest desire and the minister's consent, and talked about half-an-hour on the benefit of afflictions.

Answered two or three letters I received after I came on shore, prayed with some well-disposed people who were at Mr. R's, and about twelve went to bed.

Thursday, Feb. 2. Rose early in the morning, went on board in Mr. E's boat, intending to read prayers and preach to the soldiers, and then return to Upper Deal to preach there, being asked to do so by the inhabitants and the minister.

About ten o'clock there sprang up a pleasant fair gale, which carried us from the Downs near forty miles that day, during which time I read prayers, preached to and catechised my soldiers, wrote some letters, and had an opportunity of sending them as we sailed by Dover.

Anyone must needs think I should have been glad to have heard from Mr. Wesley¹⁰, as he went by Deal; but I considered God ordered all things for the best, and therefore I now joyfully went, but not knowing whither I went, and doubted not but He who strengthened David when he went out against Goliath, would also strengthen me against all my spiritual adversaries, and send His Holy Ghost to guide, assist, and comfort me in all emergencies. The good Lord keep me always thus minded!

Friday, Feb. 3. Let this day be noted in my book, for God wrought for us a wonderful deliverance! About seven in the morning, the men upon decks not keeping a good look-out, one of the East India ships in shifting to the wind ran near us so very briskly, that had not Captain Whiting providentially been on deck, and beseeched them

¹⁰ See A Letter To John Wesley. Bethesda in Georgia, Dec. 24, 1740

for God's sake to tack about, both the ships must inevitably have split one against another. They were within four yards of each other. The Captain said he never was in so great danger in his life. Mr. Habersham and I knew nothing of it till it was over; but when I was apprised of it, I endeavoured to excite all to thankfulness, and returned public thanks at prayers. Too many seemed to be unsensible of the mercy received. But,

*Since God does thus His wondrous love
Through all our lives extend;
Those lives to Him let us devote,
And in His service spend.*

Read public prayers and preached to the soldiers as usual; explained the Catechism to the women, and exhorted them particularly to be obedient to their own husbands, which they had lately been wanting in; and was pleased to hear the Captain, as I came on deck, remind me of the motion I made to him some time ago, about having prayers daily in the great cabin, and withal desired that from henceforward I would read prayers morning and evening to them. This, I most readily consented to, it being what I had long desired and prayed for, and what I was just then about to propose to him again. Accordingly, I went immediately and acquainted the lieutenant, etc. of the Captain's desire, and we began this night to have full public prayers; and at the request of Captain Whiting, expounded the Second Lesson, and a glorious Lesson it was. Blessed be God! I hope we shall now begin to live like Christians, and call upon the Name of the Lord daily. The very thought of God's granting me this petition filled me with joy.

Saturday, Feb. 4. Began to have prayers in the great cabin in the morning, read prayers and preached twice to the soldiers as usual, and expounded the Second Lesson in the evening to the gentlemen after prayers in the great cabin, which from henceforward I intended, God willing, to continue.

Unspeakable will be the benefit of it, for it gives me an opportunity of saying many salutary truths, and affords us matter for serious table-talk afterwards.

I was much pleased to see our ship sail directly before the wind; furnished three soldiers with books, who began to-day to learn to read. God enable them not only to read, but to do their duty! Mr. Habersham's scholars increase. The Lord increase his strength!

Sunday, Feb. 5. Joined in spirit with absent friends in holy ordinances; spent some time most delightfully in reading the Word of God; read prayers, and made some observations on both the Lessons to the soldiers. O that the Lord would open our understandings! for they are but a dead letter without the illumination of His Holy Spirit.

Read prayers and preached my sermon on Justification in the afternoon to the officers, etc., in the great cabin.

Began to-night to turn the observations made on the Lessons in the morning into catechistical questions; and was pleased to hear some of the soldiers and my companions make such apt answers. I find this an excellent way of instruction; it makes them bring their Bible, and give diligent heed to the things that are spoken; it teaches them the Scriptures practically, and consequently, will, by the Divine blessing make them wise unto salvation.

Monday, Feb. 6. Had no prayers in the morning between decks; but read prayers in the cabin. Did the same in the evening, and expounded the 6th chapter of St. Mark, the Second Lesson, which, containing an account of John's reproving Herod, gave me an opportunity of telling them, that great men should not be angry if ministers should reprove them out of love. They seemed to assent to it.

Read prayers and preached to the soldiers as usual; interceded warmly for absent friends and all mankind, and went to bed full of peace and joy. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift!

Was pleased to see Mr. Habersham so active in teaching the children. He has now many scholars. May God prosper the works of his hands!

Tuesday, Feb. 7. Read prayers and expounded the Lessons as usual to the soldiers and in the great cabin; and after dinner sung psalms with Mr. Habersham and a gentleman on board, on open deck. Being now in the Bay of Biscay, the ship rocked very much, though there was a great calm.

Wednesday, Feb. 8. Had public worship and expounded as usual to both my congregations. Was pleased to hear a gentleman discourse for some time of the utter inability of anything to make us happy but God.

In the afternoon I preached and read prayers on open deck, at the Captain's desire, who ordered chairs to be brought and boards put across them for the soldiers to sit upon. My subject was, the eternity of hell torments, and I was earnest in delivering it, being desirous that none of my dear hearers should experience them. Praying and singing psalms on open deck enlarged my heart.

Was enabled to make good part of a sermon this evening, and lay down to sleep. God grant that I may die daily

Thursday, Feb. 9. Read prayers, expounded and catechised as usual. Had delightful sailing, and very thankful that God called me abroad to see and admire His wonders in the deep. O, who can serve a better Master than Jesus Christ?

Friday, Feb. 10. Read prayers, and according to custom, went on in explaining the Catechism to the women; and after evening prayer expounded the 49th Psalm instead of the Lesson. Had still greater reason to bless God for bringing me to sea. O what shall I render unto the Lord?

Saturday, Feb. 11. Catechised, visited the sick, expounded and read prayers as usual, and met with some soldiers who could sing by note, with whom I propose to join in Divine psalmody every day.

*A psalm may win him who a sermon flies,
And turn delight into a sacrifice.*

In the evening gave thanks for the blessings, and examined into the actions of the past week. It is well I have a Saviour to satisfy for my performances as well as my person; for if other-wise, how should I stand before thee, O Holy Lord God? God be merciful to me a sinner.

Sunday, Feb. 12. Did as usual, and preached my sermon on Glorification to the gentlemen in the great cabin. Oh that God may make us partakers of it!

Honest Joseph, my servant, returned thanks after morning prayer for his recovery from a late severe fit of sickness. I hope now Christ has touched him by the right hand of His healing power, he will arise and minister unto Him. He tells me he can say with David, "*It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*" God be praised! for sanctified afflictions are signs of special love.

Monday, Feb. 13. Did as usual, only instead of the Second Lesson, expounded the 22nd chapter of St. Matthew, at the Captain's request, who takes all opportunities to express his kindness to me. May the God Whom I serve sanctify and save him!

Tuesday, Feb. 14. May I never forget this day's mercies, since the Lord was pleased to deal so lovingly with me! About twelve at night a fresh gale arose, which increased so much by four in the morning, that the waves broke in like a great river on many of the poor soldiers, who lay near the main hatchway. Friend Habersham and I knew nothing of it, but perceived ourselves restless, and could not sleep at all. He complained of a grievous headache. I arose and called upon God for myself and those who sailed with me, absent friends, and all mankind.

After this I went on deck; but surely a more noble, awful sight my eyes never yet beheld! For the waves rose mountain high, and sometimes came on the quarter-deck. I endeavoured all the while to magnify God, for thus making His power to be known. Then, creeping on my knees (for I knew not how to go otherwise), I followed my friend H. between decks, and sang psalms and comforted the poor wet people. After this, I read prayers in the great cabin, but we were obliged to sit all the while. Though things were tumbling, the ship rocking, and persons falling down unable to stand, and sick about me, I never was more cheerful in my life, and was enabled, though in the midst of company, to finish a sermon before I went to bed, which I had begun a few days before. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His Holy Name!

Thursday, Feb. 16. Did as usual in the ship, only instead of catechising, examined into the proficiency of my friend Habersham's scholars; gave them proper encouragement, as I saw they wanted, and had hopes that some of them would become living members of Jesus Christ. Joined with those at night, who set apart this day as a day of fasting and humiliation, to deprecate the judgments our national sins deserve. Lord, hear our prayers, and let our cry come unto Thee.

Friday, Feb. 17. Read prayers, expounded the Lessons, and proceeded in my explanation of the Catechism to the women. Expounded part of the Lord's prayer, after evening prayer, in the great cabin, and intend, after this is done, to go on with the Creed and Ten Commandments. God give us all praying, believing, obedient hearts.

Found honest Mr. D. particularly useful to me, I being a little sick by the late shaking of the ship, and the heat and smell of the people between decks, who, as yet, have scarce had time to recover themselves since the storm. O how soon are these frail tabernacles of ours put out of order!

Happy the man who serves God in his health, and has nothing to do when sickness seizes him, but quietly to lie down and die.

Saturday, Feb. 18. Performed the usual duty, and finished the Lord's Prayer. Perceived my bodily disorders to go off, and was enabled to preach to the soldiers. The Captain observed me a little disordered, and gave Mr. H. a cordial for me.

After dinner, I grew better, and was exceedingly delighted by sitting on deck, praising God for the pleasantness of the weather, and reading Archbishop Cranmer's Life. Surely he was a righteous man. The account of his fall made my heart tremble within me. But why shouldest thou be cast down, O my soul? Still trust in God. He who has begun will carry on and finish the good work. Even so, Lord Jesus.

Though the weather was exceedingly pleasant all the day, yet it grew more and more so in the evening, and our ship sailed at the rate of nine miles an hour, and as steady as though we were sitting on shore. The night was unusually clear, and the moon and stars appeared in their greatest lustre; so that not having patience to stay below, I went upon deck with friend Habersham, and praised God for His wonderful loving-kindness, in singing psalms, and gave thanks for the blessings, and asked pardon for the offences of the week; and then had a long intercession. God grant I may learn a lesson from this good Providence of God; and the nearer I come to my journey's end, the quicker may my pace be.

It is worth coming from England, to see what we have beheld this day. God be praised for all His mercies!

Sunday, Feb. 19. Slept better to-night than I have for a long while, blessed be the Keeper of Israel! Read prayers in the great cabin; was enlarged in expounding both the Lessons to the soldiers; and had prayers, and preached one of the sermons God enabled me to make since I came on board, on open deck in the afternoon.

All the gentlemen attended, benches were laid for the people, and the ship sailed smoothly, and the weather was finer than I can express; so that I know not where I have performed the service more comfortably. I have been so delighted these two days, with our pleasant sailing, and the promontories all around us, that I could not avoid thanking God for calling me abroad, and stirring up all to praise Him, Who by His strength setteth fast the mountains, and is girded about with power.

For these two days our ship has sailed at the rate of a hundred and sixty miles in twenty-four hours, and rode in triumph directly before the wind, and cast anchor about two in the morning, until which time I sat up on purpose to give thanks in Gibraltar Haven. Oh! that my friends would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness, and extol Him for the wonderful works He doth for me, the least of the sons of men.

How Providence will be pleased to dispose of me here, I cannot yet know, but I thought proper to send you this account of my short voyage already, to show you how God has heard your prayers, to provoke you to thankfulness, and to encourage you to persevere in praying on my behalf.

I cannot help transcribing the verses that follow, as a conclusion to what I have now sent you.

*How are Thy servants bless'd,
O Lord! How sure is their Defence!
Eternal Wisdom is their Guard;
Their Help Omnipotence.*

*Think, O my soul, devoutly think,
How with affrighted eyes
Thou saw'st the wide extended deep
In all its horrors rise!*

*Confusion dwelt in ev'ry face,
And fear in ev'ry heart;*

*When waves on waves, and gulf on gulf,
O'ercame the pilot's art.*

*Yet then from all my griefs,
O Lord! Thy mercy set me free;
Whilst in the confidence of prayer,
My soul took hold on Thee.*

*For though in dreadful whirls we hung
High on the broken wave;
I knew Thou wert not slow to hear,
Nor impotent to save.*

*The storms were laid, the winds retir'd,
Obedient to Thy will:
The sea that roar'd at Thy command,
At Thy command was still.*

Boston 1740

(pp 457-459)

Friday, September 19. I was visited by several gentlemen and ministers, and went to the Governor's with Esquire Willard,¹¹ the Secretary of the Province, a man fearing God, and, with whom I have corresponded some time, though before unknown in person. The Governor received me with the utmost respect, and desired me to see him as often as I could. At eleven, I went to public worship at the Church of England, and afterwards went home with the Commissary, who had read prayers. He received me very courteously; and, it being a day whereon the clergy of the Established Church met, I had an opportunity of conversing with five of them together. I think, one of them began with me for calling "*that Tennent and his brethren faithful ministers of Jesus Christ.*"

I answered, "*I believed they were.*" They then questioned me about "*the validity of the Presbyterian ordination.*" I replied, "*I believed it was valid.*"

They then urged against me a passage in my first *Journal*, where I said, "*That a Baptist minister at Deal*"¹² *did not give a satisfactory answer concerning his mission.*" I answered, "*Perhaps my sentiments were altered.*"

"*And is Mr. Wesley altered in his sentiments?*" said one; "*for he was very strenuous for the Church, and rigorous against all other forms of government when he was at Boston.*"

I answered, "*He was then a great bigot, but God has since enlarged his heart, and I believed he was now like-minded with me in this particular.*" I then urged, "*That a catholic spirit was best, and that a Baptist minister had communicated lately with me at Savannah.*"

"*I suppose,*" said another, "*you would do him as good a turn, and would communicate with him.*"

¹¹ Josiah Willard was the son of the Rev. Samuel Willard, Vice-President of Harvard College. In 1717, George I appointed him secretary of the Province of Massachusetts, an office which he held for thirty-nine years. He died in 1756.

¹² See Diary on Thursday, Jan. 26.

I answered, "Yes," and urged *"that it was best to preach the new birth, and the power of godliness, and not to insist so much on the form: for people would never be brought to one mind as to that; nor did Jesus Christ ever intend it."*

"Yes, but He did," said Dr. Cutler. *"How do you prove it?"*

"Because Christ prayed, *'That all might be one, even as Thou Father and I are One.'*" I replied, *"That was spoken of the inward union of the souls of believers with Jesus Christ, and not of the outward Church."*

"That cannot be," said Dr. Cutler, *"for how then could it be said, 'that the world might know that Thou hast sent Me?'"* He then (taking it for granted that the Church of England was the only true apostolical Church) drew a parallel between the Jewish and our Church, urging how God required all things to be made according to the pattern given in the Mount.

I answered, *"That before the parallel could be just, it must be proved, that everything enjoined in our Church was as much of a Divine institution as any rite or ceremony under the Jewish dispensation."* I added further, *"That I saw regenerate souls among the Baptists, among the Presbyterians, among the Independents, and among the Church folks,—all children of God, and yet all born again in a different way of worship: and who can tell which is the most evangelica?"*

"What, can you see regeneration with your eyes?" said the Commissary, or words to that effect.

Soon after, we began to talk of the Righteousness of Christ, and the Commissary said, *"Christ was to make up for the defects of our righteousness."*

I asked him, *"Whether conversion was not instantaneous?"* He was unwilling to confess it, but he having just before baptised an infant at public worship, I asked him, *"Whether he believed that very instant in which he sprinkled the child with water, the Holy Ghost fell upon the child?"*

He answered, "Yes."

"Then," said I, *"according to your own principles, regeneration is instantaneous, and since you will judge of the new birth by the fruits, pray watch that child, and see if it brings forth the fruits of the Spirit."*

I also said, "*That if every child was really born again in baptism, then every baptised infant would be saved.*"

"*And so they are,*" said Dr Cutler.

"*How do you prove that?*"

"*Because the Rubric says 'that all infants dying after baptism before they have committed actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.'*"

I asked, "*What text of Scripture there was to prove it?*"

"Here," said he, (holding a Prayer Book in his hand) "*the Church says so.*"

We then just hinted at predestination. I said, "*I subscribed to the seventeenth Article of the Church in its literal sense with all my heart.*"

We then talked a little about falling away finally from grace. I said, "*A true child of God, though he might fall foully yet could never fall finally.*"

"But," said he, the Article says "*Men may fall away from grace given.*"

I answered, "*But then observe what follows 'and by the grace of God they may, rise again.'*"

Several other things of less consequence passed between us. Finding how inconsistent they were, I took my leave, resolving they should not have an opportunity of denying me the use of their pulpits. However, they treated me with more civility than any of our own clergymen have done for a long while. The Commissary very kindly urged me to dine with them; but, being pre-engaged, I went to my lodgings, and, in the afternoon, preached to about four thousand people in Dr. Colman's meeting-house; and afterwards exhorted and prayed with many who came to my lodgings, rejoicing at the prospect then was of bringing many souls in Boston to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant this, O Father, for Thy dear Son's sake! Amen.

A Letter To John Wesley

(pp 571-588)

Bethesda in Georgia, Dec. 24, 1740

Reverend and very dear Brother,

God only knows, what unspeakable sorrow of heart I have on your account, since I left England last. Whether it be infirmity or not, I frankly confess, that Jonah could not go with more reluctance against Nineveh, than I now take pen in hand to write against you. Was nature to speak, I had rather die than do it; and yet if I am faithful to God, and to my own and other's souls, I must not stand neuter any longer. I am very apprehensive, that our common adversaries will rejoice to see us differing among ourselves. But what can I say? The children of God are in danger of falling into error. Nay, numbers have been misled, by whom God has been pleased to work upon by my ministry, and a greater number are still calling aloud upon me to show also my opinion; I must then show, that I know no man after the flesh, and that I have no respect to persons, any further than is consistent with my duty to my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

This letter, no doubt, will lose me many friends: and for this cause, perhaps God has laid this difficult task upon me, even to see whether I am willing to forsake all for him, or not. From such considerations as these, I think it my duty to bear an humble testimony, and earnestly to plead for the truths, which I am convinced, are clearly revealed in the word of God. In the defence whereof I must use great plainness of speech, and treat my dear friends upon earth with the greatest simplicity, faithfulness freedom, leaving the consequences of all to God.

For some time before, and especially since my last depart from England, both in public and private, by preaching printing, you have been propagating the doctrine of *universal redemption*. And when I remember, how Paul reproved Peter for his dissimulation, I fear I have been sinfully silent too long. O then be not angry with me, dear

and honoured Sir, if now I deliver my soul, by telling you, that I think in this you greatly err.

'Tis not my design to enter into a long debate on God's decrees I refer you to Dr. Edwards his *Veritas Redux*, which, I think is unanswerable, except in a certain point, concerning a *middle sort* between elect and reprobate, which he himself in effect afterwards condemns.

I shall only make a few remarks upon your sermon, entitled *Free-Grace*. And before I enter upon the discourse itself, give me leave to take a little notice of what, in your preface, you term an indispensable obligation, to make it public to all the world, I must own, that I always thought you were quite mistaken upon that head. The case (you know) stands thus: When you were at Bristol, I think you received a letter from a private hand, charging you with not preaching the gospel, because you did not preach up election. Upon this you drew a lot: the answer was "*preach and print*". I have often questioned, as I do now, whether in so doing, you did not tempt the Lord. A due exercise of religious prudence, without a lot, would have directed you in that matter. Besides, I never heard that you enquired of God, whether or not election was a gospel doctrine? But I fear, taking it for granted, it was not, you only enquired, whether you should be silent, or preach and print against it? However this be, the lot came out "*preach and print*"; accordingly you preached and printed against election. At my desire, you suppressed the publishing the sermon whilst I was in England; but soon sent it into the world after my departure. O that you had kept it in! However, if that sermon was printed in answer to a lot, I am apt to think, one reason, why God should so suffer you to be deceived, was, that hereby a special obligation might be laid upon me, faithfully to declare the scripture doctrine of election, that thus the Lord might give me a fresh opportunity of seeing what was in my heart, and whether I would be true to his cause or not; as you could not but grant, he did once before, by giving you such another lot at Deal. The morning I sailed

from Deal for Gibraltar,¹³ you arrived from Georgia. Instead of giving me an opportunity to converse with you, though the ship was not far off the shore; you drew a lot, and immediately set forwards to London. You left a letter behind you, in which were words to this effect "*When I saw God, by the wind which was carrying you out, brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have enclosed.*" This was a piece of paper, in which were written these words. "*Let him return to London.*"

When I received this, I was somewhat surprised. Here was a good man telling me he had cast a lot, and that God would have me return to London. On the other hand, I knew my call was to Georgia, and that I had taken leave of London, and could not justly go from the soldiers, who were committed to my charge. I betook myself with a friend to prayer. That passage, the first book of Kings, chap. 13., was powerfully impressed upon my soul, where we are told, "*That the Prophet was slain by lion, that was tempted to go back, (contrary to God's express order) upon another Prophet's telling him God would have him do so*". I wrote you word that I could not return to London. We sailed immediately. Some months after, I received a letter from you at Georgia, wherein you wrote words to this effect "*Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet, perhaps, he suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart.*" I should never have published this private transaction to the world, did not the glory of God call me to it. It is plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one. And thus I believe it is in the present case. And if so, let not the children of God, who a mine and your intimate friends, and also advocates for *universal redemption*, think that doctrine true, because you preached it up in compliance with a lot given out from God.

¹³ See diary February 2, 1738.

This, I think, may serve as an answer to that part of the preface, to your printed sermon, wherein you say, "*nothing but the strongest conviction, not only that what is here advanced is the truth as it is in Jesus, but also that I am indispensably obliged to declare this truth to all the world.*" That you believe what you have written to be truth, and that you honestly aim at God's glory in writing, I do not in the least doubt. But then, honoured Sir, I cannot but think you have been much mistaken, in imagining that your tempting God, by casting a lot in the manner you did, could lay you under an *indispensible obligation* to a action, much less to publish your sermon against the doctrine of *predestination to life*.

I must next observe, that as you have been unhappy in printing at all, upon such an *imaginary warrant*, so you have been as unhappy in the choice of your text. Honoured Sir, how could it enter into your heart, to chuse (*sic*) a text to disprove the doctrine of election, out of the 8th of the Romans, where this doctrine is so plainly asserted, that once talking with a Quaker upon this subject, he had no other way of evading the force of the Apostle's assertion, than by saying, "*I believe Paul was in the wrong.*" And another friend lately, who was once highly prejudiced against election, ingenuously confessed, "*that he used to think St. Paul himself was mistaken, or that he was not truly translated.*"

Indeed, honoured Sir, it is plain, beyond all contradiction, that St. Paul, through the whole eighth of the Romans, is speaking of the privileges of those only who are really in Christ. And let any unprejudiced person read what goes before, and what follows your text, and he must confess the word "*all*" only signifies those that are in Christ; and the latter part of the text plainly proves, what, I find, dear Mr. Wesley will, by no means, grant, I mean the *final perseverance* of the children of God. "*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (i.e. all Saints) how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.*" Grace, in particular, to enable us to persevere, and every thing else necessary to carry us home to our Father's heavenly kingdom.

Had any one a mind to prove the doctrine of *election*, as well as of *final perseverance*, he could hardly wish for a text more fit for his

purpose, than that which you have chosen to disprove it. One that does not know you, would suspect you yourself was sensible of this: for after the first paragraph, I scarce know whether you mentioned it so much as once, through your whole sermon.

But your discourse, in my opinion, is as little to the purpose as your text, and instead of warping, does but more and more confirm me in the belief of the doctrine of God's *eternal election*.

I shall not mention how illogically you have proceeded. Had you written clearly, you should first, honoured Sir, have proved your proposition, "*that God's grace is free to all*," and then by way of inference, exclaimed against what you call the *horrible decree*. But you knew that people (because *Arminianism*, of late, has so much abounded among us) were generally prejudiced against the doctrine of *reprobation*, and therefore thought if you kept up their dislike of that, you could overthrow the doctrine of election entirely. For, without doubt, the doctrine of election and reprobation must stand or fall together.

But passing by this, as also your equivocal definition of the word *grace*, and your false definition of the word *free*, and that I may be as short as possible, I frankly acknowledge, I believe the doctrine of reprobation, in this view, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being just left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death, which is its proper wages.

This is the established doctrine of scripture, and acknowledged as such in the 17th article of the church of England, as Bishop Burnet himself confesses; yet dear Mr. Wesley absolute denies it.

But the most important objections, which you have urged against this doctrine, as reasons why you reject it, being seriously considered, and faithfully tried by the word of God, will appear to be of no force at all. Let the matter be humbly and calmly reviewed, as to the following heads.

First, you say, "*if this be so (i.e. if there be an election) then is all preaching vain: it is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved. Therefore, the end of preaching to save souls is void, with regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not elected; for they cannot possibly be saved; they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void, with regard to them likewise. So that in either case our preaching is vain, and your hearing also vain.*" Page 10 paragraph the 9th.

O dear Sir, what kind of reasoning, or rather sophistry is this! Hath not God, who hath appointed salvation for a certain number, appointed also the preaching of the word, as a means to bring them to it? Does anyone hold election in any other sense! And if so, how is preaching needless to them that are elected; when the gospel is designed by God himself, to be the power of God unto their eternal salvation? And since we know not who are elect, and who reprobate, we are to preach promiscuously to all. For the word may be useful, even to the non-elect, in restraining them from much wickedness and sin. However, it is enough to excite to the utmost diligence in preaching and hearing, when we consider that by these means, some, even as many as the Lord hath ordained to eternal life, shall certainly quickened and enabled to believe. And who, that attends, especially with reverence and care, can tell but he may be found of that happy number?

Secondly, you say, "*that it, (the doctrine of election and reprobation) directly tends to destroy that holiness, which is the end of all the ordinances of God.*" For (says the dear mistaken Mr. Wesley) "*it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in scripture. The hope of future reward, and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven, and the fear of hell, &c.*"

I thought, that one who carries perfection to such an exalted pitch as dear Mr. Wesley does, would know, that a true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ would strive to be holy for the sake of being holy, and work for Christ out of love and gratitude, without any regard to the rewards of heaven, or fear of hell. You remember, dear Sir, what

Scougal says, "*Love's a more powerful motive that does them move.*" But passing by this, and granting that rewards and punishments (as they certainly are) may be motives from which a Christian may be honestly stirred up to act for God, how does the doctrine of election destroy these motives? Do not the elect know that the more good works they do, the greater will be their reward? And is not that encouragement enough to set them upon, and cause them to persevere in working for Jesus Christ? And how does the doctrine of election destroy holiness? Whoever preached any other election, than what the Apostle preached, when he said, "*Chosen through sanctification of the Spirit?*" Nay, is not holiness made a mark of our election by all that preach it? And how then can the doctrine of election destroy holiness?

The instance which you bring to illustrate your assertion, indeed, dear Sir, is quite impertinent. For you say, "*If a sick man knows, that he must unavoidably die or unavoidably re-cover, though he knows not which, it is not reasonable to take any physic at all.*" Dear Sir, what absurd reasoning is here? Were you ever sick in your life? If so, did not the bare probability or possibility of your recovering, though you knew it was unalterably fixed that you must live or die, encourage you to take physic? For how did you know, but that very physic might be the means God intended to recover you by? Just thus it is as to the doctrine of election. I know that it is unalterably fixed, may one say, that I must be damned or saved; but since I know not which, for a certainty, why should I not strive, though at present in a state of nature, since I know not but this striving may be the means God has intended to bless, in order to bring me into a state of grace? Dear Sir, consider these things. Make an impartial application, and then judge what little reason you had to conclude the 10th paragraph, page 12, in these words: "*So directly does this doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness in general, to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat.*"

"*As directly,*" you say, "*does the doctrine tend to destroy several particular branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, &c.*" I shall say little, dear Sir, in answer to this paragraph. Dear Mr. Wesley perhaps has been disputing with some warm narrow spirited men that held election, and then infers, that their warmth and narrowness of spirit was owing to their principles? But does not dear Mr. Wesley know many dear children of God, who are predestinarians, and yet are meek, lowly, pitiful, courteous, tender-hearted, kind, of a catholic spirit; and hope to see the most vile and profligate of men converted? And why? Because they know God saved themselves by an act of his electing love, and they know not but he may have elected those who now seem to be the most abandoned. But, dear Sir, we must not judge of the truth of principles in general, nor of this of election in particular, entirely from the practice of some that profess to hold them. If so, I am sure much might be said against your own. For I appeal to your own heart, whether or not you have not felt in yourself, or observed in others, a narrow-spiritedness and some disunion of soul respecting those that hold universal redemption. If so, then according to your own rule, universal redemption is wrong, because it destroys several branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, &c. But not to insist upon this, beg you would observe, that your inference is entirely set aside by the force of the Apostle's argument, and the language which he expressly uses, Col. 3:12, 13. "*Put on, therefore, (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*" Here we see that the Apostle exhorts them to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, &c., upon this consideration, namely, because they were elect of God. And all who have experimentally felt this doctrine in their hearts, feel that these graces are the genuine effects of their being elected of God.

But, perhaps dear Mr. Wesley may be mistaken in this point, and call that passion, which is only zeal for God's truths. You know, dear Sir, the Apostle exhorts us to "*contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,*" and therefore you must not condemn all that appear zealous for the doctrine of election, as narrow-spirited, or persecutors, because they think it their duty to oppose you. I am sure, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and think I could lay down my life for your sake; but yet, dear Sir, I cannot help strenuously opposing your errors upon this important subject, because I think you warmly, though not designedly, oppose the truth, as it is in Jesus. May the Lord remove the scales of prejudice from off the eyes of your mind, and give you a zeal according to true Christian knowledge!

Thirdly, says your sermon, "*This doctrine tends to destroy the comforts of religion, the happiness of Christianity, &c.*"

But how does Mr. Wesley know this, who never believed election? I believe they who have experienced it, will agree with our 17th article, "*That the godly consideration of predestination, and election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing their minds to high and heavenly things, as well because it does greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God, &c.*" This plainly shows that our godly reformers did not think election destroyed holiness, or the comforts of religion. As for my own part, this doctrine is my daily support: I should utterly sink under a dread of my impending trials, was I not firmly persuaded that God has chosen me in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and that now being effectually called, he will suffer none to pluck me out of his almighty hand.

You proceed thus: "*This is evident as to all those who believe themselves to be reprobate, or only suspect or fear it; all the great and precious promises are lost to them; they afford them no ray of comfort.*"

In answer to this, let me observe, that none living, especially none who are desirous of salvation, can know that they are not of the number of God's elect. None, but the unconverted, can have any just reason, so much as to fear it. And would dear Mr. Wesley give comfort, or dare you apply the precious promises of the gospel, being children's bread, to men in a natural state, while they continue so? God forbid! What if the doctrine of election and reprobation does put some upon doubting so does that of regeneration. But, is not this doubting a good means to put them upon searching and striving; and that striving, a good means to make their calling and their election sure? This is one reason among many others, why I admire the doctrine of election, and am convinced that it should have a place in gospel ministrations, and should be insisted on with faithfulness and care. It has a natural tendency to rouse the soul out of its carnal security. And therefore many carnal men cry out against it. Whereas universal redemption is a notion sadly adapted to keep the soul in its lethargic sleepy condition, and therefore so many natural men admire and applaud it.

Your 13th, 14th and 15th paragraphs come next to be considered. "*The witness of the Spirit, (you say) experience show to be much obstructed by this doctrine.*" But, dear Sir, whose experience? Not your own; for in your Journal, from your embarking for Georgia, to your return to London, you seem to acknowledge that you have it not, and therefore you are no competent judge in this matter. You must mean then the experience of others. For you say in the same paragraph, "*Even in those who have tasted of that good gift, who yet have soon lost it again, (I suppose you mean lost the sense of it again) and fallen back into doubts and fears and darkness, even horrible darkness that might be felt, &c.*" Now, as to the darkness desertion, was not this the case of Jesus Christ himself, after he had received an unmeasurable unction of the Holy Ghost? Was not his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, in the garden? And was he not surrounded with an horrible darkness, even a darkness that might be felt, when on the cross he cried out "*My*

God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And that all his followers are liable to the same, is it not evident from scripture? For, says the Apostle, *"He was tempted in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be able to succour those that are tempted."* And is not their liableness thereunto, consistent with that conformity to him in suffering, which his members are to bear? Why then should persons falling into darkness, after they have received the witness of the Spirit, be any argument against the doctrine of election? "Yet," you say, *"many, very many of those that hold it not, in all parts of the earth, have enjoyed the uninterrupted witness of the Spirit, the continual light of God's countenance, from the moment wherein they first believed, for many months or years to this very day."* But how does dear Mr. Wesley know this? Has he consulted the experience of many, very many in all parts of the earth? Or could he be sure of what he hath advanced without sufficient grounds, would it follow that their being kept in this light is owing to their not believing the doctrine of election? No, this, according to the sentiments of our church, *"greatly confirms and establishes a true Christian's faith of eternal salvation through Christ,"* and is an anchor of hope, both sure and steadfast, when he walks in darkness and sees no light; as certainly he may, even after he hath received the witness of the Spirit, whatever you or others may unadvisedly assert to the contrary. Then, to have respect to God's everlasting covenant, and to throw himself upon the free distinguishing love of that God, who changeth not, will make him lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees. But, without the belief of the doctrine of election, and the immutability of the free love of God, I cannot see how it is possible that any should have a comfortable assurance of eternal salvation. What could it signify to a man, whose conscience is thoroughly awakened, and who is warned in good earnest to seek deliverance from the wrath to come, though he should be assured that all his past sins be forgiven, and that he is now a child of God; if notwithstanding this, he may hereafter become a child of the devil, and be cast into hell at last? Could such an

assurance yield any solid lasting comfort to a person convinced of the corruption and treachery of his own heart, and of the malice, subtilty, and power of Satan? No! that which alone deserves the name of a full assurance of faith, is such an assurance, as emboldens the believer, under the sense of his interest in distinguishing love, to give the challenge to all his adversaries, whether men or devils, and that with regard to all their future, as well as present attempts to destroy; saying with the Apostle, *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies; who is he that condemn me? It is Christ that died: yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for me. Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation or distress, or persecution or famine, or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things I am more than conqueror, through him that loved me. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor power nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord."*

This, dear Sir, is the triumphant language of every soul that has attained a full assurance of faith. And this assurance can only arise from a belief of God's electing everlasting love. That many have an assurance they are in Christ today, but take no thought for, or are not assured they shall be in him tomorrow nay to all eternity, is rather their imperfection and unhappiness than their privilege. I pray God to bring all such to a sense his eternal love, that they may no longer build upon their own faithfulness, but on the unchangeableness of that God, whose gifts and callings are without repentance. For those whom God has once justified, he also will glorify. I observed before, dear Sir, it is not always a safe rule to judge of the truth of principle from people's practice. And therefore, supposing that all who hold universal redemption in your way of explaining it, after they received faith, enjoyed the continual uninterrupted sign of God's countenance, it does not follow, that this is a fruit of their principle: for that I am sure has a natural tendency to keep the soul in darkness

for ever; because the creature thereby is taught, that his being kept in a state of salvation, is owing his own free will. And what a sandy foundation is that for a poor creature to build his hopes of perseverance upon? Every relapse into sin, every surprise by temptation, must throw him "*into doubts and fears, into horrible darkness, even darkness that may be felt*". Hence it is, that the letters which have been lately sent me by those who hold universal redemption, are dead and lifeless, dry and inconsistent, in comparison of those I receive from persons on the contrary side. Those who settle in the universal scheme, though they might begin in the Spirit, (whatever they may say to the contrary) are ending in the flesh, and building up a righteousness founded on their own free will: whilst the others triumph in hopes of the glory of God, and build upon God's never-failing promise, and unchangeable love, even when his sensible presence is withdrawn from them. But I would not judge of the truth of election, by the experience of any particular persons: if I did (O bear with me in this foolishness of boasting) I think I myself might glory in election. For these five or six years I have received the witness of God's Spirit; since that, blessed be God, I have not doubted a quarter of an hour of a saving interest in Jesus Christ: but with grief and humble shame I do acknowledge. I have fallen into sin often since that. Though I do not, dare not allow of any one transgression, yet hitherto I have not been (nor do I expect that while I am in this present world I ever shall be) able to live one day perfectly from all defects and sin. And since the scriptures declare, "*That there is not a just man upon earth,*" no, not among those of the highest attainments in grace, "*that doeth good and sinneth not,*" we are sure that this will be the case of all the children of God. The universal experience and acknowledgment of this among the godly in every age, is abundantly sufficient to confute the error of those who hold in an absolute sense, *that after a man is born again he cannot commit sin*; especially, since the Holy Ghost condemns the persons who say they have no sin, as deceiving themselves, as being destitute of the

truth, and making God a liar, 1John 1:8,10. I have been also in heaviness through manifold temptations, and expect to be often so before I die. Thus were the Apostles and primitive Christians themselves. Thus was Luther, that man of God, who, as far as I can find, did not peremptorily, at least, hold election; and the great John Arndt was in the utmost perplexity but a quarter of an hour before he died, and yet he was no predestinarian. And if I must speak freely, I believe your fighting so strenuously against the doctrine of election, and pleading so vehemently for a sinless perfection, are among the reasons or culpable causes, why you are kept out of the liberties of the gospel, and from that full assurance of faith which they enjoy, who have experimentally tasted, and daily feed upon God's electing, everlasting love.

But perhaps you may say, that Luther and Arndt were no Christians, at least very weak ones. I know you think meanly of Abraham, though he was eminently called the friend of God and, I believe, also of David, the man after God's own heart. No wonder, therefore, that in a letter you sent me not long since you should tell me, "*that no Baptist or Presbyterian writer whom you have read, knew anything of the liberties of Christ.*" What neither Bunyan, Henry, Flavel, Halyburton, nor any of the New England and Scots divines. See, dear Sir, what narrow spiritedness and want of charity arise from your principles, and then do not cry out against election any more on account of its being "*destructive of meekness and love.*"

Fourthly, I shall now proceed to another head. Says the dear Mr. Wesley, "*How uncomfortable a thought is this, that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings?*"

But who ever asserted, that thousands and millions of men without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings? Do not they who believe God's dooming men to everlasting burnings, also believe, that God looked upon them as men fallen in Adam? And that the decree which ordained the

punishment, first regarded the crime by which it was deserved? How then are they doomed without any preceding fault? Surely Mr. Wesley will own God's justice in imputing Adam's sin to his posterity; and also, that after Adam fell, and his posterity in him, God might justly have passed them *all* by, without sending his own Son to be a saviour for any one. Unless you heartily agree to both these points, you do not believe original sin aright. If you do own them, then you must acknowledge the doctrine of election and reprobation to be highly just and reasonable. For if God might justly impute Adam's sin to all, and afterwards have passed by all, then I might justly pass by some. Turn on the right hand, or on the left, you are reduced to an inextricable dilemma. And, if you would be consistent, you must either give up the doctrine of imputation of Adam's sin, or receive the amiable doctrine of election, with a holy and righteous reprobation as its consequent. For whether you can believe it or no, the word of God abide faithful: "*The election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*"

Your 17th paragraph, page 16, I pass over. What has been said on paragraph the 9th and 10th, with a little alteration will answer it. I shall only say, it is the doctrine of election that mostly presses me to abound in good works. I am made willing to suffer all things for the elect's sake. This makes me to preach with comfort, because I know salvation does not depend on man's free will, but the Lord makes willing in the day of his power, and can make use of me to bring some of his elect home, when and where he pleases. But, Fifthly, You say, "*This doctrine has a direct manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian religion. For,*" say you, "*supposing that eternal unchangeable decree, one part of mankind must be saved, though the Christian revelation were not in being.*"

But, dear Sir, how does that follow? Since it is only by the Christian revelation that we are acquainted with God's design of saving his church by the death of his Son. Yea, it is settled in the everlasting covenant, that this salvation shall be applied to the elect through the

knowledge and faith of him. As the prophet says, Isaiah 53:11, "*By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many*". How then has the doctrine of election a direct tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation? Who ever thought, that God's declaration to Noah, that seed-time and harvest should never cease, could afford an argument for the neglect of ploughing or sowing? Or that the unchangeable purpose of God, that harvest should not fail, rendered the heat of the sun, or the influence of the heavenly bodies unnecessary to produce it? No more does God's absolute purpose of saving his chosen, preclude the necessity of the gospel revelation, or the use of any of the means through which he has determined the decree shall take effect. Nor will the right understanding, or the reverent belief of God's decree, ever allow or suffer a Christian in any case to separate the means from the end, or the end from the means. And since we are taught by the revelation itself, that this was intended and given by God as a means of bringing home his elect, we therefore receive it with joy, prize it highly, use it in faith and endeavour to spread it through all the world, in the full assurance, that wherever God sends it, sooner or later, it shall be savingly useful to all the elect within its call. How then, in holding this doctrine, do we join with modern unbelievers, in making the Christian revelation unnecessary? No, dear Sir, you mistake. Infidels of all kinds are on your side of the question. Deists, Arians, Socinians, arraign God's sovereignty, and stand up for universal redemption. I pray God, that dear Mr. Wesley's sermon, as it has grieved the hearts of many of God's children, may not also strengthen the hands of many of his most avowed enemies Here I could almost lie down and weep. "*O tell it not in Gath! Publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice, lest the sons of unbelief should triumph!*"

Further, you say, "*This doctrine makes revelation contradict itself.*" For instance, say you, "*The assertors of this doctrine interpret that text of scripture, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, as implying that God, in a literal sense, hated Esau and all the reprobates from eternity!*" And, when

considered as fallen in Adam, were they not objects of his hatred? And might not God, of his own good pleasure, love or show mercy to Jacob and the elect, and yet at the same time do the reprobate no wrong? But you say, "*God is love.*" And cannot God be love, unless he shows the same mercy to all?

Again, says dear Mr. Wesley, "*They infer from that text, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, that God is merciful only to some men, viz. the elect; and that he has mercy for those only, flatly contrary to which is the whole tenor of the scripture, as is that express declaration in particular, The Lord is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works.*" And so it is, but not his saving mercy. God is loving to every man; he sends his rain upon the evil and upon the good. But you say, "*God is no respecter of persons.*" No! For everyone whether Jew or Gentile, that believeth on Jesus, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him: "*But he that believeth not shall be damned.*" For God is no respecter of persons, upon the account of any outward condition or circumstance in life whatever; nor does the doctrine of election in the least suppose him to be so. But as the sovereign Lord of all, who is debtor to none, he has a right to do what he will with his own, and to dispense his favours to what objects he sees fit, merely at his pleasure. And his supreme right herein, is clearly and strongly asserted in those passages of scripture, where he says, "*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and have compassion whom I will have compassion,*" Rom.9:15; Exod. 33:19.

Further, you represent us as inferring from the text, "*The children not being yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand: not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her (unto Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger;*" that our predestination to life no ways depends on the foreknowledge of God. But who infers this, dear Sir? For if foreknowledge signifies approbation, as it does in several parts of scripture, then we confess that predestination and election do depend on God's foreknowledge. But if by God's fore-knowledge, you understand God's fore-seeing some good works done by his creatures as the foundation or reason

of chusing (*sic*) them, and therefore electing them, then we say, that in this sense, predestination does not any way depend on God's foreknowledge. But I referred you, at the beginning of this letter, to Dr. Edwards' *Veritas Redux*, which I recommended to you also in a late letter, with Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty. Be pleased to read these, and also the excellent sermons of Mr. Cooper, of Boston in New-England, which I also sent you, and I doubt not but you will see all your objections answered. Though I would observe, that after all our reading on both sides the question, we shall never in this life be able to search out God's decrees to perfection. No, we must humbly adore what we cannot comprehend, and with the great Apostle at the end of our enquiries cry out, "*O the depth, &c.*" or with our Lord, when he was admiring God's sovereignty, "*Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.*"

However, it may not be amiss to take notice, that if those texts, "*God willeth that none should perish,*" "*I have no pleasure in him that dieth,*" and such like, be taken in their strictest sense, then no one will be damned.

But here's the distinction. God taketh no pleasure in the death of sinners, so as to delight simply in their death; but he delights to magnify his justice, by inflicting the punishment which their iniquities have deserved. As a righteous judge who takes no pleasure in condemning a criminal, may yet justly command him to be executed, that law and justice may be satisfied, even though it be in his power to procure him a reprieve.

I would hint farther, that you unjustly charge the doctrine of reprobation with blasphemy, whereas the doctrine of universal redemption, as you set it forth, is really the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, and the merit of his blood. Consider whether it be not rather blasphemy to say as you do "*Christ not only died for those that are saved, but also for those that perish.*" The text you have misapplied to gloss over this, see explained by Ridgely, Edwards, Henry; and I purposely omit answering your texts myself, that you

may be brought to read such treatises, which, under God, would show you your error. You cannot make good the assertion, "*That Christ died for them that perish*," without holding (as Peter Boehler, one of the Moravian brethren, in order to make out universal redemption, lately frankly confessed in a letter) "*That all the damned souls would hereafter be brought out of hell*." I cannot think Mr Wesley is thus minded. And yet unless you hold this it can be proved that universal redemption, taken in a literal sense, falls entirely to the ground. For how can all be universally redeemed if all are not finally saved?

Dear Sir, for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonour God by denying election. You plainly make salvation depend not on God's *free-grace*, but on man's *free-will*; and if thus, it is more than probable, Jesus Christ would not have had the satisfaction of seeing the fruit of his death in the eternal salvation of one soul. Our preaching would then be vain, and all invitations for people to believe in him, would also be in vain.

But, blessed be God, our Lord knew for whom he died. There was an eternal compact between the Father and the Son. A certain number was then given him, as the purchase and reward of his obedience and death. For these he prayed, John 17, and not for the world. For these, and these only he is now interceding, and with their salvation he will be fully satisfied.

I purposely omit making any further particular remarks on the several last pages of your sermon. Indeed had not your name, dear Sir, been prefixed to the sermon, I could not have been so uncharitable as to think you were the author of such sophistry. You beg the question, in saying, "*That God has declared, (notwithstanding you own, I suppose, some will be damned) that he will save all*," i.e. every individual person. You take it for granted (for solid proof you have none) that God is unjust, if he passes by any, and then you exclaim against the horrible decree: and yet, as I before hinted, in holding the doctrine of original sin, you profess to believe that he might justly have passed by all.

Dear, dear Sir, O be not offended! For Christ's sake be not rash! Give yourself to reading. Study the covenant of grace. Down with your carnal reasoning. Be a little child; and then, instead of pawning your salvation, as you have done in a late hymn book, if the doctrine of *universal redemption* be not true; instead of talking of *sinless perfection*, as you have done in the preface to that hymn book, and making man's salvation to depend on his own free-will, as you have in this sermon; you will compose an hymn in praise of sovereign distinguishing love. You will caution believers against striving to work a perfection out of their own hearts, and print another sermon the reverse of this, and entitle it *free-grace indeed*. Free, not because free to all; but free, because God may withhold or give it to whom and when he pleases.

Till you do this, I must doubt whether or not you know yourself. In the mean while, I cannot but blame you for censuring the clergy of our church for not keeping to their articles, when you yourself by your principles, positively deny the 9th 10th and 17th. Dear Sir, these things ought not so to be. God knows my heart, as I told you before, so I declare again, nothing but a single regard to the honour of Christ has forced this letter from me. I love and honour you for his sake; and when I come to judgment, will thank you before men and angels, for what you have, under God, done for my soul.

There, I am persuaded, I shall see dear Mr. Wesley convinced of election and everlasting love. And it often fills me with pleasure, to think how I shall behold you casting your crown down at the feet of the Lamb, and as it were filled with a holy blushing for opposing the divine sovereignty in the manner you have done.

But I hope the Lord will show you this before you go hence. O how do I long for that day! If the Lord should be pleased to make use of this letter for that purpose, it would abundantly rejoice the heart of, dear and honoured Sir,

Yours affectionate, though unworthy brother and servant in Christ,
George Whitefield.

